

Traffic Law Changes Greet Motorists in Coming Months

Florida lawmakers made several changes to Florida's traffic laws during the 2010 Legislative session in an effort to enhance public safety and to create the safest possible driving environment for our residents and visitors. Key changes that affect our law enforcement partners include the following items:

- The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles will no longer maintain a central repository of short-form crash reports. All local law enforcement agencies completing the short-form report should maintain their own copies.
- Florida law no longer requires drivers to sign the uniform traffic citation unless it is a criminal violation or a violation that requires a mandatory hearing.
- Traffic offenders may elect traffic school for a violation up to five times in a lifetime rather than five times in 10 years.
- Florida law adds law enforcement agencies and county traffic operations offices to the list of parties authorized to receive a crash report within the first 60 days.
- Bicyclists must remain in the bicycle lane if a lane is provided.
- Motorcyclists may display a license plate perpendicular to the ground if the operator also uses a transponder.
- A driver may place a Global Positioning System device on a windshield if it does not hinder the driver's line of sight.
- A driver whose license has been permanently revoked for Driving Under the Influence may submit an application to the Department for an Employment Purpose Only license upon meeting all other requirements of law and after the expiration of 10 years from the last conviction for DUI.
- Florida law authorizes local governments to enact ordinances that permit certain vehicles on sidewalks unless the ordinance would violate federal law.
- Florida law increases the fines for street racing.
- Florida law now authorizes and provides specific guidance on the use of red light cameras.

A complete list of changes affecting motor vehicle laws is available online at www.flhsmv.gov; click "Laws." If you have any additional questions about a particular issue, please contact our Legislative Affairs Office at 850-617-3195.



Traffic Fatality Rate Falls to a Record Low in 2009

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Florida Department of Transportation announced in a June 14 statewide news release that more lives than ever are being saved on Florida's roadways. Based on an analysis of vehicle miles traveled in 2009, Florida's fatality rate dropped to 1.3 fatalities per 100 million miles traveled, the lowest rate ever reported in the Sunshine State. Both agencies attribute the downward trend to the recent passage of the primary safety belt law, as well as numerous education and awareness campaigns and the strategic enforcement efforts of law enforcement throughout the state. This marks the fourth consecutive year in which both the number of traffic fatalities and the fatality rate have declined. A complete analysis of the data is in our annual *Florida Traffic Crash Statistics Report*. Just visit our website at www.flhsmv.gov and click on the link for *Statistics / Publications*.

DHSMV Continues to Emphasize Education and Enforcement

Throughout the spring and summer months, the Department has continued to identify at-risk groups for targeted education and enforcement efforts. The following initiatives helped promote safe driving habits in order to create the safest possible driving environment for Florida's 15.5 million licensed drivers and 80 million visitors each year:

- On March 1 - 15, the Florida Highway Patrol participated in the statewide Click It or Ticket campaign and focused on drivers who did not fasten their safety belts. Troopers issued nearly 37,000 traffic citations. Of those, more than 6,500 were for failure to buckle-up. They also made 311 arrests for Driving Under the Influence of drugs or alcohol; cited more than 10,000 drivers for speeding; and assisted nearly 10,000 motorists.

- The Department participated in the Dori Slosberg Foundation's Tallahassee Safety Week on March 2 - 6. During the week, the Department brought safety messages to teens and parents at several events in the Capital City, including an education blitz at local high schools and a movie theater; a press conference at the Capitol to promote the *Drive with CARE* program; and a child safety seat round-up at a local mall.

- On March 12, we published a statewide press release with helpful safety tips for motorists and pedestrians to coincide with the arrival of Daylight Saving Time. The time change typically presents visibility challenges for those Floridians walking or driving to school or work – especially those at bus stops.

- As teens prepare each year for prom night and graduation day, the Department encouraged them to drive safely and responsibly. Gov. Charlie Crist proclaimed April 18 – 25 *Teenage Safe Driving Awareness Week* in Florida. DHSMV developed Drive with CARE (Courtesy, Attention, Responsibility and Experience), which includes a [website](#) and a [driving guide](#), as well as a presentation for parents with teen drivers. During the months of March and April, we coordinated with driver's education instructors to talk to teens at schools throughout the state as they ramped up for end-of-school-year celebrations.

- The Department brought together Floridians whose lives have been impacted by motorcycle crashes, riders, law enforcement officers, safety experts and advocates on May 4 at news conferences held simultaneously in seven locations throughout the state. The Department hosted the events to educate Floridians about motorcycle safety and Florida's requirements for riders, and to promote general awareness among all motorists to share the road. Governor Crist proclaimed May as *Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month* in Florida to highlight the importance of the public safety issue.

- State troopers were out in full force during the Memorial Day holiday weekend, May 28 - 31. All uniformed FHP personnel, including those normally assigned to administrative duties, patrolled interstates and other major state roads throughout the four-day holiday period. FHP Auxiliary and Reserve troopers also volunteered to augment the Patrol's forces. The Patrol issued more than 14,000 citations during the heightened enforcement period, including 125 for DUI; 2,711 for failure to buckle-up; and 4,965 for speeding. Governor Crist also proclaimed May as *Florida Safety Belt Awareness Month*.

