



# ANNUAL

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# REPORT 2021

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## **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

# **Division of Highway Traffic Safety Annual Report**

**FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021**

Philip D. Murphy – Governor

Sheila Y. Oliver – Lieutenant Governor

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS), by N.J.S.A. 27:5F-18 et seq., is responsible under its Director for developing and implementing, on behalf of the Governor, the New Jersey Highway Safety Program, a comprehensive plan to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage resulting from traffic crashes. The plan is developed in accordance with the U.S. Highway Safety Act of 1966 (P.L.89-564) and any acts amendatory or supplementary thereto. DHTS is also responsible for procuring and administering federal highway traffic safety funds, and processing and administering grants to State agencies, political subdivisions and nonprofit organizations. As the State's lead highway traffic safety agency, DHTS promotes traffic safety and coordinates the traffic safety activities of State and local agencies as part of a comprehensive statewide traffic safety program. The Highway Safety Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 (FFY 2021), developed in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 402, is part of this effort.

DHTS is located in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The Division Director is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the Governor. By the terms of N.J.S.A. 27:5F-32, the Director is specifically appointed as the Governor's Representative for highway traffic safety matters to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), although as a functional matter, this also entails all dealings with the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation. The Director is also chairperson of the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (N.J.S.A. 27:5F-31). The Director's administration of the Division is under the auspices of the Governor and the Attorney General.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of DHTS is the safe passage of all roadway users in New Jersey as we move towards zero fatalities.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Highway Safety Plan Annual Report for FY 2021 (October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021) addresses the use of monies from the annual allotment of Section 402 State and Community Highway Safety funds. The report also addresses the use of funds from the following grant programs: Section 405 (b,c,d,e,f and h), National Priority Safety Program Grants. Funds from these sections supported projects in the following areas: alcohol and other drug countermeasures; occupant protection; pedestrian and bicycle safety; community traffic safety programs; police traffic services and training; traffic records; other vulnerable road users; and paid and earned media. The DHTS awarded 563 federally-funded projects in FY 2021. The amount of funds allocated to those projects totaled over \$19,000,000 in both new allocations and carryover monies. Projects were implemented by State and local entities and nonprofit organizations. The Division also oversees and coordinates the State Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund, N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.8, the Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund and the Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund.

The annual report provides an overview of the projects funded during the year and the status of the performance measures identified in the FY 2021 Highway Safety Plan. DHTS will continue to conduct a thorough review of all of its performance measures to determine where additional resources are needed to improve traffic safety in New Jersey.

The cooperation and participation of governmental and private sector partners of the DHTS are critical to the overall success of the highway safety program. The principal forum for these traffic safety partners is the Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (HTSPAC), which consists of 21 members, appointed by the Governor, who assist in recommending and developing traffic safety policy and programs. HTSPAC membership was updated and reconstituted in FY2021.

In addition, NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration provide leadership and technical assistance to DHTS. Other partners include the Division of State Police; NJ Motor Vehicle Commission; Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control; Department of Transportation; Department of Education; Department of Health; Office of Emergency Medical Services; Administrative Office of the Courts; Department of Community Affairs; local law enforcement agencies, including the Association of Chiefs of Police and the Traffic Officers Association; universities; advocacy groups, including AAA and the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ; the Transportation Management Associations; as well as other private sector businesses and organizations. All of these partner organizations play a key role in developing and implementing New Jersey's traffic safety program.

## **COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

The worldwide Covid-19 public health crisis continued to impact traffic safety in the state in FY2021, though thankfully not to the extent of FY2020. New Jersey was able to carry out its full schedule of four statewide enforcement mobilizations in FY2021 as well as the annual seat belt usage survey.

Preliminary results from the mobilization campaigns, as well as other DHTS grant programs, indicate that traffic enforcement activity declined during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in FY2020. This trend continued into FY2021. In addition, an increase in risky driving behaviors first noted during the pandemic in FY2020 also continued into FY2021. DHTS is reviewing these factors against the recent increases in motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey, and keeping abreast of these trends on a national level as well.

## **2020 NJ STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN**

DHTS is committed to assisting in the implementation of the 2020 SHSP tasks throughout its grant programs. 35 key SHSP emphasis area tasks were identified in the 2020. As of November, 2021, the average level of progress on these tasks was 38%:

### Equity Priority Actions

Engage local advocates to share grant program opportunities with underserved communities.

Identify best practices for considering equity in grant programs.

Identify best practices for integrating equity consideration with Highway Safety Manual analyses.

Identify and define underserved communities' parameters to be used for SHSP.

Average progress 39%.

### Intersections Priority Actions

Map high-risk county and municipal intersections.

Best practices for identifying county and municipal road safety audit locations.

Map high-risk pedestrian intersections on local roadway system.

Proven traffic control and operational countermeasure best practices.

Develop tools for reducing right angle and left turn crashes at county and municipal intersections.

Average progress 49%.

### Lane Departure Priority Actions

Map lane departure fatalities and serious injuries on local roadway system.  
Identify resources to assist road owners in lane departure crash locations.  
Best practice strategies to improve data collection process for roadway fixed objects.  
Peer exchanges related to lane departure best practices.  
Plan to share specifications, details, and Crash Modification Factors.  
Average progress 37%.

### Pedestrians and Bicyclists Priority Actions

Establish a Complete Streets Task Force  
Research automated speed enforcement and vulnerable road users policies/practices.  
Identify pedestrian and bicyclist design guidance best practices.  
Develop a strategy for performance-based implementation of Street Smart campaign statewide.  
Identify best practices for safety at transit stops.  
Average progress 26%.

### Driver Behavior Priority Actions

Identify best practices for law enforcement training.  
Identify best practices for police recruit training.  
Identify driver behavior training, education, and marketing program best practices.  
Identify media best practices to reduce aggressive driving.  
Identify best practices to increase teen driver seatbelt compliance.  
Identify underserved communities with an overrepresentation of driver behavior related fatalities and serious injuries.  
Average progress 36%.

### Other Vulnerable Road Users Priority Actions

Identify mature driver high-risk locations.  
Increase motorcycle rider safety education.  
Identify work zone safety best practices.  
Increase crossing guard training.  
Develop safety education content to protect crossing guards and children walking/biking to school training programs.  
Average progress 38%.

### Data Priority Actions

Identify NJTR-1 crash report critical fields.  
Identify the police departments not completing critical fields on the NJTR-1 crash report.  
Identify NJTR-1 crash report fields that are often not completed.

Identify NJTR-1 crash report common errors.

Research best practices in collecting and calculating bicycle and pedestrian volumes.

Average progress 45%.

## TRAFFIC CRASH DATA

New Jersey, like the nation as a whole, saw an increase in fatal motor vehicle crashes in 2020. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a decrease of approximately 13.2% in vehicle miles traveled, preliminary data indicates that motor vehicle fatalities increased to a twelve year high of 38,680 deaths (nationally). In 2020, New Jersey experienced 549 fatal crashes that resulted in 587 fatalities. This is an increase of 5.2 percent from 558 in 2019, which equates to 1.61 fatalities per day. Fatalities in 2021 are trending upward and are 18 percent higher than 2020 at the time of this report. Preliminary data shows a reduction in the number of passengers fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes in 2021 while increases are noted in the other categories.

The total number of persons seriously injured in motor vehicle-related crashes increased dramatically in 2019 due to an injury classification definition change on the New Jersey Police Accident Report (PAR – NJTR-1). In 2019, there were 3,047 persons seriously injured in motor vehicle-related crashes, compared to 1,284 in 2018. In 2020, despite a 31 percent reduction in overall crashes on New Jersey’s roadways, serious injuries only declined 7.7 percent (6.5% crash reduction) resulting in 2,811 serious injuries. At the time of this report, only 47,773 crash records for 2021 have been processed, resulting in 645 serious injuries. Serious injury motor vehicle crashes will be closely monitored as the 2021 data continues to be processed. An updated curriculum component was recently added to the NJTR-1 refresher trainings to address the updated definition changes pertaining to the Final Rule in FY2020.

Alcohol played a significant role in motor vehicle crashes in 2020, with 151 alcohol-impaired fatalities reported. This represented a 17 percent increase from the 129 alcohol impaired driving fatalities reported in 2019. Over 25 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey were a result of one or more drivers driving under the influence of alcohol in 2020. At the time of this report, there have been 46 confirmed alcohol involved fatalities reported in 2021 with additional alcohol-related cases pending toxicology report results. Pedestrian fatalities are also a major area of concern in New Jersey as they accounted for nearly 30 percent of total fatalities in the state in 2020. At the time of this report, there have been 196 pedestrians killed compared to 160 at this same time in 2020. Bicyclist fatalities increased 38 percent in 2020 (18) compared to 2019 (13). Year-to-date for 2021 there has been one additional bicycle fatality (19 compared to 18).

