



Road Traffic Act 1988

1988 CHAPTER 52

PART I

PRINCIPAL ROAD SAFETY PROVISIONS

Motor vehicles: drink and drugs

- 5 Driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle with alcohol concentration above prescribed limit.**
- (1) If a person—
- (a) drives or attempts to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place, or
 - (b) is in charge of a motor vehicle on a road or other public place,
- after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in his breath, blood or urine exceeds the prescribed limit he is guilty of an offence.
- (2) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (1)(b) above to prove that at the time he is alleged to have committed the offence the circumstances were such that there was no likelihood of his driving the vehicle whilst the proportion of alcohol in his breath, blood or urine remained likely to exceed the prescribed limit.
- (3) The court may, in determining whether there was such a likelihood as is mentioned in subsection (2) above, disregard any injury to him and any damage to the vehicle.

Annotations:

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Ss. 4-11 applied (with modifications) (5.8.2011) by [The Road Traffic \(Drink and Drugs\) \(Cambridgeshire Guided Busway\) Regulations 2011 \(S.I. 2011/1652\)](#), regs. 1, 3

Changes to legislation:

There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Road Traffic Act 1988. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 12(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 73\(2\)](#)
- s. 12A-12I inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 73\(3\)](#)
- s. 34A inserted by [2000 c. 37 Sch. 7 para. 6](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The amending provision has been repealed)
- s. 41(2)(m) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 18\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 41(2)(ba) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(3\)](#)
- s. 49(3A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 48\(1\)](#)
- s. 53(6) inserted by [S.I. 2017/849 reg. 3\(e\)](#)
- s. 66(7A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(5\)](#)
- s. 85(1) word substituted by [S.I. 2018/235 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 85(1) word substituted by [S.I. 2018/235 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words substituted by [S.I. 2018/235 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words substituted by [S.I. 2018/235 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words substituted by [S.I. 2018/236 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words substituted by [S.I. 2018/236 Sch. 2 para. 1\(3\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 85(2) added by [1988 c. 54 Sch. 2 para. 17\(c\)](#)
- s. 97(1)(c)(ia) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 6\(2\)\(b\) Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 97(1ZA) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 38\(2\)](#)
- s. 123 123A substituted for s. 123 by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 2](#)
- s. 123(1)(aa) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 123(6A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(3\)](#)
- s. 123A(3) words inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 124(3)-(5) inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 3](#)
- s. 124(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 2\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(4\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 125(2A) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(4\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 125(3A)-(3D) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(3A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(4\)\(f\)](#)
- s. 125(4A)(4B) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(4\)\(g\)](#)
- s. 125(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(3\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125A(5)-(7E) substituted for s. 125A(5)-(7) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 6\(3\)](#)
- s. 125ZA inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 5](#)
- s. 125ZA(2)(b) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(2)(d) and word inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(c) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(c\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)

- s. 125ZA(4)(c) words substituted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(ba)(bb) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(ca) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(d\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126(3A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 126(5) omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 6](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126A inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A omitted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 8A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 3\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(2\)](#)
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 128(1A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(7\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 128(2B) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(7\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 128A inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#)
- s. 128A(4) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(4\)](#)
- s. 128B inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 9](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 128ZA inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(1\)](#)
- s. 128ZB inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 2](#)
- s. 128AZA 128AZB inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA 128AZB inserted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA 128AZB substituted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 128AZA(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 128AZA(4) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 128AZB heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 131(3)(b)(c) substituted for s. 131(3)(b) and word by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(4\)](#)
- s. 131(6) inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(4\)](#)
- s. 131(6) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(9\)](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)
- s. 131(6) substituted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(9\)](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)
- s. 132-133ZA and cross-heading substituted for ss. 132, 133 and cross-heading by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 14](#)
- s. 133(2)(a) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133(2)(b) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133B(2A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 12\(3\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133B(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 12\(6\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)

- s. 133D(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 14\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133D(3A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 14\(4\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 135(2A) inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(9\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 135(3)-(6) substituted for s. 135(3) by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 2\(9\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 140(1)(2) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(2\)](#)
- s. 140(3) s. 140 renumbered as s. 140(3) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(1\)](#)
- s. 141A(5) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 24 Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 143(1A) inserted by [2018 c. 18 Sch. para. 17](#)
- s. 145(3A) inserted by [2018 c. 18 Sch. para. 19\(2\)](#)
- s. 173(2)(g)-(gb) substituted for s. 173(2)(g) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 27](#)
- s. 173(2)(n) and word inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 37\(8\)](#)
- s. 174(1)(da) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 28](#)
- s. 183(6A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 29](#)
- s. 193A(3A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 75\(4\)](#)
- s. 195(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 s. 75\(5\)](#)