



SOUTH CAROLINA HANDS-FREE AND DISTRACTED DRIVING ACT

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.



3 TYPES OF DISTRACTIONS



VISUAL

takes your eyes off the road



MANUAL

takes your hands off the wheel



COGNITIVE

takes your mind off of driving

Your phone involves all three

Putting the phone down saves lives

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



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

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

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