New Jersey has made great progress in reducing the number of teen drivers (16-20 years of age) involved in fatal crashes. However, teen driver involved fatalities increased 18 percent in 2020 (64 involved drivers) compared to 2019 (54 involved drivers). At the time of this report, preliminary figures are showing a decline in young driver involvement in fatal crashes in 2021.

Motorcycle fatalities (drivers and passengers) decreased by 8 percent in 2020 from 85 in 2019 to 78. Also, the number of fatally injured motorcycle riders that were unhelmeted decreased from 15 in 2019 to 8 in 2020.

Driver behavioral issues such as speeding, driving distracted, and driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol continue to plague our roadways. Over the past five years (2016-2020) more than 55 percent of all crashes in New Jersey were the result of speed, distracted driving, and/or impaired driving. 2020 presented new pandemic related traffic safety challenge with abnormalities in travel patterns and personal driving routines.

Traffic related deaths continue to be the leading cause of accidental deaths in New Jersey and the nation. Through enforcement and education programs targeting the motoring public, we will continue to work towards the reduction of motor vehicle fatalities on our roadways. State, county and local agencies along with our other non-profit partners remain steadfast in our cooperative effort to promote effective strategies and programs to reduce overall motorist fatalities on our roads. With the help of our partners, DHTS will continue to strive to meet the goals outlined in the Highway Safety Plan while looking for new, innovative ways to meet these challenges.



## **PROGRAM FUNDING**

### **Federally Funded Programs**

#### **A. Section 402 Program**

The State and Community Highway Safety Grant program is administered at the federal level primarily by NHTSA and partially by the Federal Highway Administration. The funds are intended to be used as seed money for innovative programs and as leverage to garner other State, local and private resources. The 402 program provides funds to improve the enforcement of existing laws, change public attitudes through education, and build State and local leadership in highway safety. DHTS awarded 60 grants in FY2021, totaling \$7,958,514.

402 program highlights included: First time grant funding to the state's Police Traffic Officers Association; a grant to the NJ Institute of Technology for the state's 2021 seat belt usage survey; 18 comprehensive police enforcement grants; 11 county and regional Community Traffic Safety Grants; New Jersey's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor and Statewide Law Enforcement Liaison; and large police training and public education grants with Rutgers University, Kean University, and the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ.

#### **B. Section 405(b) Occupant Protection Program**

The Section 405(b) Occupant Protection Program provides funds to implement effective occupant protection programs to reduce deaths and injuries resulting from individuals riding unrestrained or not properly restrained in motor vehicle child safety seats. DHTS awarded 46 grants, totaling \$1,197,604.

#### **C. Section 405(c) State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements**

The Section 405(c) Traffic Records Program establishes a State traffic safety information system improvement grant program. The program encourages the coordination of safety data systems across agencies and the development and maintenance of a comprehensive traffic safety information system. Projects that improve the timeliness, completeness, uniformity, accessibility, and quality of crash data qualify for funding. DHTS awarded three grants totaling \$891,063.

#### **D. Section 405(d) Impaired Driving Countermeasures**

The Section 405(d) Impaired Driving Countermeasures Program provides funds to implement programs to reduce traffic safety problems resulting from individuals driving motor vehicles

while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or the combination of alcohol and drugs. DHTS awarded 134 grants in FY2021 totaling \$4,190,125.

#### **E. Section 405(e) Comprehensive Distracted Driving**

The Section 405(e) Comprehensive Distracted Driving Program encourages States to enact and enforce laws prohibiting texting while driving and youth cell phone use while driving. Funds are used to educate the public about the dangers of texting or using a cell phone while driving and for enforcement of distracted driving laws. DHTS awarded 145 grants with this funding, totaling \$2,233,203.

Section 405(e) regulations allow for 50% of the annual award to be reallocated into other programmatic areas. DHTS exercised this option and utilized new and carryover 405(e) flexed funds as follows: \$396,000 for 61 impaired driving crackdown grants; \$1,022,368 for 15 full year sustained enforcement grants targeting impaired driving, distracted driving, seat belt usage, and speeding; and \$499,800 for 65 grants for the May, 2021 Click It or Ticket mobilization.

#### **F. Section 405(f) Motorcycle Safety**

The Section 405(f) Motorcycle Safety Program provides funds to implement programs that will reduce the number of crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving motorcyclists. DHTS awarded one grant, totaling \$120,000 under this program.

#### **G. Section 405(h) Non-motorized Safety**

The Section 405(h) Non-motorized Safety Program earmarks funds to train law enforcement on State laws applicable to bicycle and pedestrian safety; enforcement mobilizations and campaigns designed to enforce pedestrian and bicycle laws; and public information and awareness programs designed to inform motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists of State laws. DHTS awarded 33 grants, totaling \$948,301 under this program.

## **State Funded Programs**

### **A. Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund**

The Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund (DDEF), established under NJSA 39:4-50.8, imposes a \$100 surcharge on each drunk driving conviction. Monies in this fund are managed by DHTS and distributed to police agencies to increase enforcement of drunk driving laws. Every law enforcement agency whose officers make arrests leading to DWI convictions and imposition of the surcharge are entitled to grants representing its proportionate contribution to the fund. Law enforcement agencies, through application to DHTS and approval of the Director, may use DDEF monies for supplemental DWI enforcement patrols and other appropriate DWI tools, equipment, and countermeasures. DDEF funds totaling \$1,539,070.96 were made available to law enforcement agencies during State Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) to help reduce alcohol-related crashes and fatalities.

### **B. Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund**

The Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund is a repository for monies provided pursuant to subsection c. of N.J.S.A. 39:4-36. Under the statute, a motorist must stop for a pedestrian crossing the roadway at an intersection. Failure to stop may result in a fine not to exceed \$200.00. A total of \$100.00 of such fine is dedicated to the Fund that is used to make grants available to municipalities and counties with pedestrian safety problems. During 2021, 21 pedestrian safety enforcement and education grants were funded in the amount of \$454,665.

### **C. Motorcycle Safety Education Program**

The NJ Motor Vehicle Commission administers the state's motorcycle safety education program. The program provides for a course of instruction and training designed to develop and instill the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits necessary for the safe operation of a motorcycle. Beginner and advanced rider training programs, along with three-wheel training, are conducted throughout the State. Training was provided to 9,216 riders during 2021 at private locations by State approved motorcycle safety providers, which was increase from 5,356 riders trained in 2020.

#### **D. Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund**

The Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund is a separate, non lapsing, dedicated account. All fines imposed and collected as a result of enforcement of N.J.S.A. 39:4-77.1 shall be deposited into the Fund. Monies in the account can be used to offset the costs associated with the establishment of a public awareness campaign and to develop a grant program that private companies can use to purchase, install, and maintain equipment and technology to remove snow and ice from commercial motor vehicles. Seven grants were awarded in FY2021 to purchase commercial vehicle snow removal equipment. A listing of the 16 snow removal devices funded to date through this program is posted on the DHTS website.

## DESCRIPTION OF FUNDED PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

### Alcohol and Other Drug Countermeasures – Project Summaries

#### DWI Training/Drug Recognition Expert Program

Critical standardized training courses were offered to law enforcement personnel in FY2021 relating to the detection, apprehension, processing, and prosecution of DWI offenders. The DWI Detection Standardized Field Sobriety Testing five-day course was delivered to 366 officers. The Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training program was conducted, as well, with 62 police officers trained and certified as DRE's and another 58 officers certified as DRE Instructors. Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) courses were held for 482 police officers, which was a significant increase from 2020 when Covid-19 related restrictions impacted program delivery. The ARIDE program addresses the gap in training between the Standard Field Sobriety Testing and DRE programs by providing officers with general knowledge related to drug impairment and driving. In addition, the DRE Drug Impaired Driving (DID) course was delivered to another 659 officers. The ARIDE and DID training does not qualify participants as drug recognition experts, but is intended to make individuals competent in evaluating and documenting suspected abuse and impairment of drugs.



The DRE program trains law enforcement officers to determine whether an individual is under the influence of drugs through a visual evaluation.

The DRE Call-Out program establishes policy and procedures for the utilization of DREs to evaluate and assess motorists who are arrested for driving under the influence of intoxicating drugs and alcohol. The DRE call-out program was operational in twelve counties in



FY2021: (Bergen, Atlantic/Cape May, Hudson, Monmouth, Morris/Sussex, Ocean, Somerset/Hunterdon, Middlesex, and Union). The program utilizes qualified DRE personnel, as part of a shared services agreement with local police departments, to assist in identifying and removing intoxicated drivers from the roadway. The DREs are available to all agencies in the county on a call-out basis and for support at DWI sobriety checkpoints. Grant funding was also provided to the New Jersey DRE Association to support its efforts to better train and equip New Jersey DREs.

