



U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

Part 573 Safety Recall Report

26V128

Manufacturer Name: Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing

Submission Date: Mar 05, 2026

NHTSA Recall No.: 26V128

Manufacturer Recall No.: 26TB06 / 26TA06

Manufacturer Information

Population

Manufacturer Name: Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing

Address: 6565 Headquarters Drive
Plano TX, 75024

Total number of potentially involved: 550,007

Estimated percentage with defect: 1%

Vehicle Information

Vehicle 1: 2021-2024 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER HYBRID

Product Category: Light Vehicles

Product Type:

Fuel / Propulsion:

Production Dates: Mar 31, 2021 - Nov 10, 2023

Number of potentially involved: 129,236

Descriptive Information:

(1) Although the involved vehicles are within the above production period range, not all vehicles in this range were sold in the U.S.

(2) This issue only affects the 2021-2024 MY Highlander and Highlander HV vehicles equipped with certain recliner assemblies manufactured by a certain supplier during a certain production period beginning after a design change was made by the supplier and before a 500% sort inspection process was implemented. Other Toyota or Lexus vehicles sold in the U.S. are not equipped with the certain recliner assemblies produced by this supplier during this time period, have a recliner assembly installed with a different orientation, or contain a recliner assembly of a different design. Vehicles with seat backs that were inspected and sorted using the 500% process are still under investigation by Toyota.

Unknown. Toyota is unable to provide an estimate of the percentage of vehicles to actually contain the defect. Whether the recliner assembly teeth fail to fully engage in a locked position that could create the issue in Section 5 depends on various conditions, as described further below. However, as the NHTSA manufacturer portal requires an integer value be entered, Toyota has entered the value "1" in response to this question in the portal. For the purpose of this report, "1" means "unknown".

Vehicle 2: 2021-2024 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER

Product Category: Light Vehicles

Product Type:

Fuel / Propulsion:

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Production Dates: Mar 31, 2021 - Nov 10, 2023

Number of potentially involved: 420,771

Descriptive Information:

(1) Although the involved vehicles are within the above production period range, not all vehicles in this range were sold in the U.S.

(2) This issue only affects the 2021-2024 MY Highlander and Highlander HV vehicles equipped with certain recliner assemblies manufactured by a certain supplier during a certain production period beginning after a design change was made by the supplier and before a 500% sort inspection process was implemented. Other Toyota or Lexus vehicles sold in the U.S. are not equipped with the certain recliner assemblies produced by this supplier during this time period, have a recliner assembly installed with a different orientation, or contain a recliner assembly of a different design. Vehicles with seat backs that were inspected and sorted using the 500% process are still under investigation by Toyota.

Unknown. Toyota is unable to provide an estimate of the percentage of vehicles to actually contain the defect. Whether the recliner assembly teeth fail to fully engage in a locked position that could create the issue in Section 5 depends on various conditions, as described further below. However, as the NHTSA manufacturer portal requires an integer value be entered, Toyota has entered the value "1" in response to this question in the portal. For the purpose of this report, "1" means "unknown".

Defect / Noncompliance Description

Description of the defect or noncompliance:

The subject vehicles are equipped with second row seats that use recliner assemblies to unlock the seat backs, allow for seat back angle adjustment, and lock the seat backs in place once adjustment is complete. Due to a failure to consider the force balance between the locking spring and the return spring during a design change made by the supplier, a combination of recliner return spring orientation and outer clearance between the recliner guide and ratchet may cause the recliner teeth to not fully engage during seat back adjustment. This could lead to the seat back not remaining in a locked position. A seat back that has not been secured in a locked position may fail to properly restrain occupants, increasing the risk of injury in the event of a crash at higher speeds.

FMVSS1:

FMVSS2:

Description of the safety risk, including crash, fire, death, injury:

This could lead to the seat back not remaining in a locked position. A seat back that has not been secured in a locked position may fail to properly restrain occupants, increasing the risk of injury in the event of a crash at higher speeds.

