



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE STOPPED

## INTRODUCTION

You look into your side mirror and see a patrol car or other law enforcement vehicle behind you with its emergency lights flashing. A officer is walking up to your car. This can be a stressful experience. However, knowing what to do, and what not to do will make the experience less stressful and will help ensure your safety, the safety of other motorists, and the safety of the officer. This brochure is designed to inform you of what to do when stopped by a law enforcement officer.

## THE MOTORIST

Missouri Law Section 304.022, RSMo. requires a motorist to pull as far as possible to the right of the traveled portion of the highway and stop when a police car approaches displaying emergency equipment. The motorist must remain stopped until the patrol car has passed, or a police officer directs them otherwise.

When you see flashing red and blue lights on a patrol car, don't panic. Simply slow down, signal your intention to turn onto the right shoulder, and drive off the roadway to the right as far as is safe. It is important that neither you nor your passengers make any sudden or undirected movements! The officer does not know who you are or what your intentions are.

## THE OFFICER

After an explanation as to why you were stopped, the officer may ask for your driver license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance identification card. While the officer is approaching your vehicle,

DO NOT attempt to reach under your seat, into a glove compartment, into a console, or any other place hidden from the officer's view. The officer will sometimes complete the contact without requiring you to leave your car. At other times the officer may ask you to take a seat in the patrol car. Court cases permit the officer to decide which procedure is safest for the officer. As you exit your car, always keep your hands in plain view of the officer.

If a traffic ticket is issued by the officer, please maintain a polite and cooperative attitude. Do not attempt to debate the merits of the traffic ticket on the side of the highway. The court is the proper place to contest any grievance.

## IMPORTANT NOTE

If you are alone and uncertain if the person trying to stop you is a legitimate police officer, pull over, but keep your car doors locked. When your vehicle is then approached, roll your window down only far enough to talk. Express your concern and desire to drive to the nearest public place. Most police officers will understand and allow this, unless they suspect you are an impaired driver or your license is suspended. Once you have driven to a public place, remain in your secured vehicle until proper identification is made.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A traffic ticket is a legal document issued by an officer for traffic violations. A space for your signature is provided near the bottom of the traffic ticket. By signing the traffic ticket, you are not admitting guilt. Your signature merely acknowledges receipt of the traffic ticket and your promise to appear in court on the given court date, or that you will contact the court prior to the court date for disposal of the case. Refusing to sign the traffic ticket will not eliminate your obligation to appear in court. Once the officer gives you a copy of the traffic ticket, you have been served a summons (subpoena) to appear in court.

Failure to appear on your scheduled court date is a violation of law and may result in additional charges being filed against you and/or your driver license being suspended.

In nearly all court cases where a fine is levied, court costs must be paid. Even if you pay the fine by mail, the court case must still be processed through the court system. Therefore, the court costs must be paid. Court costs help fund the court system. Fine monies help fund Missouri's public schools. Fine monies do not fund the Highway Patrol. The officer may provide you with an information sheet explaining the court's mail-in procedures. Officers do not collect fines.

If you lose your copy of the ticket you must contact the associate circuit court of the county in which the ticket was written. It is the responsibility of the violator to handle all traffic tickets in a timely manner. A warrant may be issued by the court when an individual fails to comply with the requirements of a traffic ticket.

## CONCLUSION

Traffic laws are enacted to ensure the safety of the motoring public. Help make Missouri's highways safer — please obey our traffic laws. Feel free to ask the officer questions if you receive a traffic ticket. You may also call the county prosecuting attorney of the county where you are to appear in court. Employees at the nearest Highway Patrol troop headquarters or local law enforcement agency will also be willing to assist. A traffic ticket issued by one officer cannot be changed by another law enforcement agency employee.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If you are the subject of a traffic stop, you have legal rights created by the Constitution and the law. These include the right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure, the right to be free from being forced to incriminate yourself, which is commonly referred to as the right to remain silent, and the right to an attorney. Please consult an attorney licensed to practice in the State of Missouri if you have questions about these and other rights.

