

Fact Sheet | New Cell Phone Driving Laws



Got cell phone?
18 and over, hands-free.
Under 18, it's hands off.
Starting July 1st.

Watch the Road.org



Keep both hands on the
wheel, not on your phone.
It's the law.

Watch the Road.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES, June 30, 2008 — Watch the Road and the City of Los Angeles are alerting drivers to California's two new cell phone laws, which will change their driving behaviors beginning July 1.

The first law (VC §23123) mandates that drivers discontinue using hand-held cellular devices while driving. Instead, drivers 18 and older must use hands-free devices. The second law (VC §23124) stipulates drivers younger than 18 will not be allowed to use any electronic device whatsoever.

Quick Facts: VC §23123 and VC §23124

- ❖ Drivers under 18 may not use any electronic devices, including wireless telephones, pagers, laptops or other electronic communication or mobile services devices.
- ❖ Law enforcement officers will begin ticketing for offenses to these laws on July 1. Officers can pull drivers over singularly for either infraction.
- ❖ The base fine for a first offense for either law is \$20; subsequent convictions incur \$50. With the addition of penalty assessments, a first offense is \$76 and a second offense is \$190, according to the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule. The violation is a reportable offense, although a point to drivers' records will not be added by the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- ❖ In emergencies, drivers are allowed to use their cell phones to call law enforcement, fire departments, medical providers or other emergency services agencies.
- ❖ Hands-free ear pieces may be used by drivers 18 or older, but both ears may not be covered.
- ❖ For drivers 18 and older, dialing on cell phones and text messaging is not specifically prohibited, but law enforcement and transportation agencies strongly discourage doing so while driving. Law enforcement officers may cite drivers who are text messaging if the officer believes the driver was distracted and not operating the vehicle safely.
- ❖ The laws do not apply to vehicle passengers.