WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §17c-5-2

§17C-5-2. Driving under influence of alcohol, controlled substances, or drugs; penalties.

(a) Definitions.

(1) "Impaired state" means a person:

(A) Is under the influence of alcohol;

(B) Is under the influence of any controlled substance;

(C) Is under the influence of any other drug or inhalant substance;

(D) Is under the combined influence of alcohol and any controlled substance or any other drug; or

(E) Has an alcohol concentration in his or her blood of eight hundredths of one percent or more, by weight.

(2) "Bodily injury" means injury that causes substantial physical pain, illness, or any impairment of physical condition.

(3) "Controlled substance" has the meaning provided in §60A-1-101 of this code.

(4) "Serious bodily injury" means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death, that causes serious or prolonged disfigurement, prolonged impairment of health, or prolonged loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.

(5) "Test and lock program" means the Motor Vehicle Test and Lock Program, established in §17C-5A-3a and administered by the Division of Motor Vehicles.

(b)(1) Any person who drives a vehicle in this state while he or she is in an impaired state and does so with deliberate disregard for the safety of others, as defined in §17C-5-1 of this code, and such impaired state and deliberate disregard for the safety of others proximately causes the death of any person, including an embryo or fetus as defined in §61-2-30 of this code, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for not less than five nor more than 30 years and shall be fined not less than $2,000 nor more than $10,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for life: Provided, That any death charged under this subdivision must occur within one year of the offense: Provided further, That upon conviction for a violation of this subdivision, the sentence is mandatory, and not eligible for suspension pursuant to the provisions of §25-4-6 of this code, or an order for home incarceration pursuant to the provisions of §62-11B-1 *et seq*. of this

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code. The amendments to this section enacted during the 2026 regular legislative session shall be known as “Baylea’s Law”.

(2) Any person who drives a vehicle in this state while he or she is in an impaired state, and such impaired state proximately causes the death of any person, including an embryo or fetus as defined in §61-2-30 of this code, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for not less than three nor more than 15 years and shall be fined not less than $1,000 nor more than $3,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of 10 years or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That any death charged under this subsection must occur within one year of the offense: *Provided, however*, That if the person has previously been convicted under this section, the person shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for life or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code.

(c) Any person who drives a vehicle in this state while he or she is in an impaired state, and such impaired state proximately causes serious bodily injury to any person, including an embryo or fetus as defined in §61-2-30 of this code, other than himself or herself, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for not less than two nor more than 10 years and shall be fined not less than $1,000 nor more than $3,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of five years or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That if the person has previously been convicted under this section, the person shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for life or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code.

(d) Any person who drives a vehicle in this state while he or she is in an impaired state, and such impaired state proximately causes a bodily injury to any person other than himself or herself, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not less than one day nor more than one year and shall be fined not less than $200 nor more than $1,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of two years or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That if the person has previously been convicted under this section, the person shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for life or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code. Any jail term imposed pursuant to this subsection shall include actual confinement of not less than 24 hours: *Provided, however*, That a person sentenced pursuant to this subsection shall receive credit for any period of actual confinement he or she served upon

arrest for the subject offense.

(e) Any person who drives a vehicle on any public highway or private road in this state: (1) while he or she is in an impaired state; or (2) while he or she is in an impaired state but has an alcohol concentration in his or her blood of less than fifteen hundredths of one percent, by weight, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, may be confined in jail for up to six months and shall be fined not less than $100 nor more than $500, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of six months or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That a person sentenced pursuant to this subsection shall receive credit for any period of actual confinement he or she served upon arrest for the subject offense.

(f) Any person who drives a vehicle on any public highway or private road in this state while he or she has an alcohol concentration in his or her blood of fifteen hundredths of one percent or more, by weight, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not less than two days nor more than six months, which jail term is to include actual confinement of not less than 24 hours, and shall be fined not less than $200 nor more than $1,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of one year or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code. A person sentenced pursuant to this subsection shall receive credit for any period of actual confinement he or she served upon arrest for the subject offense.