## Alcohol Breath Test System

Under the authority of the Attorney General, the Alcohol/Drug Test Unit within the Division of State Police spearheads the continual process of training and re-certifying police officers throughout the State to operate the approved chemical breath test instrument (Alcotest System). In order to support and maintain the training program, funds were used to purchase the equipment necessary for training and re-certifying police officers as breath test operators. The number of officers (local, county, and state) re-certified in FY2021 on the use of the Alcotest was 4,553.

The new Alcotest 9510 breathalyzer instrument will continue testing, pilot program and validation in FY2022.

## Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Campaigns

From December 4, 2020 – January 1, 2021, the state’s law enforcement community teamed up to carry out the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2020 Year End Holiday Crackdown*. The goal of this campaign was to mobilize the State’s police departments during the critical end-of-year holiday period and to raise public awareness about the dangers of impaired driving through a combination of high visibility enforcement backed by targeted media activities. During this campaign, 114 agencies received overtime grant funds totaling \$656,000. The campaign resulted in 590 DWI arrests, 3,121 speeding summonses and 817 seat belt summonses.



To help spread the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* message, police departments engaged their communities through the dissemination of press releases, public service announcements and displays on variable message boards.

The *2021 Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Statewide Crackdown*, took place August 20 – September 6, 2021, to coincide with the national enforcement crackdown. For this campaign, \$505,000 in overtime grant funding was awarded to 98 agencies. The campaign resulted in 518 DWI arrests, 3,023 speeding summonses and 1,274 seat belt summonses.

## **Underage Enforcement**

Funds were provided to the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control to implement the *Cops In Shops Summer Initiative* program. The program funded overtime salaries for police officers to work in an undercover capacity in liquor stores, restaurants and bars in an effort to identify underage individuals who purchase or attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages and adults of legal drinking age who purchase alcoholic beverages for underage persons.

Enforcement efforts were held from May 26, 2021 through September 15, 2021 in Atlantic, Cape May, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties. The retail license establishments displayed posters warning underage individuals that police officers may be present in an undercover capacity.

A total of 22 towns participated in the Summer Initiative program. The enforcement effort resulted in the arrest of 62 individuals. There were 130 total offenses charged in the Summer Initiative, 36 of which were for underage individuals: (1) entering a licensed premises for the purpose of purchasing alcoholic beverages and/or (2) misrepresenting or misstating their age with the use of fictitious identification. There were several ordinance violations related to underage possession of alcohol as well.

Funds were also provided to enforce Alcoholic Beverage Control acts and other related laws pertaining to underage alcohol use and/or intoxicated patrons. The use of undercover police personnel is intended to identify underage individuals who order and/or consume alcoholic beverages as well as those who serve them. Appropriate criminal and/or administrative charges were initiated against underage individuals, those providing alcoholic beverages to underage persons as well as liquor licenses that allowed this activity on their premises. 101 licensed establishments were identified for investigation of underage or intoxicated patron drinking activity. 12 administrative violations were identified and submitted to the Division's Enforcement Bureau for prosecution.

A local underage enforcement grant was provided to the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office to implement undercover operations at locations licensed to serve alcoholic beverages. The purpose of the project was to identify individuals under the legal age attempting to purchase alcohol or providing alcohol to underage patrons and those utilizing fraudulent identification to purchase alcohol. The Cape May project reported carrying out 19 enforcement details during the grant year, resulting in 23 underage patrons being charged. There were also a number of violations issued against liquor establishments relating to the various Covid-19 restrictions that were in effect.

The Clinton Township Police Department utilized grant funding for a combination education/enforcement program focusing on the regional high school within its jurisdiction. Though delivery of the program was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, more than 250 high school juniors and seniors received impaired driving education either in person or through online formats.

## College Programs

During FY2021 several New Jersey colleges and universities delivered important campus-based educational programs relating to substance abuse and healthy decision making.

Despite significant pandemic related challenges, TCNJ was successful in providing training, education, and prevention programs. Through TCNJ’s ADEP (Alcohol and Drug Education Program) initiative, 198 students received *Training for Intervention Procedures* (TIPS), which is a two-hour skill based training to prevent intoxication, underage drinking, and drunk driving by enhancing the fundamental "people skills" of college students. 98 students participated in BASICS, Choices, or Cannabis 101. These are individual and group interventions, which provide education, personalized feedback, and skills training relating to substance use. This year's virtual Peer Institute included 157 students and advisors who participated in three days of intensive training on how to effectively promote healthy behaviors and mitigate at-risk behaviors. Additionally, TCNJ provided 1,200 students with self-care bags, which included information promoting healthy and safe behaviors while approximately 1,500 students completed the “Binge Thinking!” online training module.



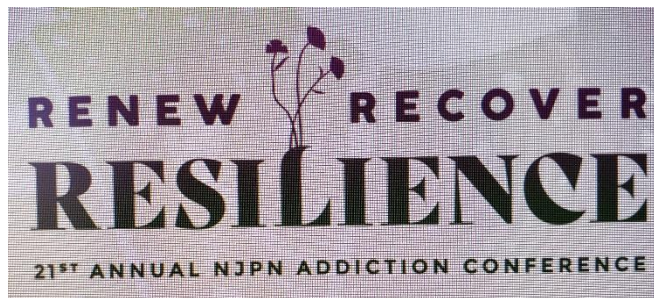
Grant funding enabled the Peer Health Advocates (PHA) program at William Paterson University to promote the HERO Campaign’s designated driver messaging at numerous events throughout the campus. Alcohol awareness and educational materials were distributed as part of freshman orientation and welcome events in September as well as throughout the year. Twitter and Instagram platforms, campus bulletin boards, and digital monitors throughout campus were used on an ongoing basis for educational activities.



At Stockton University, eight student peer educators hired through a DHTS “Stay Safe and Graduate” grant endeavored to provide programming to as many of the state’s 10,000 students as possible, though efforts were hampered somewhat by the impact of Covid-19. Highlights included virtual *Alcohol 101* workshops and educational “tables”.

### **New Jersey Prevention Network**

The New Jersey Prevention Network conducted its 21<sup>st</sup> annual addiction conference 2021. The conference, titled “Renew, Recover, Resilience.” took place in a virtual environment on April 29-30, 2021. More than 1,000 professionals who work in substance abuse prevention, education, law enforcement, and health



care attended the online conference. With the support of DHTS grant funding, a highway traffic safety track included a pair of workshops: “Legalization of Marijuana-The Impact in Colorado” and “Smokescreen: What the marijuana industry doesn’t want you to know.” Topics of other workshops included the impact of alcohol abuse on women’s health, health disparities in Covid-19, and the ongoing opioid epidemic. DHTS displayed its traffic safety materials during the events “virtual exhibit center”. All of the workshops and information provided through the conference were recorded for later viewing.

### **Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)**

The New Jersey Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) received seed money in FY2021 to carry out its work in victim advocacy and public awareness relating to impaired driving. MADD Victim Service Specialists worked to mitigate the devastating effects of impaired driving crashes by helping the family members of crash victims navigate the criminal justice system and beyond from both practical and support standpoints. MADD helped raise awareness New Jersey’s new ignition interlock law and worked collaboratively with the enforcement and judicial communities to provide community-based information, support, and referral services.



## **Summary**

This program area is a major focus for FY2022 and for the planning process for FY2023. Major public information campaigns are planned on alcohol involved fatalities and drug involved fatalities, and the DHTS Crash Analysis Tool will continue to be updated and utilized as much as possible to target new and existing impaired driving sustained and mobilization grants throughout the year, with a special focus on national crackdown periods.

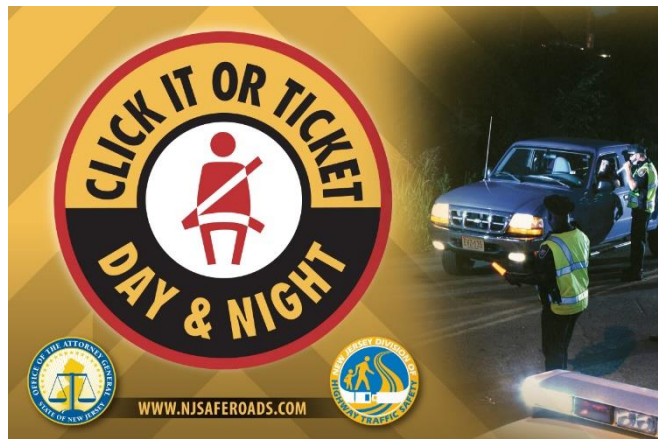
The ongoing rule making and rollout of the state's legalized cannabis industry will be closely monitored. DHTS has an active and robust DRE program that will be the focus of enforcement efforts in this realm. New county participants were added to the state's DRE call out program in FY2021 and existing programs expanded and refined their efforts.

