



# SENATE BILL 648: Winter Sports Safety and Accidents.

2025-2026 General Assembly

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<b>Committee:</b>	Senate Judiciary. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	<b>Date:</b>	June 23, 2026
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Sens. B. Newton, Britt, Daniel	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Debbie Griffiths
<b>Analysis of:</b>	Fourth Edition		Staff Attorney

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**OVERVIEW:** *Senate Bill 648 would amend Chapter 99C of the General Statutes (Actions Related to Winter Sports Safety and Accidents) by:*

- *Adding definitions for "inherent risks of skiing", "season pass", and "ski pass".*
- *Amending the duties and responsibilities of skiers, ski area operators, and parents and guardians of skiers less than 14 years old.*
- *Permitting assumption of risk as an affirmative defense for the ski area operator.*
- *Creating a Class 1 misdemeanor for misuse of a ski pass, the unauthorized use of or access to a ski area, and hit and run ski collision.*
- *Creating a civil action for the ski area operator to recover damages from a skier who misuses a season pass or ski pass, or who accesses or uses a ski area without authorization.*
- *Providing limited immunity for a ski area operator's employee or agent related to an individual's detention or arrest for misuse of a ski pass.*
- *Permitting enforceability of waivers of liability.*
- *Exempting bona fide volunteers at a ski area, including youth under the age of 18 years old, from state minimum wage, overtime, youth employment, and record keeping requirements.*

**BILL ANALYSIS:** Senate Bill 648 would amend Chapter 99C of the General Statutes as follows:

- "Inherent risks of skiing", "season pass", and "ski pass" would be added to the Chapter definitions.
- Additional duties and responsibilities for skiers would be added, including to not ski off or outside of boundaries, to not ski on a slope that is closed or outside of operational hours, to heed all information and warnings and refrain from acting in a way that may cause injury to others, to remain onsite when the skier collides with another individual unless it is necessary to leave to obtain medical help or when remaining at the scene of the collision places the skier or others at significant risk of injury. Skiers involved in a collision would be required to provide their name and current address to the ski patrol, ski area employee, or to each other. A parent or guardian of a skier less than 14 years old who is participating in winter sports activities would be required to properly supervise the skier.
- A ski area operator's duties and responsibilities would be amended, including additional locations where signs may be posted giving reasonable notice of slope or trail conditions.

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- Assumption of the risk of the inherent risks of skiing would be an affirmative defense for the ski area operator.
- Class 1 misdemeanors would be created for misuse of ski passes and season passes, the unauthorized access to or use of a ski area, and hit and run ski collision. A Class 1 misdemeanor is punishable by an absolute minimum of 1 day of community punishment to an absolute maximum of 120 days of active punishment, depending on the defendant's prior record level.
- A civil action would be created to recover damages from a skier who misuses a season pass or ski pass, or who accesses or uses a ski area without authorization.
- A ski area operator's employee or agent would have limited immunity related to an individual's detention or arrest for misuse of the ski pass.
- Waivers of liability executed in conjunction with winter sports would be enforceable.
- Bona fide volunteers at a ski area would be exempt from G.S. 95-25.3 (minimum wage), 95-25.4 (overtime), 95-25.5 (youth employment), and 95-25.15(b) recordkeeping and would include qualified youth under 18 years of age.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This act would become effective on October 1, 2026, and apply to causes of action arising or after that date and offenses committed on or after that date.