



MEDIA RELEASE



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Sandra DiRuzza
Chief of Police

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2024 PUT THE PHONE AWAY or PAY!

Mamaroneck, NY The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is launching a national high-visibility enforcement effort, April 1-8, 2024, to deter distracted driving. Law enforcement officers nationwide will work together to enforce texting and distracted-driving laws and remind drivers: *Put the Phone Away or Pay*. This effort comes during April, which is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

According to NHTSA, in 2021 there were 3,522 people killed and an estimated additional 362,415 people injured in traffic crashes involving distracted drivers.

"Distracted driving is a leading cause of vehicle crashes on our nation's roads, and most of this distraction can be attributed to cell phone use," said Chief Sandra DiRuzza "People know using their phone while driving is dangerous and often illegal, but they do it anyway, and put themselves and others at risk. Drivers will see increased law enforcement efforts, as officers will be stopping and ticketing anyone who is caught texting and driving. If you text and drive, you will pay," she said.

Violating New York State's distracted-driving laws can be costly.

<i>Violation</i>	<i>Fine (minimum/maximum)</i>	<i>Points</i>
First Offense	\$50/\$200	5
2 nd Offense (in 18 months)	\$50/\$250	5
3 rd Offense + (in 18 months)	\$50/450	5

Drive Safe Every Trip

NHTSA urges drivers to put their phones away when behind the wheel. If you are the driver, follow these steps for a safe drive:

- If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location.
- Ask your passenger to be your "designated texter." Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.

- Cell phone use is habit-forming. Struggling to not text and drive? Activate your phone's "Do Not Disturb" feature, silence notifications, or put your phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of your vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

Cell phone use while driving is dangerous and illegal. Break the cycle. Remember: *Put the Phone Away or Pay*. For more information, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/distracted-driving>.

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