



SENATE BILL 648: Winter Sports Safety and Accidents.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-49

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Prepared by: Legislative Analysis
Division Staff

S.L. 2026-49 (Senate Bill 648) does the following:

- Defines "inherent risks of skiing," "season pass," and "ski pass."
- Adds additional duties and responsibilities for skiers, as follows:
 - Remain onsite when the skier collides with another individual, unless leaving is necessary to obtain medical help, or when remaining at the scene of the collision places the skier or others at significant risk of injury.
 - After a collision, provide name and current address to ski patrol, ski area employee, or to each person involved in the collision.
 - No skiing off or outside of boundaries.
 - Load and unload properly from a tramway and use any passenger restraining devices on tramway in accordance with intended purpose, posted instructions, and verbal instructions from the ski area operator.
 - No skiing on a slope that is closed or during a time outside of slope operational hours.
 - Stay clear of snow-grooming equipment, vehicles, lift towers, signs, and any other equipment on ski slopes and ski trails.
 - Heed all information and warnings and refrain from acting in a way that could cause injury.
 - Yield the right-of-way to the downhill skier when approaching or overtaking another skier.
 - When a skier younger than 14 years old is participating in winter sports activities, a parent or guardian must properly supervise the skier.
- Provides additional locations where ski area operators can post signs giving reasonable notice of slope and trail conditions, including at ticket kiosks or online.
- Allows assumption of the risk of the inherent risks of skiing to be an affirmative defense for ski area operators.
- Creates Class 1 misdemeanors for (i) misuse of ski passes and season passes, (ii) unauthorized access to or use of a ski area, and (iii) hit and run ski collision.
- Creates a civil action to recover damages from a skier who (i) misuses a ski pass or season pass or (ii) accesses or uses a ski area without authorization.
- Provides limited immunity for the employee or agent of a ski area operator related to an individual's detention or arrest for misuse of a ski pass.
- Establishes that waivers of liability executed in conjunction with winter sports are enforceable.
- Exempts bona fide volunteers at a ski area, including qualified youth under 18 years old, from minimum wage, overtime, youth employment, and recordkeeping requirements.

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This act becomes effective October 1, 2026, and applies to causes of action arising on or after that date and offenses committed on or after that date.