- On June 22, the Department (in conjunction with AAA, AARP and other stakeholders) held the first of several CarFit events, where certified technicians assisted motorists in adjusting their cars to fit them as drivers. This program is especially valuable to Florida's mature drivers who often need assistance with ensuring that their vehicles are in good working order and properly set up to meet their driving needs.

The Department is currently planning additional initiatives for the summer and fall months ahead, and we welcome the partnership of our local law enforcement agencies. For more information about these and other education and enforcement programs, please contact us at FHP@flhsmv.gov.

Stop on Red, Kids Ahead

National School Bus Safety Week falls on Oct. 18-22 this year. Using the week as a springboard, state agencies are teaming up to bring the public safety topic to the front and center. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is working with the departments of Transportation and Education to develop *Stop on Red, Kids Ahead*, a statewide campaign that will help motorists understand Florida's laws for passing a school bus. We are collaborating to arm educators, law enforcement officers and safety advocates with a toolkit of information and resources that easily can be plugged in to promote the campaign in communities across Florida. The campaign website, FloridaSchoolBusSafety.gov, serves as the information portal for the campaign. It provides graphics, safety tips and related links, and soon it will provide a video, brochures and much more! In addition to the awareness campaign, the Florida Highway Patrol invites city police departments to participate in enforcement initiatives throughout the state that will coincide with *National School Bus Safety Week*. Stay tuned to FloridaSchoolBusSafety.gov this summer for more materials that will help you keep students in your community safe on their way to and from school.



The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles is tweeting! You can find and even follow the Department on Twitter under the name:

@FDHSMV

Department Expands Partnerships with Tax Collectors

For many years the Department has enjoyed a strong partnership with Florida's elected tax collectors who serve as our agents for processing motor vehicle title and registration transactions. More recently, this partnership has grown to include tax collectors that voluntarily assumed responsibility for certain driver license related transactions. However, the 2010 Legislature has now mandated that the Department and tax collectors bring forward a plan by Feb. 1, 2011, that will transition all driver license work to the tax collectors by June 30, 2015. This transition of driver license services is designed to enhance the efficiency with which government provides motorist services, including the concept of a "one-stop shop" for our customers. Today, 46 tax collectors operate 128 driver license offices throughout the state, and the Department is looking forward to strategically expanding these services with our partners.

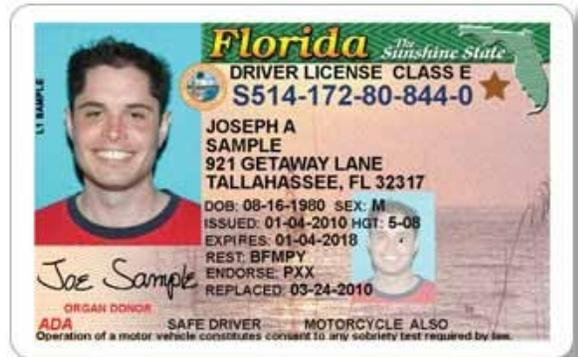


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More Than 1 Million New Driver License And Id Cards Issued

Beginning Jan. 1, new documentation requirements took effect for Florida residents wishing to obtain a driver license or identification card. Customers who wish to obtain a new license, legally change their name prior to their renewal date, or immediately replace a lost or stolen license or ID card are required to visit a driver license office and show proof of identity, Social Security number and residential address (two items). To prepare for a visit to a driver license office, customers are visiting the Department's interactive website, www.GatherGoGet.com, to find out how and when to gather the right documents, go to a driver license office and get a new card. The Department, in partnership with many of Florida's county tax collectors, offers driver license and ID card services. While the new documentation requirements are now in effect, Florida residents may not have to visit a driver license or tax collector office right away. Since inception of the new requirements, more than 1.5 million new cards have been issued with the gold star in the upper right corner indicating compliance with the new identification requirements. It is important to note that other than the gold star insignia, there are no other changes to the card. The successful implementation of the new requirements enhances the safety and security of Florida's driver license and ID card processes and systems, benefitting our customers, the business community and law enforcement.



The new Florida driver license and ID card features a gold star.

New Partnerships Enhance Use of Technology

The Department recently entered into new partnerships with several local law enforcement agencies that allow the expanded use of automated license plate readers in an effective and efficient manner. This new program provides suspended driver and/or expired license plate data directly to the Charlotte, Alachua, Lee, Seminole and Volusia County Sheriffs Offices, as well as to the Winter Springs, Aventura and Sarasota Police Departments. The data helps officers quickly recognize potential problem motorists so that officers can respond promptly. In our continuing effort to support highway safety education and enforcement initiatives statewide, the Department will continue to work with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and local law enforcement agencies to expand this program in the future.

