



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA AVAILABILITY: Transportation Cabinet, KSP and AAA officials will be at the Spindletop Driver Licensing Regional Office, located at 2624 Research Park Dr., in Lexington April 1, 2026 from 10 a.m. – 11a.m. to share driver tips and discuss the Kentucky Safe Teen Driving Challenge.

Team Kentucky Urges Motorists To Put the Phone Down To Keep Travelers Safe

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 31, 2026) – April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month and Kentuckians are reminded to drive distraction-free to keep themselves and others safe on the road. As part of this month’s awareness efforts, a high-visibility enforcement campaign, “Put the Phone Away or Pay,” will run April 6–13 to reduce distracted driving through increased enforcement and public education.

Over the past decade, distracted driving has become one of the leading causes of vehicle crashes on our nation’s roads. Based on statewide law enforcement collision data maintained by Kentucky State Police, there were 5,503 crashes in 2025, 18 of which were fatal, linked to distracted driving, including cellphone use.

"There is nothing more important than your safety and the safety of your fellow Kentuckians," said **Gov. Andy Beshear**. "We ask that everyone do their part and put the phone down while driving – it could help save a life, prevent a life-altering injury or spare lifelong regret."

Officials from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s Office of Highway Safety and the Kentucky State Police (KSP) joined forces to support the enforcement campaign spearheaded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

To encourage safe driving behaviors early in life, teens are encouraged to participate in this year's [Kentucky Safe Teen Driving Challenge](#). Teens aged 15 -19 with a learner's permit or driver's license can register through April 16. Using a smartphone app, participants' driving behaviors will be evaluated on five core safe habits, see real-time insights to help adapt driving behaviors, and compete to be named as Kentucky's safest teen driver. A total of \$10,000 in cash prizes, sponsored by Intoximeters, AAA East Central and AAA Blue Grass, will be awarded to the top five scorers. The teen with the highest overall score will win \$3,000 and their school will be recognized.

"Teen drivers are some of our most vulnerable on the road due to their inexperience," said Kentucky Office of Highway Safety Executive Director Ryan Fisher. "We are committed to keeping them safe and reminding all drivers that no text or phone call is worth a life. Stay focused and stay safe."

There are three types of distraction when behind the wheel: visual, manual and cognitive. According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), any one of these can be dangerous on its own. Using a phone while driving is especially risky because it combines all three.

In Kentucky, drivers under 18 are prohibited from using a personal communication device while the vehicle is in motion, except in emergencies to contact law enforcement or medical services ([KRS 189.294](#)).

"Distracted driving is one of the dangers on our roadways that is completely preventable," KSP Public Affairs Branch Commander Sgt. Sudduth said. "Whether it's a cellphone, adjusting the radio, or anything else that takes your attention away from driving, those few seconds can change lives forever. The Kentucky State Police is committed to protecting the people of this commonwealth, and that includes encouraging drivers to stay focused and make safety their top priority every time they get behind the wheel."

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Editor's note:

- Buckle Up/Phone Down campaign radio spots, ringtones, and videos may be downloaded/viewed at bupdky.com.
- Kentucky Safe Teen Driving Challenge assets can be downloaded [here](#).
- Assets from today's event will be available after it concludes [here](#).

