



Town of Ponce Inlet POLICE DEPARTMENT



Frank Fabrizio ★ Police Chief

****New Law July 1, 2019****

Texting while driving has been illegal in Florida for years as a secondary offense. Meaning officers could only conduct a traffic stop if they observed another traffic violation and subsequent to that violation also observed you texting and driving. Truthfully, we have been behind the curve for some time. Effective July 1, 2019 Florida's new Texting & Driving Law will make texting and driving a primary offense in the state of Florida. However, officers will only give warnings to motorists until January 1, 2020, at which time officers will begin issuing citations.

The new law also has a provision for handheld devices being banned in construction/school zones (except for emergencies) that will take effect October 1, 2019, and officers will adhere to warnings for primary offenses until January 1, 2020. While the law does ban texting while driving, it does permit the use of cell phones (except in construction or school zones). Therefore, you can still use them for GPS/Maps Navigation and making phone calls.

In 2016, the state of Florida had nearly 50,000 vehicle crashes that were attributed to distracted driving. Furthermore, it was reported that distracted driving accounted for approximately 233 deaths and thousands of injuries in the same year. The nationwide statistics are staggering with nearly 1.6 million crashes per year and 400,000 injuries.

The Ponce Inlet Police Department strongly encourages "Hands Free" devices for everyone while traveling the roadways.

Drive Safe,

Chief Frank Fabrizio

