

A state law that prohibits texting while driving, which was passed by the legislature last fall, recently went into effect – making Pennsylvania the 35th state to put a ban on this form of distracted driving.

Under the new law, texting while driving is considered a primary offense – meaning that drivers can be pulled over if caught texting, even if they’re not committing any other moving violations at the time. Those who are caught breaking this law will face fines of around \$135.

According to PennDOT, the new law applies to texts that are sent from any Interactive Wireless Communication Device (IWCD) while driving, which includes any smart phone, portable computer, personal digital assistant or wireless phone. In addition to text messages, the new law applies to emails, instant messages and any other written communication that can be composed on an IWCD.

Critics Respond to New Law

Although critics of the texting while driving law think it’s a step in the right direction toward reducing distracted driving related car accidents on Pennsylvania’s roads, they believe that the measure has some problems. For one, there may be a problem enforcing the law because, as currently written, it only applies to drivers who are in a moving vehicle. In addition, if law enforcement officers do not actually witness drivers sending a text, they will have to rely on phone records or a confession from the drivers themselves.

Another problem with the law is that, critics say, it’s not broad enough. Although texting while driving is banned, drivers can still use their handheld devices for other purposes, such as using a GPS program.

If You Need Legal Help

If you have been injured by a motorist who was texting while driving, contact a qualified personal injury lawyer as soon as possible. An attorney can help you determine if the driver is liable for your injuries and whether or not you are eligible to receive compensation. By filing a lawsuit, you may be able to get compensation for the injuries you sustained, as well as pain and suffering.