It is hoped that a new statewide Impaired Driving Task Force, begun in FY2021, will grow in the years ahead to take the lead role in developing and implementing new cooperative efforts in this critical area. In addition, a report is due in the months ahead on a comprehensive analysis of drugged driving data from the last ten year period which will assist in framing activities moving forward.

## Occupant Protection – Project Summaries

### Click It or Ticket

The *Click It or Ticket* seat belt enforcement mobilization returned in FY2021 after cancellation in 2020 due to the public health crisis. Beginning May 24 and running through June 6, the mobilization utilized high visibility seat belt checkpoints and saturation patrols, in combination with local and national publicity efforts, to reiterate the life-saving value of seat belts.



Grant funding totaling \$810,000 was awarded to 134 police agencies. These agencies issued 9,755 seat belt summonses, 3,936 speeding summonses, and made 555 DWI arrests. To launch the campaign, traffic safety officials from New Jersey and Pennsylvania gathered for a *Border to Border* Kickoff Event on May 24, 2021 at Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia.

### Seat Belt Survey

The statewide seat belt survey returned in FY2021 after cancellation in 2020 due to Covid-19. The survey, conducted for DHTS by the New Jersey Institute of Technology, found that the State's front-seat belt usage rate is 93.92%. That is an increase of 3.69 percent from the last survey result of 90.23 in 2019. The driver and front-seat passenger usage rates were 93.77 percent and 94.55 percent respectively. These rates represented increases in the driver's usage rate of 3.36 percent and the passenger usage rate of 5.14 percent.

Among the counties included in the survey, Somerset, Mercer and Union saw the largest increases in belt use (10.41%, 8.09%, and 7.45%) while Hudson and Atlantic were the only two with declines (3.31% and 1.94%).

## Child Passenger Safety

New Jersey's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program, funded for many years by DHTS, continued its work in FY2021 at reducing traffic injury and fatality rates through coordinated enforcement and education programs regarding the proper use of child restraints in motor vehicles. Twelve agencies (three local police departments, six county police departments, one non-profit agency, one state agency, and NJ State Police) received grant funding for CPS activities that included technician training, re-training and program delivery at the local level.



The theme of New Jersey's CPS program is *100%, Everyone, Every Ride*. The DHTS website, [www.njsaferoads.com](http://www.njsaferoads.com), contains a wealth of information relating to Child Passenger Safety,



including a list of county coordinators, who can help the public locate technicians, assist technicians with re-certification needs and provide information on child passenger safety programs in their respective counties. The public was able to contact county coordinators directly and arrange for child safety seat program presentations or receive information and guidance on proper installation techniques.

A highlight of the year was National Child Passenger Safety Week from September 19-25, 2021. During the week, the DHTS sponsored child restraint check/educational events throughout the state.

The DHTS continued its coordination and funding for the state's CPS training efforts and also supported the national child passenger safety certification program which provides a standardized certification to those that are successfully trained. Ten child passenger safety courses were held in 2021, that trained 154 new technicians. In addition, NJ State Police conducted two certification courses for its personnel. There are now 952 individuals trained as certified technicians in the State working in public safety, health and injury prevention programs. Forty-six of the technicians are certified as CPS instructors. New Jersey recertification rate for its technicians in 2021 was 56%, just above the national average of 53.4%



A statewide Child Passenger Safety technical conference, postponed several times by the pandemic, is planned for April 25-26, 2022. The event will include CEU courses, networking opportunities and state and national perspectives for our New Jersey technicians.

## **Summary**

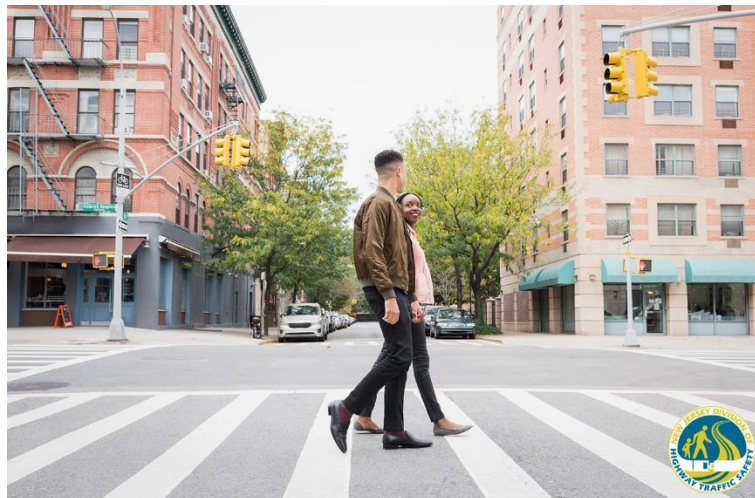
FY2021 was generally a positive year for the state's occupant protection program. New Jersey emerged from the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic and DHTS was able to fund new sustained enforcement grants, which included an occupant protection component, in several of the highest ranked counties and municipalities in the state for unbelted crash injuries. The solid increase in the state seat belt usage rate, to 93.92% was certainly welcome news and shows that the programmatic efforts that have been undertaken in this area have had a positive impact, such as bringing the Crash Analysis Tool to bear to better target the awarding of mobilization and sustained enforcement grants.

New Jersey continues to have a very robust team of trained technicians who deliver grass roots CPS assistance to parents and caregivers on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Several grantees, including the state's AAA clubs, plan to put a special focus in the years ahead on delivering CPS programs in underserved communities. Finally, DHTS looks forward to bringing all CPS technicians together for a training conference in the spring of 2022.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Project Summaries

### Pedestrian Enforcement and Education

Ensuring the safety of pedestrians in New Jersey is a significant challenge. Pedestrian fatalities for calendar year 2021 in the state are, as of this writing, on track to set an all-time high. In FY2021, the Division worked in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority to expand and strengthen the *Street Smart NJ Campaign*. The *Street Smart NJ Campaign* uses a combination of community-wide grass roots education and awareness backed by strong law enforcement measures to reduce pedestrian injury crashes.



54 agencies received grants from the State Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund and Federal Section 405 Non-Motorized Fund. The grant funds were used to pay for overtime enforcement that targeted high pedestrian crash locations and provided pedestrian safety education materials for delivery to high-risk segments of the population.

The *Street Smart Campaign* continually expands into new communities, emphasizing a data driven approach to raise awareness for both pedestrians and motorists, while enforcing laws and changing behaviors. More than 200 towns are participating in the program at this time, many with the support of DHTS funding. The campaign uses several slogans to remind individuals of the major rules for pedestrian safety: obey the speed limit; stop for pedestrians; use crosswalks; and heads up, phones down. The campaign uses outdoor advertising, radio public service announcements, internet advertising and outreach materials including street signs, posters and tip cards. One *Street Smart* grant funded agency, Paterson, conducted a multi-week pedestrian safety education and enforcement blitz in October and November, 2021. The police department handed out 345 pedestrian safety tip cards to walkers and hung more than 50 *Street Smart* posters in

English, Spanish, and Arabic. The enforcement component resulted in the issuance of 110 summonses to motorists for failing to stop for a pedestrian in a crosswalk, along with 290 other violations.

## **Crossing Guard Program**

New Jersey has approximately 6,800 school crossing guards. The New Jersey crossing guard training and resource program is funded jointly by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and DHTS, and operates under the auspices of the *New Jersey Safe Routes to Schools* program. The New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center Crossing Guard website: [www.njcrossingguards.org](http://www.njcrossingguards.org) includes resource manuals, videos, and other useful training tools.

With the support of DHTS grant funding, representatives of the Voorhees Transportation Center conducted two virtual crossing guard supervisor classes on: June 23, 2021 and August 3, 2021. In all, 68 individuals took part in the trainings, representing 46 municipalities. Since its inception, the training program has reached 79 percent of the municipalities in the state that employ school crossing guards.



The program also raises awareness about school crossing safety to the general public. Since being made available on YouTube in 2015, the training video “Crosswalk Heroes” has had almost 55,000 views. The Spanish language version of the training video has had over 1,400 views on YouTube. “The Challenging Crossings” training video has had over 3,000 views since it was introduced in 2019.

