

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Department of Public Safety Reminds Parents to Stress Safety during Spring Break

MONTGOMERY — With spring break season's arrival comes heavier than usual traffic. The Alabama Department of Public Safety strongly encourages motorists -- particularly young drivers and their parents -- to make highway safety a priority.

"Parents, let's be proactive this spring break. Take time to sit down with your young drivers to discuss safety before heading to the beach or other spring break destinations, especially if your teens will be traveling with friends," said Col. Hugh B. McCall, director of the Department of Public Safety and the state's highest-ranking state trooper. "Let's remind them **to buckle up, to focus on the road, to avoid such distractions as texting while driving and to obey speed limits and other traffic laws.**"

McCall said parents with teen drivers also should review Alabama's Graduated Driver License law, a three-stage licensing process that places certain restrictions on young drivers to ensure they acquire experience behind the wheel before driving without supervision or restrictions.

Stage I (learner's permit): A 15- to 17-year-old is authorized to drive when accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or licensed driver age 21 or older who is occupying the front passenger seat.

Stage II (restricted license): A 16- to 17-year-old who has passed the road skills test may drive without supervision, but he or she must not have more than one passenger in the vehicle other than parents, legal guardians or family members; must not use any handheld communication devices while driving; must not drive between midnight and 6 a.m. unless accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or licensed driver age 21 or older with parent or legal guardian's consent. *(Exceptions on time restriction include driving to or from an event sponsored by a school or religious organization and going to or from a place of employment.)*

Stage III (unrestricted license): A 17-year-old who has held a Stage II license for six months or longer may obtain an unrestricted license. Anyone who is age 18 or older may bypass the first two stages and obtain a Stage III license after passing the road skills test.

Additional Information on the Graduated Driver License law and more can be found at dps.alabama.gov.

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