(g) Any person who, being a habitual user of narcotic drugs or amphetamines, or any derivative thereof, drives a vehicle on any public highway or private road in this state is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not less than one day nor more than six months, which jail term is to include actual confinement of not less than 24 hours, and shall be fined not less than $100 nor more than $500, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of six months. A person sentenced pursuant to this subsection shall receive credit for any period of actual confinement he or she served upon arrest for the subject offense.

(h) Any person who knowingly permits his or her vehicle to be driven on any public highway or private road in this state by any other person who is in an impaired state is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not more than six months and shall be fined not less than $100 nor more than $500, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of six months or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code.

(i) Any person who knowingly permits his or her vehicle to be driven on any public highway or private road in this state by any other person who is a habitual user of narcotic drugs or amphetamines, or any derivative thereof, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction

thereof, shall be confined in jail for not more than six months and shall be fined not less than $100 nor more than $500, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of six months.

(j) (1) Any person under the age of 21 years who drives a vehicle on any public highway or private road in this state while he or she has an alcohol concentration in his or her blood of two hundredths of one percent or more, by weight, but less than eight hundredths of one percent, by weight, for a first offense under this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than $25 nor more than $100, and have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle suspended by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of 60 days or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code. For a second or subsequent offense under this subsection, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for 24 hours and shall be fined not less than $100 nor more than $500, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of one year or until the person's 21st birthday, whichever period is longer, or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code. A person who is charged with a first offense under the provisions of this subsection may move for a continuance of the proceedings, from time to time, to allow the person to participate in the test and lock program as provided in §17C-5A-3a of this code. Upon successful completion of the program, the court shall dismiss the charge against the person and expunge the person's record as it relates to the alleged offense. In the event the person fails to successfully complete the program, the court shall proceed to an adjudication of the alleged offense. A motion for a continuance under this subsection may not be construed as an admission or be used as evidence.

(2) (A) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, a person shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle suspended or revoked for a minimum period of one year or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code, if the person:

(i) Has previously been convicted under this subsection and is subsequently convicted of an offense under another subsection of this section; or

(ii) Is convicted under this subsection and has previously been convicted of an offense under another subsection of this section.

(B) Nothing in this subdivision permits a shorter period of license revocation, license suspension, or participation in the test and lock program than is mandatory for the specific offense for which the person is convicted.

(3) A person arrested and charged with an offense under the provisions of this subsection or subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), or (i) of this section may not also be charged with an offense under this subsection arising out of the same transaction or occurrence.

(k) Any person who drives a vehicle on any public highway or private road in this state while he or she is in an impaired state and has within the vehicle one or more other persons who are unemancipated minors who have not yet reached their 16th birthday is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not less than two days nor more than 12 months, and shall be fined not less than $200 nor more than $1,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for a period of one year or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That such jail term shall include actual confinement of not less than 48 hours: *Provided, however*, That a person sentenced pursuant to this subsection shall receive credit for any period of actual confinement he or she served upon arrest for the subject offense.

(l) A person convicted of an offense under this section, who has previously been convicted of any offense under this section on one occasion, is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in jail for not less than six months nor more than one year, may be fined not less than $1,000 nor more than $3,000, and shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for 10 years or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code: *Provided*, That if the second conviction is for an offense as described in subsections (b), (c), or (d) of this section and the subsection creating the offense requires a period of incarceration, period of license revocation, or fine that is greater than what is required for a conviction under this subsection, the greater period of incarceration, period of revocation, or fine shall be imposed: *Provided, however*, That this section does not apply to a second conviction that is subject to a period of license revocation under subsection (j) of this section.