## **Bicycle Safety**

The New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, with the support of grant funding from DHTS, conducted a series of bicycle safety rider training courses, both on bike and virtually, as part of the rollout of the City of Newark’s new Bike and Scooter share program. Certified cycling instructors conducted three Cycling Savvy classroom sessions online over Zoom and four on-the-bike Smart Cycling workshops in four different neighborhoods in Newark. The online sessions streamed live over Facebook to other city residents. Sessions were scheduled at a variety of day and evening times and promoted through the City of Newark.

Bicycle crashes in the Township of Montclair were reduced by 10% in FY2021 with the help of DHTS funds awarded to the Montclair Police Department. The grant dollars were used for an ongoing enforcement and educational program that promotes bicycle safety in the community and addresses violations by motorists who do not yield for bicyclists.



The eight Transportation Management Associations in New Jersey were very active in FY2021 delivering grass roots bicycle safety programming for recreational riders of all ages as well as bicycle commuters. Bike to Work and Bike to School programs were promoted throughout the state and many virtual and in-person educational programs were conducted targeting a variety of age groups. A major

overriding goal of the programs was to foster bike friendly communities and an equitable transportation network, while also promoting the benefits of regular physical activity.

The Division of State Police continued its bicycle safety awareness program in FY2021 with the support of grant funding. More than 550 hours of dedicated bicycle safety overtime was conducted by NJSP School and Safety Outreach Unit troopers. Programs were carried out during the spring and summer at state parks, festivals, fairs, and other special events. In all more than 1,500 people were contacted and provided with safety related information. Several new bicycles were purchased for the unit as well, and maintenance was performed on existing bikes, which are used on an ongoing basis for enforcement patrols and hands-on community events.



## Summary

Reducing pedestrian and bicycle injuries and fatalities remains a priority in New Jersey. The number of annual pedestrian fatalities for 2021 is projected to increase by approximately 20 percent compared to 2020.

In FY2022, efforts will be ramped up to promote safe walking and bicycling as well as stressing the need for motorists to share the road and beware of non-motorized roadway users. Programs will align with the NJ SHSP in terms of data analysis and equity considerations. Grant funding for pedestrian safety enforcement and education, from both State and Federal funding sources, will be expanded into more than 20 of the Top 25 NJ pedestrian crash ranked cities. With the assistance of its partner agencies (NJDOT, NJTPA, and *Street Smart NJ*), DHTS will work with cities to identify specific locations at which to focus enforcement and educational efforts. The DHTS crash analysis tool will be very effective in this effort. Both the *Street Smart NJ* pedestrian safety program and the statewide school crossing guard educational program overseen by the Voorhees Transportation Institute will specifically target new programmatic efforts in 2022 into underserved communities, which have been adversely affected by this issue.

The recently passed “New Jersey Safe Passing Law”, which takes effect early in 2022, will also afford DHTS and its partner agencies the chance to undertake a new round of safety education on behalf of the state’s most vulnerable roadway users.



## Community Traffic Safety Programs/Teen Driver Safety – Project Summaries

### Community Traffic Safety Programs

Grant funded community-based traffic safety projects have been the backbone of the DHTS highway safety program for many years, as these projects deliver critical educational programming at the local level while also helping disseminate materials and expertise. In FY2021, these Community Traffic Safety Programs utilized local leadership, resources, and institutional knowledge to offer programs targeted to specific local needs in key emphasis areas including: pedestrian, bicycle and child passenger safety; aggressive, impaired, distracted, and teen driving; seat belt use, and older drivers. The following counties were part of CTSP funded programs in 2021: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren.

In addition to county-based operations, DHTS also partnered with a number of regional and statewide non-profit organizations that provided traffic safety outreach, networking, and education with community groups, corporate employers and students. Examples of activities conducted in FY2021 included:



The North Jersey Foundation for Safety (AAA Clubs of New Jersey) conducted older driver safety presentations and Car-Fit sessions both in person also virtually, and certified new Car-Fit Technicians and event coordinators across the state. A safe driving awareness program “*Stay Awake, Stay Alert, Stay Sober*” was sponsored at all rest stops on the New Jersey Turnpike, Garden State

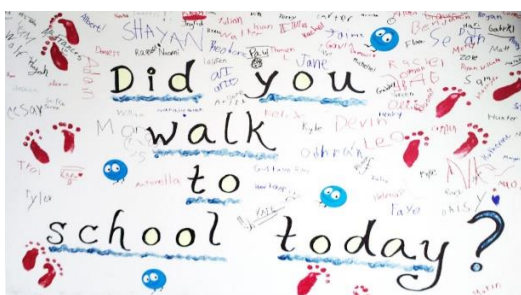
Parkway, and Atlantic City Expressway. A second campaign “*Slow Down/Move Over*” was displayed on buses and billboards throughout the state.

Also, the AAA clubs conducted approximately 60-80 child seat check installations and education contacts per month, offered *Share the Keys* programs for new drivers, and delivered distracted driving, impaired driving and *Shifting Gears* marijuana education events both in person and virtually.

New Jersey’s eight Transportation Management Associations (Hudson TMA, TransOptions, RideWise, Keep Middlesex Moving, goHunterdon, Greater Mercer TMA, Cross County

Connection, and EZRide) used DHTS funding to present a wide variety of bicycle, pedestrian and driver safety public outreach initiatives in FY2021 at the local level. The TMA's are a strong supporter of the *Street Smart NJ* pedestrian safety campaign, offering support and technical assistance to communities engaged in this important program. Traffic safety messaging is pushed out throughout the year by the TMA's, to coincide with major national campaigns as well as local initiatives.

The agencies put a great focus on educating school children, especially in the areas of walking safely and safe cycling. Bicycle and pedestrian safety events were held within underserved communities, many of which have residents who rely heavily on biking and walking as their primary form of transportation. The *Share the Keys* teen driving program, offered in partnership with New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Company, was delivered to high school students. Driving safety programs for seniors were also offered to help them stay safe while being mobile both on foot and in the vehicle.



Safe Kids New Jersey (SKNJ) conducted an array of *Children In and Around Cars* safety education programs to targeted areas of need. Together with its statewide network of coalitions, 24,650 community members were reached. Through its child safety seat inspection stations, SKNJ checked 3,272 car seats, reaching 4,257 parents/caregivers and 1,708 children. 58 car seats and 294 bike helmets were provided to families in need. Targeted outreach programs accompanied by extensive social media included International Walk to School Day, National Child Passenger Safety Week, and Never Leave Your Child Alone (Heatstroke Prevention).

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) continued to raise awareness about traffic safety through presentations, web-based training, social media outreach, participation in coalition meetings and regional, statewide and national conferences. BIANJ delivered over 150 virtual or in-person presentations and safety events across the state in FY2021, including more than 20 Spanish presentations. A social media campaign of consistent safety messaging was shared weekly by approximately 80 organizations through a statewide network. BIANJ utilized social media to create awareness about Motorcycle Safety during the month of May and throughout the year with educational programs to enhance rider safety. BIANJ also worked with social influencers to promote safety messages, which resulted in over 1 million impressions and positive feedback.

**Heads Up! Seniors**  
**A Pedestrian Safety and Fall Prevention Program**

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey presents a free, interactive workshop for drivers and pedestrians.

**Workshop Objectives:**

- Provide strategies to best prevent falls
- Educate pedestrians to walk and drive safely
- Provide a safety checklist to anticipate and prevent potential hazards
- Play an interactive Jeopardy-style game

**November 19th at 11:00 AM**  
YMCA of Paterson, 128 Ward Street, Paterson, NJ

Jersey Drives | Brain Injury Alliance NEW JERSEY | HCPC

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey • 825 Georges Road, North Brunswick, NJ • 732-745-0200 • bianj.org

BIANJ's comprehensive transportation safety website, *JerseyDrives.com*, was updated with lesson plans and virtual learning tools for teachers, teens, parents and the community. BIANJ also offered virtual workshops, trainings, webinars, and uniquely tailored presentations for all ages. Additionally, the 11th year of the *U Got Brains* Champion Schools Program was successful despite the virtual environment, working with approximately 45,000 students from 47 schools across the state. In light of the pandemic, schools found creative ways to spread their safety messages and most were able to complete their campaigns and participate in a virtual showcase event.

The South Jersey Transportation Planning (SJTPO), the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties, reached a large number of people with important traffic safety information in FY2021. In addition to regularly scheduled Child Passenger Safety check events, the SJTPO delivered its three in-class teen driver presentations (*Car Crashes It's Basic Physics*, *Share the Keys* and *Most Dangerous Place on Earth*) 83 times in total, reaching 2,434 students.