**Emergency Assistance**  
**1 (800) 525-5555 or cellular \*55**  
**Road Conditions**  
**1-888-275-6636**

# RESPONSIBLE DRIVING

## Understanding the Dangers of Driving While Intoxicated and Driving Under the Influence of Drugs

### CONGRATULATIONS!

If you are reading this document, it is likely that you recently earned the privilege of driving a car in the state of Missouri.

Driving is a privilege that offers many people the freedom to go places. Whether it opens opportunities for you to get a job, take your brother or sister to the store for your parents, or go to school events, driving is a privilege that must be taken seriously.

As with all privileges in life, you must respect the rules associated with driving or your privilege to drive will be taken away from you. Driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs is serious and dangerous. Driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs not only puts your life in jeopardy, but also the lives of your friends, family, and other innocent drivers.

You have probably thought about all the freedom that you will have now that you have your driver license or permit. But have you thought about the consequences that will result if you abuse your new privilege? This pamphlet is not intended to make you afraid of driving; it is intended to educate you to be a safe and responsible driver.

Avoid driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs at all costs. The cost could be your life or the life of someone you care about dearly.

### FACTS!

Even passengers who are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs can often cause the driver to lose focus.

It is not okay for a designated driver to have any alcohol or other drugs, not even one drink.

A five ounce glass of wine or a wine cooler has the same amount of alcohol as a can of beer or one ounce (a shot glass) of hard liquor.

Time is the only thing that will sober a person who has been drinking. Coffee, a cold shower, or exercise will not make someone sober.

It takes one hour for a person's liver to metabolize one alcoholic beverage.

### What should I do if someone I am with has had too much to drink or has taken drugs?

- Drive the person home if you have not been drinking.
- Ask someone who is sober to drive the person home.
- Call a taxi or other transportation service.
- Take the person's keys if you must.
- Call a parent. Any parent would prefer a child be safe rather than risking his or her life.
- Call the police if the person insists on driving.

### KNOW THE LAWS!

#### **Abuse and Lose Law -- You Use - You Lose**

In Missouri, drivers under 21 who commit the following offenses will lose their driver license:

- Driving while intoxicated or driving with a blood alcohol content over the legal limit
- Possession of alcohol while operating a motor vehicle
- Possession of a controlled substance (drugs)
- Altering or modifying a driver license, or providing misinformation or misrepresentation of your identity to obtain a driver license.

#### **Chemical Refusal Law**

Refusing to take a test to determine your blood alcohol content will result in the revocation of your driving privilege for 1 year.

#### **Zero Tolerance Law**

Drivers under the age of 21 can lose their driver license if their blood alcohol content is a mere .02%. One drink for most people will result in a .02% or higher blood alcohol content.

#### **Graduated Driver License Law**

In order to qualify for a full driver license, young drivers are now required to go through several stages in the licensing process. First, you must drive on an instruction permit for at least six months (182 days). When you turn 16, you may "graduate" to an intermediate driver license.

- You may not "graduate" to an intermediate license if you have had any alcohol-related convictions in the last 12 months or any traffic convictions in the last 6 months. When you turn 18, you may "graduate" to a full driver license.
- You may not "graduate" to a full driver license if you have had any alcohol-related offenses or traffic convictions within the last 12 months.

Conviction of an alcohol-related offense will prohibit you from "graduating" to the next stage of licensing for one year.

### HOW DOES ALCOHOL AFFECT A DRIVER?

- Alcohol acts like an anesthetic, dulling areas of the brain that enable people to make sensible decisions, resulting in poor judgment.
- Drinking slows reflexes and hinders coordination.
- Drinking may cause drowsiness, increasing the chances for a traffic crash.
- Alcohol can cause double or multiple vision and reduce side vision.

### ALCOHOL: MYTH VS. REALITY!

**MYTH:** Alcohol gives you energy.

**REALITY:** Alcohol is a depressant. It slows down your ability to think, speak, and move.

**MYTH:** Coffee, a cold shower, or exercise will sober you up.

**REALITY:** Only time will sober a person up. In fact, it takes an hour for your body to get rid of one fluid ounce of alcohol.

**MYTH:** Beer or wine will not affect you like hard liquor.

**REALITY:** No matter what type of drink, the alcohol in the drink can affect you.



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