(m) A person convicted of an offense under this section, who has previously been convicted of any offense under this section on two or more occasions, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in a state correctional facility for not less than two nor more than five years, shall have his or her license to operate a motor vehicle revoked by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles for life or for a period of time conditioned on participation in the test and lock program in accordance with §17C-5A-3a of this code, and the court may, in its discretion, impose a fine of not less than $3,000 nor more than $5,000: *Provided*, That if the third or subsequent conviction is for an offense as described in subsections (b), (c), or (d) of this section and the subsection creating the offense requires a period of incarceration, period of license revocation, or fine that is greater than what is required for a conviction under this subsection, the greater period of incarceration, period of revocation, and fine shall be imposed: *Provided, however*, That this section does not apply to a third or subsequent conviction that is subject to a period of license revocation under subsection (j) of this section.

(n) For purposes of subsections (l) and (m) of this section relating to second, third, and subsequent offenses, the following events shall be regarded as offenses and convictions under this section:

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(1) Any conviction under the provisions of subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), or (i) of this section, or under a prior enactment of this section, for an offense which occurred within the 10-year period immediately preceding the date of arrest in the current proceeding;

(2) Any conviction under a municipal ordinance of this state or any other state or a statute of the United States or of any other state of an offense which has the same elements as an offense described in subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), or (i) of this section, which offense occurred within the 10-year period immediately preceding the date of arrest in the current proceeding; and

(3) Any period of conditional probation imposed pursuant to §17C-5-2b of this code for violation of subsection (e) of this section, which violation occurred within the 10-year period immediately preceding the date of arrest in the current proceeding.

(4) Any conviction under the provisions of §61-5-17(j) of this code or under a prior enactment of that subsection, for an offense which occurred within the 15-year period immediately preceding the date of arrest in the current proceeding.

(o) A person may be charged in a warrant, indictment, or information for a second or subsequent offense, as described in subsection (j), (l), or (m) of this section, if the person has been previously arrested for, or charged with, a violation of this section which is alleged to have occurred within the applicable time period for prior offenses, notwithstanding the fact that there has not been a final adjudication of the charges for the alleged previous offense. In that case, the warrant or indictment or information must set forth the date, location, and particulars of the previous offense or offenses. No person may be convicted of a second or subsequent offense under this section unless the conviction for the previous offense has become final, or the person has previously had a period of conditional probation imposed pursuant to §17C-5-2b of this code.

(p) The fact that any person charged with a violation of subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), or (g) of this section, or any person permitted to drive as described under subsection (h) or (i) of this section, is or has been legally entitled to use alcohol, a controlled substance, or a drug does not constitute a defense against any charge of violating subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), or (i) of this section.

(q)The sentences provided in this section upon conviction for a violation of this article are mandatory and are not subject to suspension or probation: *Provided*, That the court may apply the provisions of §62-11A-1 *et seq*. of this code to a person sentenced or committed to a term of one year or less for a first offense under this section: *Provided, however*, That the court may impose a term of conditional probation pursuant to §17C-5-2b of this code to persons adjudicated thereunder. An order for home detention by the court pursuant to the provisions of §62-11B-1 *et seq.* of this code may be used as an alternative sentence to any period of incarceration required by this section for a first or subsequent offense: *Provided further*, That for any period of home incarceration ordered for a person convicted of a second offense under this section, electronic monitoring shall be required for no fewer than

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five days of the total period of home confinement ordered and the offender may not leave home for those five days notwithstanding the provisions of §62-11B-5 of this code: And *provided further*, That for any period of home incarceration ordered for a person convicted of a third or subsequent violation of this section, electronic monitoring shall be included for no fewer than 10 days of the total period of home confinement ordered and the offender may not leave home for those 10 days notwithstanding §62-11B-5 of this code.

(r) A person whose license to operate a motor vehicle has been revoked or suspended by the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles pursuant to this section must complete a comprehensive safety and treatment program as set forth in §17C-5A-3 of this code before his or her license to operate a motor vehicle can be reinstated and his or her driving privileges restored.

(s) For any offense for which an alternative revocation period is permitted conditioned upon participation in the test and lock program, an alternative sentence may not be imposed without the consent of the driver.

(t) Upon entering the order of conviction for an offense under this section, or the imposition of conditional probation as provided in §17C-5-2b of this code, the clerk of the court shall immediately transmit the order to the Commissioner of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

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