

# Age requirement for children in booster seats changes Jan. 1

By Cathy Locke and Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

A new state law requiring children younger than 8 to use car booster seats will become effective Sunday.

Children younger than 8 also must be properly buckled into a car seat or booster seat, and in the back seat, according to a news release from the California Office of Traffic Safety. In addition, children 8 and older who are not tall enough for the seat belt to fit properly must ride in a booster seat or car seat.

Previously, the law required that children remain in a booster seat until age 6 or until they weighed 60 pounds. The law change comes after several years of political debate. Safety officials hail it as critical catch-up moment for California.

“It’s been national practice for several years now,” said Jennifer Rubin, an instructor with the Cosumnes Fire Department. “Normally, California is a trendsetter, but we were pretty far behind.”

Safety officials say the law is needed because most 6- and 7-year-olds are still too small to fit safely in adult seat belts.

**Read the whole story**