Kean University again received grant funding to carry out its Statewide Comprehensive Traffic Safety Project. The program took the lead in hosting eight Basic and six Advanced Crash Investigation Training Courses (14 courses in total) with 404 police officer attendees successfully completing the classes. In addition, 34 officers who had previously completed the Basic and Advanced Crash Investigation courses took part in a new Forensic Science certificate program that was offered for the first time. Kean also continued its sponsorship of the Traffic

Safety Specialist program, which is a statewide, uniform, and consistent recognition of police officers who have attained notable levels of experience, education, training a proficiency in highway safety and traffic enforcement methods and procedures. 81 police officers were recognized in FY2021 as having completed either Level I or Level II of this program. Progress was also made during the year on several new initiatives including the development of a training program for local police relating to cannabis impaired driving enforcement and crash investigation.

# Police Traffic Services and Training – Project Summaries

## Comprehensive Law Enforcement Programs

Recognizing the need for greater sustained enforcement activities throughout the program year, DHTS successfully engaged a large number of new agencies in FY2021 to undertake ongoing, sustained enforcement in four key program areas: speed, occupant protection/seat belts, distracted driving, and impaired driving. Crash ranking lists were developed in these four areas and sustained enforcement grant funding was offered, and in most cases accepted, by police agencies in these high crash counties and communities. 35 sustained enforcement grants were funded in total in FY2021, utilizing Sec 402 and Sec 405e flex funds.

The Essex County Sheriff's Department received a sustained enforcement grant focusing on seat belt usage and speeding. During the grant year, the agency reported issuing 1,166 seat belt and 691 speeding summonses respectively in these two critical program areas. At the local level, the Woodbridge Township Police Department had a productive year, utilizing its sustained enforcement grant to issue 618 speeding summonses and 888 summonses for cell phone usage or careless driving, while also making 221 arrests for DWI.



Both radar and laser speed detection devices have been effective tools used by State Troopers assigned to patrol on both highways and rural roadways. During FY2021, grant funds were used to purchase 125 radar units for NJSP while NJ State Police radar and laser teams conducted more than 750 hours of saturation enforcement. NJSP also used grant funding to undertake

targeted seat belt enforcement statewide throughout the year.

## Distracted Driving Crackdown

New Jersey was fortunate to be one of only a handful of states that qualified to receive distracted driving incentive grant funds again in FY2021. These funds enabled the state to undertake a major public awareness campaign relating to driver distraction (as detailed in the Paid Media area of this report) as well as fund a significant enforcement effort in support of the national *UDrive. UText. UPay.* distracted driving crackdown.



The 2021 *UDrive. UText. UPay.* distracted driving crackdown took place April 1-30, 2021. \$1.4 million in grant funding was awarded to 184 state, county, and local police agencies. During the campaign, these grant funded agencies issued 8,014 summonses for hand held use of a cell phone while driving. An additional 4,346 summonses were issued for careless driving.

## Driver Distraction Survey

Rowan University conducted groundbreaking research for DHTS in FY2021 on the issue of driver distraction, which found that rates of distraction among New Jersey drivers approach 25% along certain high-volume roadways. Every year, thousands of people die in the United States due to crashes involving distracted driving, with this cause contributing to 25% of all fatal traffic crashes in New Jersey. In 2019, distracted driving contributed to 159 of the 524 fatal crashes in New Jersey that claimed 558 lives (New Jersey State Police, 2019). To better understand the prevalence of the issue, and to cross-reference driver distraction by time of day, roadway type, etc., a comprehensive study was conducted using a novel approach. Data collectors drove a vehicle through ten high crash corridors with video recorders mounted on the exterior of the vehicle during the Spring and Summer of 2021. The video data, captured through the side windows of vehicles on these roadways, was analyzed to detect driving behaviors using a deep learning algorithm. In total, 335 hours of video observation was conducted. Among the findings:

- “Handheld cellphone” is the leading type of distraction, irrespective of time, type of roadway, season, and the geometric properties of the roadway.



- “Receiving calls” significantly changes with the season, the day of the week, and the roadway type.
- The behavior of “eating/drinking” significantly changes with respect to various roadway features (i.e., signalized/unsignalized roads or spring/summer).
- Summer (24.4%) has a higher rate of distractions than spring (20.8%).
- Geometric features of the roadway (e.g., median type, median width, posted speed limit, shoulder width, and the number of lanes) significantly impact distracted driving behavior.

The outcomes from the study will assist DHTS in planning future countermeasures in this area, such as focusing enforcement and awareness activities more in the summer months, when driver distraction rates are higher. Moreover, such countermeasures should also prioritize corridors with signalized intersections, weekday driving, lower speed limits, wider shoulder width, higher median width, and positive-type medians. Looking to the future, the study results also show that detection of driver behavior from cameras outside the car is a promising avenue for further research.

### **Crash Investigation Training**

The Crash Investigation Training program funded by DHTS was able to return to a normal schedule of offerings in FY2021. The Basic Crash Investigation course was offered ten times at various police academies around the state and was successfully completed by 266 police officers. Six sessions of Advanced Crash Investigation were held, with 170 attendees. Nine specialty courses were conducted as well, on topics including traffic crash reconstruction, pedestrian/bicycle crash investigation, and event data recorder use in traffic reconstruction. These courses were successfully completed by 217 attendees.

### **Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor**

Three Deputy Attorneys General (“DAG”) in the Department of Law and Public Safety worked as Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutors (TSRP’s) at various times during FY2021. The TSRP’s conducted and attended trainings, sat on several committees, attended traffic safety-related workshops, provided assistance to prosecutors and law enforcement officers on various inquiries, represented the state in traffic safety-related court matters, and provided assistance to prosecutors in preparing briefs and appearing before the New Jersey Supreme Court.



The TSRP's conducted several training programs including Prosecutor Alcotest Training (90 attendees), Radar Instructor Refresher course (13 sessions, 250 attendees), Basic Motor Vehicle Course for DCJ Investigators, and Basic DRE Course legal aspects.

There was also ongoing work required in the DWI realm, which included preparation for legal challenges stemming from the upcoming rollout of the Alcotest 9510 chemical breath test unit.



The TSRP's are an important part of New Jersey's traffic safety program and regularly participate and provide updates on their activities at HTSPAC, NHTSA Region II, and Regional LEL/JOL meetings.

### **Fatal Crash Unit**

The State Police Fatal Accident Investigation Unit performed many functions related to the investigation of fatal and serious injury motor vehicle crashes and the collection of statistical data related to fatal crashes. Unit personnel investigated serious and fatal crashes that occurred in the patrol areas of the State Police and responded to requests for technical assistance with on-scene investigations and/or post collision investigation from county prosecutors' offices and municipal police departments. The FAIU also reviews, reinvestigates, or reconstructs every fatal crash that occurs in the state in order to ensure accurate FARS reporting. Unit personnel relied on their advanced training and technical expertise as well as specialized equipment, funded in part by DHTS again in FY2021, in order to effectively and efficiently perform these vital functions.



### **New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association**

Founded in 1974, the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association is one of the nation's only dedicated statewide organizations devoted to the work of police traffic officers. Over the years, the organization has proven an invaluable partner to DHTS. In light of this, DHTS began awarding grant funding to the NJPTOA in FY2021 to assist the entity in its work and to set the

stage for greater cooperative efforts in the years ahead. The NJPTOA reports on all contemporary traffic safety issues including the NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety's campaigns and priorities, traffic related case law, new and emerging technology, training updates and anticipated future issues. The NJPTOA offers and provides access to training events based on the Association and state's needs. The NJPTOA utilizes a web site, monthly meetings and newsletter as well as mass emails to keep its membership informed on all things traffic safety.

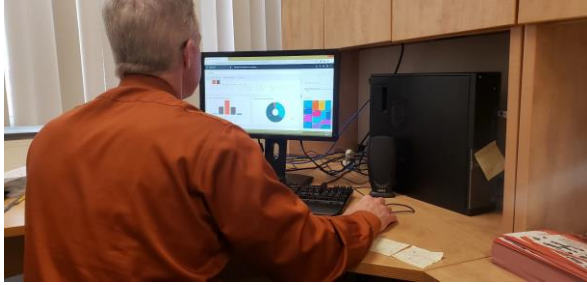
### **Law Enforcement Liaison**

New Jersey's Law Enforcement Liaison was active again in FY2021, through a grant from DHTS to the NJ State Association of Chiefs of Police. Work of the LEL included: providing assistance to DHTS staff in the promotion of law enforcement grants during the seat belt, impaired driving and distracted driving mobilizations, promoting the division's traffic safety initiatives at monthly meetings of the State Association of Chiefs of Police and at monthly and quarterly meetings of the Traffic Officers Association, sharing news on traffic safety topics and initiatives with municipal Chiefs of Police via email blast, assisting the DHTS Director with ongoing projects as needed, and actively being involved in the implementation of the 2020 NJ Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

### **Comprehensive Police Training**

Rutgers University provided a variety of training programs to the law enforcement community of the state in FY2021 through its Comprehensive Police Training Grant from DHTS, the biggest highlight of which was the debut of a new course: Data-Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety. Other areas of training included NJTR-1 Crash Reports (described in the Traffic Records area of this Annual Report), Work Zone Safety (described in the Other Vulnerable Road Users area of this Annual Report), and UAS (Drone) Crash Investigation.

