

Date: January 29, 2026
Bulletin: All Driver Education School Owners and Operators
From: Business Licensing and Compliance
RE: How to comply with the 18-Week Program Completion Requirement

Purpose

To provide recommended best practices to help ensure compliance with the requirement of COMAR 11.23.02.08C(8).

Summary

COMAR 11.23.02.08C(8) requires that a certified school ensure that the classroom and behind-the-wheel (BTW) instruction is completed within 18-weeks unless a student requests an extension. This clearly establishes that it is the school's responsibility to assure that the 18-week requirement is met and to have documentation when it is not met.

This bulletin explains how you can document a student's request for an extension.

- Use form [DE-157](#) which allows you to document-
 - The student's request to exceed 18 weeks; and
 - The school's attempts to contact the student.
- Develop an alternative method of obtaining the same information contained in form [DE-157](#)
 - This can be a paper form or electronic method.
 - It must include the student's signature, or parent/guardian signature in the event the student is under the age of 18.
- Implement other ways for students to request additional time beyond 18-weeks (For example, you can add language in the system used by students to schedule BTW sessions.)-
 - The language used must clearly communicate that this is a request by the student.
 - The language must not solely indicate that the student has reviewed a policy, this does not equal a request to exceed the stated limits.
 - The request must be submitted prior to exceeding 18-weeks. Documents received after exceeding the 18-week requirement are an acknowledgement, not a request.
 - To assure that requests are submitted timely, it is a good practice to set a reminder in advance of the 18-week deadline.
 - If you are capturing requests electronically, you must be able to submit documentation or data to support the student has requested an extension that is date and time stamped when requested and in an extractable format to provide to the Administration upon request.
 - Any language submitted to student to request an extension beyond the 18-week requirement must be approved by the Administration.
 - Automated responses are not the same as making a conscious effort to communicate.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 410-787-2952 or mvabldisd@mdot.maryland.gov.