



Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.



Distracted Driving

As the police services continue campaigns targeting distracted drivers, officers are preparing for more severe penalties that could see drivers pay more in fines and have their licence suspended.

For the past four years on OPP-patrolled roads, inattentive driving, while using electronic devices, has been the leading cause of the majority of fatalities in Ontario. There were 83 fatalities on OPP patrolled roads due to inattentive driving compared to 46 alcohol and drug-related fatalities.

As of January 1st, if you are convicted of distracted driving for the first time, you could receive a fine of up to \$1,000 (currently it's \$490) and three demerit points on your licence. A second conviction could mean a fine of up to \$2,000 and a seven-day licence suspension and a third offence could mean a fine of up to \$3,000 and a 30-day suspension. If convicted of multiple distracted driving-related offences could also receive six demerit points.

Distracted driving charges aren't restricted to the use of cellphones. Police could charge drivers if officers observe anything that distracts motorists from the road, for example eating, putting on make-up, turning around to grab something from the back seat, etc.

Tips to Avoid Distracted Driving:

- Turn off your phone or switch it to silent mode before you get in the car - put it in the glove compartment (lock it, if you have to) or in a bag on the back seat.
- Before you leave the house, record an outgoing message that tells callers you're driving and you'll get back to them when you're off the road. Some apps can block incoming calls and texts, or send automatic replies to people trying to call or text you.
- Ask a passenger to take a call or respond to a text for you. If you must respond, or have to make a call or send a text, carefully pull over to a safe area.
- Silence notifications that tempt you to check your phone.