Description of the cause:

Identification of any warning that can occur:

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Component Manufacturer

Tier of Supplier:

Supplier Type:

Name: Toyota Boshoku Indiana

Address: 1698 S 100 W
Princeton IN, 47670

Country: United States

Involved Components

Component Name 1: Frame Sub-Assy, Rear Seat Back, LH

Component Description: Left Hand Second Row Seat Back Frame

Component Part Number: 71018-0E140

Component Name 2: Frame Sub-Assy, Rear Seat Back, LH

Component Description: Left Hand Second Row Seat Back Frame

Component Part Number: 71018-0E150

Component Name 3: Frame Sub-Assy, Rear Seat Back, RH

Component Description: Right Hand Second Row Seat Back Frame

Component Part Number: 71017-0E190

Component Name 4: Frame Sub-Assy, Rear Seat Back, RH

Component Description: Right Hand Second Row Seat Back Frame

Component Part Number: 71017-0E200

Component Name 5: Frame Sub-Assy, Rear Seat Back, RH

Component Description: Right Hand Second Row Seat Back Frame

Component Part Number: 71017-0E270

Chronology

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October 2023 – September 2024

In October 2023, during a routine inspection at a Toyota assembly plant, a second row seat back was found that skipped the first locking position during adjustment, but remained locked in place at subsequent positions. At this time, the Toyota assembly plant and the Supplier initiated a 500% sort inspection activity to identify and contain seats with this issue.

In July 2024, when considering potential countermeasures for the first position skip issue with the Supplier, Toyota was made aware that the Supplier had implemented a design change to the guide and ratchet within the recliner assembly in April of 2021. Because Toyota was not aware that the change had occurred, Toyota began to study the effects of the change on recliner assembly performance.

Toyota hypothesized that several parts, including ones that the Supplier did not change, could have an altered performance as a result of change to the outer clearance between the guide and ratchet. It was theorized that the return spring torque and the locking spring force were becoming imbalanced, which would change the relationship between the teeth of the ratchet gear and pawl.

October 2024 – June 2025

In October 2024, while performing the sort inspection activity, Toyota found a seat back that failed to remain in a locked position after adjustment. Toyota began investigating this new condition with the Supplier and determined that it was possible that the design change made by the Supplier in April 2021 could be contributing to this new condition.

To study the recliner assembly performance, 20 seats were built for replication testing. During replication testing, Toyota confirmed that 5 of the 20 seats contained a seat back that failed to remain in a locked position after adjustment.

July 2025 – November 2025

After replication testing was completed, Toyota began a survey of vehicles in the market to understand the field condition, as Toyota had not received any field reports or customer complaints about this issue at this time. Toyota surveyed and tested second row seats in 343 vehicles and found 12 seats that exhibited failure to remain in a locked position after adjustment. Toyota Field Technical Reports were prepared about these 12 seats.

December 2025 – February 2026

To understand the mechanism, Toyota began to tear down 3 of the 12 seats from the field survey. After teardown, Toyota confirmed its hypothesis that the relationship between the ratchet teeth and the teeth of the pawl had changed due to an outer clearance issue caused by the Supplier's design change, resulting in the teeth of the pawl not fully engaging with the teeth of the ratchet, which could lead to the seat back not remaining in a locked position after adjustment. Toyota also found that the installation orientation of the springs changed the relationship between the teeth of the ratchet gear and pawl.

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Based on the results of the above investigation, Toyota decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall campaign.

As of February 25, 2026, based on a diligent review of records, Toyota's best engineering judgment is that there are 10 Toyota Field Technical Reports and 18 warranty claims on the subject vehicles that have been received from U.S. sources that relate or may relate to this condition and which were considered in the decision to submit this report.

Related NHTSA Recall Number:

Description of Remedy

Remedy Type:

Consumer Advisories: Do Not Drive Park Outside

Description of remedy program:

All known owners of the subject vehicles will be notified to return their vehicle to a Toyota dealer. For all involved vehicles, the dealer will replace the return springs in the recliner assemblies with improved ones, at no cost.

How remedy component differs from recalled component:

Identify how/when recall condition was corrected in production:

Reimbursement Plan

Manufacturer used general reimbursement plan on file.

Recall Schedule

Description of recall schedule:

Notifications to owners of the affected vehicles will occur by May 4, 2026. A copy of the draft owner notification will be submitted as soon as it is available. Notifications to distributors/dealers will be sent on March 5, 2026. Copies of dealer communications will be submitted as they are issued.

Planned Dealer Notification Date: Mar 05, 2026 - Mar 05, 2026 No Dealers

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Planned Interim Owner Notification Date:

No Owners

Planned Remedy Owner Notification Date: Apr 20, 2026 - May 04, 2026

Phased Recall

Date when VIN will be searchable: