

An AAA Foundation study found that aggressive driving may be a factor in more than half of all fatal crashes. Any of the following actions are considered to be signs of an aggressive driver:

- Following improperly
- Improper or erratic lane changing
- Illegal driving on road shoulder, in ditch, or on sidewalk or median
- Passing where prohibited
- Operating the vehicle in an erratic, reckless, careless, or negligent manner or suddenly changing speeds
- Failure to yield right of way
- Failure to obey traffic signs, traffic control devices, or traffic officers
- Failure to observe safety zone traffic law
- Failure to observe warnings or instructions on vehicle displaying them
- Failure to signal
- Driving too fast for conditions or in excess of posted speed limit or racing
- Making an improper turn

Aggressive driving (ticketable traffic offense) becomes road rage (arrestable criminal offense) when it involves assault or violent action against another driver. A separate seven year AAA Foundation study looked at 10,000 road rage incidents and found that they resulted in 218 fatalities and 12,160 injuries. (<https://aaafoundation.org/>).

What can you do to combat aggressive driving? Remember that anytime you are in a hurry and drive in an unsafe manner, you are risking your safety and that of other drivers. You might not be able to control other drivers, but you can control yourself by focusing on your driving and remaining calm. Allow yourself plenty of time to get to your destination and obey all traffic laws.

Don't engage with aggressive drivers. Instead, stay out of their way and avoid eye contact. When it is safe to do so, contact law enforcement at (352) 955-1818 or dial *FHP (347) on your cell phone.

CONTACT Us:

9-1-1 FOR EMERGENCIES

352-955-1818 FOR NON-EMERGENCIES

ACSO Important Phone Numbers

ACSO Main Administration	352.367.4000
Crime Prevention Unit	352.374.1800
Crime Stoppers & Gun Bounty	352.372.7867
Dept. of the Jail	352.491.4444
Evidence Section	352.367-4076
Human Resources	352.367.4040
Narcotics Tip Line	352.374.1849
Patrol	352.367.4101
Public Information Office	352.367.4050
Property Unit	352.367.4078
Records Bureau	352.367.4006
Victim Advocate Unit	352.367.4199



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DISTRACTED & AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

According to the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration (NHTSA), Americans spend more than 84 billion hours driving each year. Approximately six percent of your waking hours are spent behind the wheel. With so much time spent driving, it is little wonder that 42,795 people lost their lives in a traffic crash on one of America's roadways in 2022. (the most recent year statistics are available).



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DISTRACTED DRIVING

An average of 3,000 people die each year in traffic crashes due to crashes caused by distracted drivers. That equates to an average of 8-10 people killed every single day in this country by a distracted driver.

Distracted driving takes three main forms:

- ⇒ **Visual** - taking your eyes off the road.
- ⇒ **Manual** - taking your hands off of the wheel
- ⇒ **Cognitive** - taking your mind off of driving.

Texting while driving is the worst offender because it involves all three distractions. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off of the road for an average of five seconds. At 55 mph, that is like driving the entire length of a football field with your eyes closed. At least one person dies every day in this country as a direct result of a texting driver.



Talking on a cell phone is not much better. According to a University of Utah study, talking on a cell phone delays a driver's reactions more than having a blood alcohol level of .08 percent, which is the legal threshold for intoxication. This is true regardless of whether the device is hand-held or hands-free. If you must take a call, pull off the road and stop in a safe place before doing so. Your life and someone else's may well depend on it. **Please hang up and drive!**

These activities are also considered to be distracted driving:

- ⇒ Eating or drinking
- ⇒ Grooming
- ⇒ Talking to passengers
- ⇒ Adjusting the music
- ⇒ Strong emotions

Basically, anything that takes your mind, your hands or your eyes off of the road and what you are doing is considered distracted driving.

DISTRACTED TEEN DRIVERS

Teenagers are more likely to drive distracted and be injured or killed in a crash than any other age group. In fact, traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for teens age 15-19.



State Farm/Flickr

Texting increases a teen driver's chance of becoming involved in a crash by 23%.

Teens can also be distracted by other teenaged passengers, which is why 47 states have an intermediate learner stage where the number of passengers under 21 (18 in some states) is restricted. Research shows that the risk of a

fatal crash increases in direct relation with the number of teenagers in a vehicle. While Florida does not have an intermediate stage where passengers are restricted, experts recommend that teen drivers do not carry passengers for at least the first year of driving.

DISTRACTED EMPLOYEE DRIVERS

Traffic crashes are the number one cause of workplace death. In fact, regardless of whether a crash occurs while an employee is on the clock or off, the employer must absorb the costs through lost productivity, damaged vehicles or equipment, medical expenses, or through liability for the crash if their on-duty employee was at fault. To limit exposure, workplaces should set firm expectations for their drivers, such as:

- ⇒ Using a seat belt at all times.
- ⇒ Obeying speed limits and other traffic laws.
- ⇒ Avoiding any medications that could make the driver drowsy.
- ⇒ Disallowing cell phone usage while driving.

For more information on distracted driving, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website at <https://www.nhtsa.gov>.



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AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Aggressive driving and road rage also contribute to large numbers of fatal accidents. The NHTSA defines aggressive driving as occurring when "an individual commits a combination of moving traffic offenses so as to endanger other persons or property."