The Data-Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety course was developed with the goal of helping potential DHTS grantees create and submit stronger, data-driven project applications. The three day course trains participants to utilize the Crash Analysis Tool (CAT) in a computer lab or virtual classroom by first developing queries for a specific town to identify crash prone locations and factors. Those queries are saved and exported to form the justification for a DHTS grant proposal.



Attendees also received grant writing training to develop a grant proposal related to their data points, utilizing the DHTS SAGE e-grant system. NHTSA's proven countermeasures are discussed, and agencies are assisted in selecting the proper strategies to implement, as well as how to measure the impact of their intervention(s).

Three Data-Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety courses were carried out in FY2021, resulting in 46 officers trained from 33 police departments and 1 TMA. Agencies from cities with long-standing traffic safety concerns, such as Newark, Paterson, Trenton, Atlantic City and New Brunswick, attended the classes.

The course, *UAS Application for Traffic Safety*, which debuted in FY2020, focuses on the use of unmanned aircraft (drones) in crash investigation, traffic engineering, mapping, and roadway surveying. Four virtual workshops on this subject were held, attended by 98 officers from more than 40 police departments.

## **Traffic Records – Project Summaries**

An efficient traffic records system is critical to the highway safety program of a state. Projects that were funded and/or supported in FY2021 by DHTS were designed to expand statewide-integrated data collection and transmission systems to improve the timeliness, completeness, accessibility, accuracy, and linkage of safety information. The ultimate goal is data that will allow for analysis of all traffic crashes for use in policy and program development. DHTS was involved in the following crash data-related initiatives:

### **NJTR-1 Training**

The NJTR-1 crash report form is completed by law enforcement for any incident resulting in injury, death or damage in excess of \$500. Proper completion of the report by officers in the field is critical to obtaining valid crash data. During FY2021, twelve virtual refresher workshops were held. A total of 722 State, county, and municipal police officers and safety personnel from 121 agencies were trained in how to properly complete the crash form. Technical assistance was provided to another 300+ officers.

### **Statewide Traffic Records Coordination and Analysis**

The Statewide Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (STRCC) is responsible for the critical job of integrating and exchanging traffic records data between federal, state and local traffic-related agencies and organizations in an effort to reduce fatalities, crashes and injuries. STRCC agency representatives include those involved in highway safety, highway infrastructure, law enforcement and adjudication, public health, injury control and motor vehicle and driver licensing. The Committee provides a forum for the discussion of highway safety data and traffic records issues, represents the interests of the agencies and organizations within the traffic records system and develops and carries out a traffic records strategic plan. Several meetings of the Committee were held during FY2021.

## Electronic Patient Care Reporting and EMS Data Repository

With the support of DHTS funding, the Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) continued its ongoing program to improve the quantity and timeliness of electronic patient care reporting (ePCR) for Emergency

Medical Services (EMS) and the EMS Data Repository. Prior to the ePCR program, all patient data was collected individually by multiple organizations either manually or through unlinked desktops and servers. With the ePCR program, patient and circumstantial data is collected through tablet personal computer devices by both Advanced and Basic Life Support providers who are the first responders to emergency incidents. As the data fields within the ePCR are completed, the information is transferred via Wi-Fi/cellular,



in near real-time, to the receiving hospital so all relative data to the patient and their injuries are available to treating clinicians. The data is also transferred and stored in the repository in such a way that it is accessible by multiple State and Federal agencies.

Moving forward, OEMS will investigate the feasibility of importing Event Data Recorder (EDR) information from crashes through the ePCR system to enhance the current crash information dataset. Another new initiative through OEMS allows for the licensing, safety monitoring, and crash reporting of emergency vehicles in New Jersey. Additionally, it allows for the collection of data regarding safety inspections, child & adult vehicle crash safety equipment, as well as vehicle safety violation data.

### In House Data Analysis

The full time data analyst added to the DHTS staff in FY2019 played a critical role in all DHTS programming again in FY2021, including in the preparation of the annual Highway Safety Plan and annual report as well as serving as a liaison on crash data-related matters to the STRCC and NJ DOT. Having a full time data analyst helps the Division be more data driven in its programmatic and grant funding decisions and also offers a means of supporting local agencies in their data access and analysis efforts.

### Crash Analysis Tool (Numetric)



The Crash Analysis Tool is used by DHTS to analyze crash data with an eye towards traffic safety programmatic and grant funding decisions. The system is also used by other public and private agencies and individuals to help identify and assess the most cost-effective ways to

improve safety on the State's roadways through a data-driven approach. The Crash Analysis Tool is a critical program that is used in all aspects the Division's traffic safety work.

In FY2021, 623 users were enrolled in the system, consisting of law enforcement agencies, local governments, and partnering stakeholders including NJDOT. Product enhancements included an overhaul of the network screening module interface, including custom date ranges and emphasis area applications. This overhaul provides a new way for DHTS to identify segments of roadways that are high-risk. Using this data, DHTS can better assist law enforcement agencies in targeting their enforcement systemically.

In the year ahead, (FY2022) plans include the addition of geospatial layers (such as primary/secondary schools, transit stops, and disadvantaged communities of NJ) to better understand where crashes are taking place and the potential impact it may have on the surrounding community. This upgrade would provide DHTS with better insight into the relationship between motor vehicle crashes and the environmental impact.

### **Traffic Engineering Interns**

Grant funding was again provided to the Warren County Engineer's Office that allowed it to retain the services of two engineering students to collect traffic crash data and assist in performing safety studies at high crash locations. Under the supervision of the Assistant County Engineer, the students gathered crash data, created a computerized crash database, and performed field investigations as needed. The *2020 Warren County Traffic Crash Data and Road Safety Assessment Report* was produced and contains the top crash locations involving county roadways, based on 2020 data, with recommendations for improvements. The *2021 Traffic Study Locations Report*, which was also produced, provides crash data and analysis of roadway locations which have previously undergone improvements or been identified through this program.

## Other Vulnerable Road Users - Project Summaries

### Motorcycle Safety

In FY2021, the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) continued its motorcycle safety programs and hosting of quarterly meetings of the Motorcycle Coalition. The coalition includes motorcycle enthusiasts, rider training site owners, insurance company representatives, community safety partners and motorcycle coaches and trainers. The coalition takes the lead role in guiding the motorcycle training programs in the state and shaping the various safety and share the road (STR) messages that are developed.



2021 messages targeted automobile drivers and the general public in an effort to increase awareness of motorcycles on the road, via traditional and social media. Enhanced messaging occurred in May, which is Motorcycle Safety Month, but the campaign was yearlong, consisting of radio and online marketing and a successful social media campaign, “Did U Gear Up for Your Ride?” Radio messages were run during busy weekends throughout the summer to encourage drivers to share the road with motorcycles, with a special focus on areas with high crash rates. BIANJ also carried out digital media placement, which resulted in a large increase of visitors to the STR page during the months of August and September.

The ongoing Champion Schools Program was leveraged to get STR information to teens throughout the state, through presentations and pledge contests. Presentations were delivered to driver education classes while new materials and QR codes were developed to conduct outreach in a "hands free" manner. Share the road safety messages were promoted in workshops at the NJEA and NJ Shape conferences to reach educators. BIANJ staff hosts the statewide Driver Education Committee, which also is used to promote these STR messages in the classroom.

During the pandemic, BIANJ used virtual messaging and exhibits in person at community events starting in the summer. The *JerseyDrives* website educated the general public about the importance of sharing the road and is updated at least quarterly throughout the year. Programs

geared towards the motorcycle rider also continued as commitments were sought from riders to use good judgement, wear proper gear and become lifelong learners. BIANJ worked with motorcycle clubs, rider training centers and community partners to help spread these messages.

## **Work Zone Safety**

Through the Comprehensive Rutgers University Police Training Grant, work zone safety training and education was provided throughout FY2021 to law enforcement officers, municipal traffic engineers, and public works personnel.



The annual statewide Work Zone Safety Conference was held virtually on April 21, 2021. The event promoted work zone safety awareness on local and state roadways for a multi-disciplinary audience of construction, engineering, public safety,

maintenance and operations personnel and included a panel discussions about the importance of preconstruction meetings and the role of police in work zones. 257 people attended the conference.

