



# National Distracted Driving Coalition:

## National Action Plan

**Vision:** To accelerate national efforts to implement effective interventions to prevent distraction and encourage attentive driving by eliminating distractions.

**Mission:** To promote innovative and collaborative approaches to create a traffic safety culture of attentive drivers.

### Data

1. **Summarize available data sources to describe how these data are collected and used, as well as the strengths and limitations.** This resource would be valuable to allow organizations to spend less time seeking data and more time affecting change. This resource would also be useful to inform policymakers, legislators and potential funders and guide data-driven decisions. The Coalition will summarize available sources and previous reviews and identify states tracking distraction as a contributing factor in crashes.
2. **Communicate the importance of collecting prevalence data to measure and track distracted driving.** Demonstrate data gaps and the impact of under-reporting of distracted driving incidents to emphasize the importance of good data to guide legislation, programs and policies. The Coalition will track improvements to Fatality Analysis Reporting System data quality lead by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2021 PRIORITY)
3. **Identify what measures are available with respect to the effectiveness of distracted driving laws, and what information is or should be collected by jurisdictions to guide evaluations.** Underscore the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of distracted driving laws and practices in order to increase efficiency and accelerate change to reduce distracted driving.
4. **Recommend that NHTSA continue to share guidance regarding challenges and best practices in identifying and documenting distracted driving crashes.**

### Education

5. **Create a centralized online resource for distracted driving materials.** Develop and launch an accessible distracted driving website which consolidates and shares research knowledge, tools and resources for diverse stakeholders to support distracted driving prevention initiatives. This website will be supported by a communications strategy to increase awareness and enable organizations to spend less time looking for information and more time taking action. (2021 PRIORITY)



6. **Conduct a national survey to identify mechanisms to change driver behavior and barriers which impede behavior change.** This initiative is a foundation for a national education campaign. Solutions and messaging associated with an educational campaign should be connected to the health belief model with respect to behavior change strategies. A focused effort to reach the diverse audience in the US and customizing our messages is essential. Many surveys have been conducted, but more exploration and analysis of strategies that work can help develop the most accurate and compelling messages. This survey is examining the potential of blocking apps as well as encouraging industry and the public to turn on these features. (2021 PRIORITY)
7. **Recommend that NHTSA evaluate the effectiveness of current national campaign themes (“U Drive. U Text. U Pay.”) and whether new approaches may be needed.**
8. **Develop educational messaging to increase awareness about the risks associated with handsfree communication technologies.** This initiative is important to increase awareness that handsfree phone use is not risk-free, and to communicate the limitations associated with other handsfree technologies as they become available. Such messaging can help inform drivers and encourage safe choices while driving. (2021 PRIORITY)
9. **Develop or identify campaign materials to educate passenger vehicle drivers about sharing the road with large trucks, with an emphasis on distraction-related risks.** These educational materials should be shareable and easily integrated into campaigns developed and delivered by many organizations at state and national levels. The FMCSA has “Our Roads, Our Safety Coalition” and may have some materials already available.
10. **Work with children and youth to increase distracted driving prevention strategies.** Cultivating a younger generation of drivers who avoid distractions while driving can accelerate a shift in social norms to discourage distraction. Young children and young drivers are important influencers of parental behaviors if they are empowered to speak up when parents are driving distracted. (2021 PRIORITY)
11. **Understand the brain. Provide insight into the brain and ways increased access to advanced technology underlies distracted driving behaviors.** Summarize available research to educate the public about how the excessive use of technologies (i.e., cell phones, in-cab infotainment systems) can tap into naturally occurring neural mechanisms and are related to increased risk for distracted driving.

## Employers

12. **Promote best practices for workplace distracted driving policies to inspire corporate leadership and encourage a stronger workplace safety culture which can**

**also influence families, peer groups and the community at large.** The National Safety Council, the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration have completed important work on this issue. A review of existing materials can inform a distracted driving program toolkit with clear and actionable steps to guide implementation in the workplace. The Coalition can help increase awareness by sharing these tools through their networks to help reach employers across sectors. Encouraging the use of driver monitoring technologies can help also increase safety. (2021 PRIORITY)

13. **Compile and share risk information and best practice tools for employers to inform policies on the use of communication tools.** This will include educating employers about differences between handheld and hands-free communication technologies and the differences between in-vehicle conversations and phone conversations. The goal of this action item is to help employers understand distracted driving risks and empower them to use evidence to support the development and implementation of workplace policies.

## Enforcement

14. **Encourage and support initiatives to provide training about distracted driving prevention and distracted driving laws to law enforcement.** Work with the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Sheriffs Association to encourage the widespread adoption of workplace safety policies and training and emphasize the importance of leadership to support the consistent enforcement of laws.
15. **Explore advanced technologies to increase the enforceability of distracted driving laws. Research cutting-edge technologies and showcase their abilities to law enforcement.** Encourage law enforcement to pilot new technologies and utilize proven technologies to enforce distracted driving laws. Encourage the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to provide grant funding for automated technologies.

## Legislation

16. **Prepare templates to guide the development of policy/legislative briefing documents that stakeholders can use to inform legislative initiatives.** These educational documents can build a foundation for national and state leadership to advance distracted driving policy by sharing model language and articulating research findings about risks in lay language. It is very important to be sensitive to the reality of existing policies and legislation and not harm existing progress. A focus should also be to encourage studies to evaluate the effectiveness of laws. (2021 PRIORITY)
17. **Identify and promote equitable distracted driving enforcement initiatives.** Equitable enforcement is a priority consideration in the development and implementation of distracted driving legislation. As part of this action item, the Coalition can encourage the collection of traffic stop data to both determine effectiveness of and assess equity impacts of distracted driving enforcement initiatives.

## Technologies

18. **Summarize research studies evaluating new and emerging in-vehicle technologies (e.g., driver monitoring cameras) with the goal of increasing awareness of how vehicle technologies can help reduce distraction, and the limitations of these technologies.** The Coalition will use research to identify opportunities to enhance the safe use of in-vehicle technologies and actively engage with automakers to encourage the adoption of effective technologies.
19. **Review studies and analyses of existing and emerging Do Not Disturb While Driving (DNDWD) Apps and share the findings with the general public.** This action item will focus on eliminating barriers to use and promoting the automatic use of these apps through the actions of drivers and technology companies.
20. **Share research and knowledge with vehicle safety and consumer advocates to inform approaches to federal mandates and/or voluntary guidance for vehicle-based and wireless technologies to prevent distracted driving.** Encourage and promote ongoing evaluations of these technologies.
21. **Make distracted driving a national priority in road safety.** Identify and cultivate relationships with the U.S. Congress to share knowledge and research to support national policy priorities related to distracted driving with resources allocated to accomplish the actions listed above.