



Texting While Driving in Virginia

Did you know, since July 1, 2013 texting while driving became a primary traffic offense in Virginia?

It is illegal for any person operating a moving motor vehicle on the state's highways to use any handheld personal communications device to manually enter multiple letters or text in the device as a means of communicating with another person. It is also unlawful to read any email or text message currently transmitted to or previously stored within the device.

Exceptions are made for 1) emergency vehicles; 2) an operator who is lawfully parked or stopped; 3) the use of factory-installed or after-market global positioning systems (GPS) or wireless communications devices used to transmit or receive data as part of a digital dispatch system; or 4) any person using a handheld personal communications device to report an emergency.

Violation of any provision of this section shall constitute a traffic infraction punishable, for a first offense, by a fine of \$125 and, for a second or subsequent offense, by a fine of \$250. Every person convicted of reckless driving under the provisions of this article who, when he committed the offense, (i) was driving without a valid operator's license due to a suspension or revocation for a moving violation and, (ii) as the sole and proximate result of his reckless driving, caused the death of another, is guilty of a Class 6 felony.

The punishment for every person convicted of reckless driving under the provisions of this article who, when he committed the offense, was in violation of § 46.2-1078.1 shall include a mandatory minimum fine of \$250.