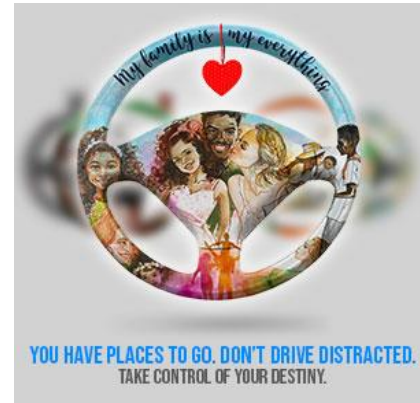
In addition, two virtual *Work Zone Safety Train-the-Trainer for Police* workshops were conducted, resulting in 44 officers being trained and two virtual *Work Zone Safety Awareness for Police* workshops were held, resulting in 92 officers being trained.



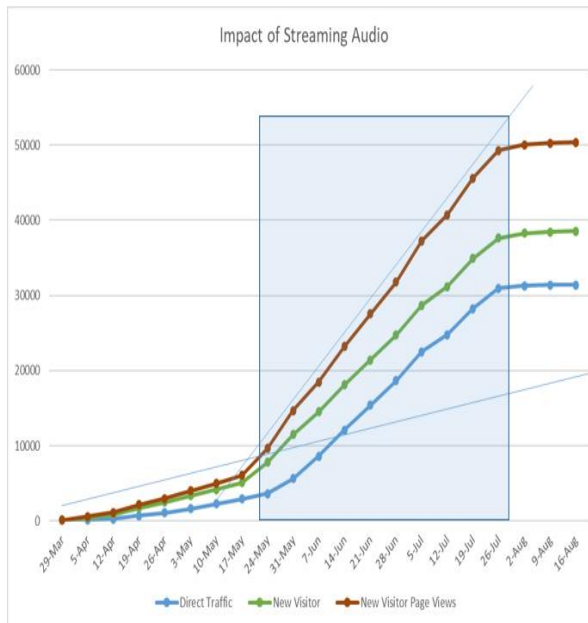
## Paid and Earned Media - Project Summaries

### Take Control of Your Destiny (distracted driving)

A major public information campaign, called “Take Control of Your Destiny – Don’t Drive Distracted” was undertaken in FY2021 to address New Jersey’s distracted driving program. Distracted driving was to blame for more than a quarter of the fatal crashes that occurred in New Jersey from 2015 through 2019, claiming the lives of 730 drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. During that same five-year period, more than half of all crashes in the state– both fatal and non-fatal – involved a distracted driver.



The “Take Control of Your Destiny” campaign featured colorful steering wheels depicting life milestones like graduation, marriage, and pursuing creative and professional interests, accompanied by the tagline “*You Have Places to Go. Don’t Drive Distracted.*” The campaign reminds the public that they should put down the phone and keep their eyes on the road in order to achieve their destinies.

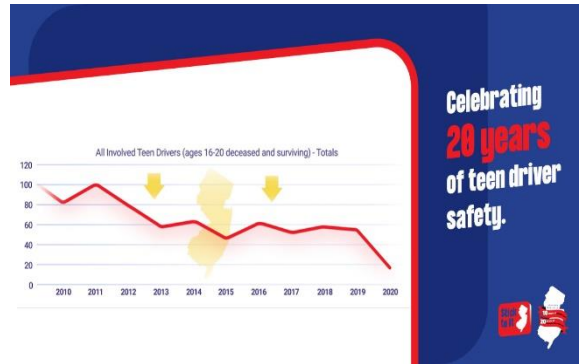


The “Take Control of Your Destiny” campaign used social media channels like Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter as well as other streaming outlets like Pandora (audio), YouTube (video), and super market and major roadway rest stop screens. The campaign generated almost 70 million impressions across all channels and almost 60,000 page views to the DHTS website. 70% of those sessions came from direct channels suggesting that listeners heard or saw the media and then went directly to the DHTS website at some point thereafter. The sharp increases in engagement due to just the streaming portion of the campaign can be seen on the chart to the left.

As an added component to the “Take Control of Your Destiny” campaign, the Division has launched an awareness contest where the public can design their own steering wheel depicting why they choose to never drive distracted. Winners from this contest will have their steering wheel artwork displayed on the Division’s social media pages.

**Stick To It (graduated driver’s license)**

The Division also continued organic social media postings (including text copy, branded graphics and videos) from the FY2020 “Stick to It” teen driver safety public information campaign about New Jersey graduated driver licensing laws, which are among the strongest in the nation.



**New Partnerships (teen drivers)**

Furthering its commitment to teen driver safety, the Division has partnered with the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) for sponsored multimedia messaging at high school athletic events that includes social media posts, ads in sports championship booklets, in-game loudspeaker announcements and more.

**Social Media**

During FY2021, the Division employed a full time public information assistant to coordinate social media copy and graphics and assist with other efforts to create and generate paid and earned media. The goal of all these efforts was to further the division’s mission to ensure safety on the roads and increase awareness of the State’s several traffic safety initiatives in real time. Twitter, Facebook, Facebook Stories and Instagram Stories were utilized to engage and inform the public about the division’s campaigns and programs. The division’s social media pages are as follows:

- Facebook - @NewJerseyDivisionofHighwayTrafficSafety
- Twitter - @NJTrafficSafety
- Instagram- @NJTrafficSafety

The DHTS has over 5,600 Twitter followers, over 15,000 “LIKES” on Facebook, and almost 1,500 followers on Instagram. The number of followers has increased on each of the social media platforms from the previous year.

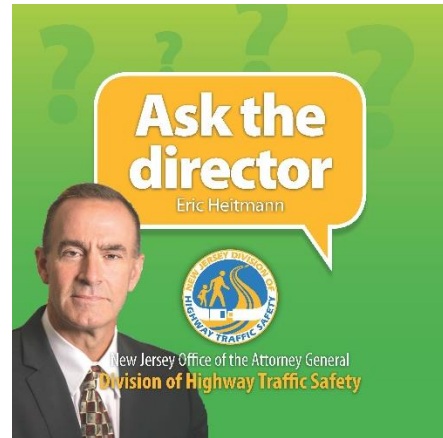
The Division's social media channels were integral in pushing out safety messaging to the public in FY2021. With impaired driving and speeding more prevalent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division emphasized "Drive Sober," "Slow Down" and "Click It Or Ticket" messaging for added safety awareness on these issues.



Social media partnerships with other state and federal traffic safety partners, such as the New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Department of Transportation, AAA, Brain Injury Alliance and beyond has allowed a consistent and cohesive social media message to be pushed out for maximum reach and effect.

**Ask the Director**

New FY2021 social media engagement and awareness tactics included an "Ask the Director" question and answer video with the Division's director.



## **RECENT LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS**

The following highway safety legislation was signed into law by Governor Murphy during calendar year 2021.

### **P.L. 2020, c.148**

This law requires a person to watch a video created by the Motor Vehicle Commission, in conjunction with the Attorney General, before the person takes an examination for any permit. The video is to explain the rights and responsibilities of a driver stopped by a law enforcement officer. The video shall be used for informational purposes only and shall not be used in any criminal proceeding involving a driver stopped by a law enforcement officer. Under the bill, the video is to explain the rights and responsibilities of a driver stopped by a law enforcement officer.

Signed into law by Governor Murphy on January 4, 2021, this act became effective on August 1, 2021.

### **P.L. 2021, c.194**

The “New Jersey Safe Passing Law” imposes certain requirements on a motorist when the motorist is overtaking pedestrians, certain bicycles, low-speed electric scooters, and any other personal conveyances permitted under law.

Under the provisions of this law, the operator of a motor vehicle approaching a pedestrian, bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, low-speed electric scooter, or other personal conveyance permitted under law is required to approach with due caution and, absent any other direction by a law enforcement officer, proceed as follows: 1) If possible in the existing safety and traffic conditions, make a lane change into a lane not adjacent to the pedestrian, bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, low-speed electric scooter, or other personal conveyance permitted under law; 2) Leave a reasonable and safe distance of not less than four feet while approaching the pedestrian, bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, low-speed electric scooter, or other personal conveyance permitted under law and maintain this distance until the motor vehicle has safely passed; or 3) If a lane change or leaving a reasonable and safe distance of at least four feet is not possible, prohibited by law, or unsafe, the operator of the motor vehicle is to reduce the speed of the motor vehicle to 25 miles per hour and be prepared to stop.

A person violating the provisions of this bill is to be subject to a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$500.

Signed into law on August 5, 2021, this act becomes effective on March 1, 2022.

