

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were nearly 325,000 people injured in distraction-related crashes in 2023. Help improve road safety by doing your part and encouraging others to put down the phone.



## 3 TYPES OF DISTRACTIONS



### **VISUAL**

takes your eyes  
off the road



### **MANUAL**

takes your hands  
off the wheel



### **COGNITIVE**

takes your mind  
off driving

Your phone involves all three



**south carolina**  
**DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC SAFETY**  
PROTECT. EDUCATE. SERVE.

[SCDPS.SC.GOV/HandsFree](https://scdps.sc.gov/HandsFree)

# **NEW STATE LAW**

South Carolina Hands-Free and Distracted Driving Act



**HANDS  
FREE SC**

HANDS-FREE LAW STARTS  
**SEPTEMBER 1, 2025**

## South Carolina Hands-Free and Distracted Driving Act

SC CODE § 56-5-3890

WARNINGS BEGIN: **SEPTEMBER 1, 2025**

CITATIONS BEGIN: **FEBRUARY 28, 2026**

### What is the new hands-free law?

The hands-free driving law aims to reduce the number of distracted driving collisions on South Carolina roads. The South Carolina Hands-Free and Distracted Driving Act is in effect as of September 1, 2025.

### What does the hands-free law prohibit?

This new law prohibits drivers from using mobile electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle. A “mobile electronic device” refers to a cellular phone, portable computer, GPS receiver, electronic game, and similar items.

#### According to the law, drivers are not allowed to:

- Hold or support a mobile electronic device with any part of their body. This does not prohibit the use of an earpiece or device worn on the wrist used for voice-based communication.
- Use a mobile electronic device to read, compose, or transmit texts, emails, app interactions, or website information.
- Watch motion, including a video, movie, game or video call.

### What are the exceptions to the hands-free law?

Exceptions to the hands-free law include using a device in hands-free mode; using a device while legally stopped; or reporting a wreck, emergency, or safety hazard to a public safety official.

### What are the penalties for the hands-free law?

- **First offense: \$100**
- **Second and subsequent offenses (within three years): \$200 and two points on the driver's license.**

#### Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Holders:

- Those who hold a CDL and operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) should note that these violations count as serious offenses under *49 CFR 383.51 Disqualification of Drivers*.
- Under *49 CFR 383.51* and *SC Code of Laws Section 56-1-2110*, if a CDL holder is convicted of two disqualifying violations within a three-year period while operating a CMV, the CDL may be disqualified for 60 days by the SC Department of Motor Vehicles.

## Putting the phone down saves lives

Because collisions can be prevented when we choose to stay focused behind the wheel.



The *Hands Free SC* campaign educates the public about the state's new hands-free law.

**SCAN TO LEARN MORE**

*(when you're not driving)*



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