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Hands-Free Distracted Driving Bill Goes Into Effect July 1st

LaGrange, Ga. June 6, 2018 – The new Hands-Free Distracted Driving bill goes into effect July 1st.



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This new law will require citizens to use hands-free technology while using cellphones and other electronic devices while driving.

Current Georgia law already prohibits texting and driving. That law went into effect July 1, 2010.

This new law will prohibit drivers from:

- Holding or supporting a phone or device while driving
- Using a hand held phone or device to write, send, or read texts, message, emails while driving
- Watching a video on your phone or device while driving
- Recording a video on your phone or device while driving

Under the new law, Georgia drivers **WILL** be able to:

- Talk on the phone or text using hands-free technology
- Use a GPS system
- Wear/Use a smartwatch
- Use an earpiece to talk on the phone
- Use phones in an emergency situation like a traffic accident or medical emergency
- Listen to a music app
- Talk on the phone if you are legally parked, not at a stop light



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Law enforcement, first responders, and utility employees responding to a utility emergency will be exempt from the law.

“LaGrange Police investigated on average 2,400 motor vehicle collisions every year. Last year there were 713 individuals who were injured and one person who died. This law is important,” said LPD

“Whether you call it distracted driving or inattentive driving the fact remains that the use of hand-held cellular telephones and other electronic devices dramatically increases your risk of becoming involved in a motor vehicle collision.”

For nearly a decade the National Safety Council, a nonprofit and nongovernmental group, has been calling on state and federal lawmakers to ban the use of cell phones and text-messaging devices while driving citing studies showing that this practice is as dangerous as driving drunk.

"Studies show that driving while talking on a cell phone is extremely dangerous and puts drivers at a four times greater risk of a crash," said Former President and NSC CEO Janet Froetscher.

"Driving drunk is also dangerous and against the law. When our friends have been drinking, we take the car keys away. It's time to take the cell phone away."

Sixteen states and the District of Columbia currently prohibit all drivers from using hand-held cell phones while driving. Thirty-eight states and the District of Columbia ban all cell phone use by novice or teen drivers and forty-seven states ban text messaging by all drivers.

The LaGrange Police Department will implement a 30 day grace period where only warnings are issued for observed violations unless the distracted driving was clearly the contributing factor in a collision.

The new law takes effect July 1st throughout the state of Georgia.

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