

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY  
DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2024  
OCTOBER 1, 2023 — SEPTEMBER 30 2024



Philip D. Murphy  
Governor  
Tahesha L. Way  
Lt. Governor



Matthew J. Platkin  
Attorney General



Michael J. Rizol, Jr.  
Director



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Executive Summary .....	2
2020 NJ Strategic Highway Safety Plan .....	3
Traffic Crash Data .....	4
Assessment of Progress .....	6
Performance Targets .....	14
Program Funding .....	17
Federally Funded Programs .....	17
State Funded Programs .....	18
Funded Projects and Activities .....	20
Projects Not Implemented .....	50
Evidence-Based Traffic Safety Enforcement Program .....	51
Recent Legislative Enactments .....	55

# *Mission Statement*

The mission of the  
Division of Highway Traffic Safety  
is the safe passage of all roadway users in  
New Jersey as we move toward  
zero fatalities.



# 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. 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 Triennial Highway Safety Plan for Federal Fiscal Years 2024-2026, 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.

# Executive Summary

The Highway Safety Plan Annual Report for FY2024 (October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024) 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, g, 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 510 federally-funded projects in FY2024. The amount of funds allocated to those projects totaled over \$24,000,000 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 work to increase traffic safety and reduce crashes and deaths is part of Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin's focus on improving public safety for all New Jerseyans.

The annual report provides an overview of the projects funded during the year and the status of the performance measures identified in the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan. Based on available data from 2023, DHTS is on track to meet 4 of the 15 core outcome goals set forth in the FY2024-2026 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 these traffic safety metrics 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.

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; state, county, and local law enforcement agencies, including the Association of Chiefs of Police and the Traffic Officers Association; universities; advocacy groups, including AAA, the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ, and the NJ Bike and Walk Coalition; 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.

# 2020 NJ Strategic Highway Safety Plan

DHTS is committed to assisting in the implementation of the 2020 SHSP tasks throughout its grant programs. The plan's goals and objectives are based on the five Es: engineering, enforcement, education, emergency response, and equity. The plan is a data-driven approach to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.

Originally, 35 key SHSP emphasis area tasks were identified in the 2020 plan. This was later expanded with an additional 22 priority action items. As of July, 2024, more than 99% of the original 35 action items had been completed, and 90% progress was reported on the 22 additional action items.

*Completed tasks within the 2020-2025 SHSP include:*

**Data Emphasis Area:** Updating the crash data reporting training curriculum, conducting research on best practices such as bike/pedestrian volume data collection techniques, potential integration of pedestrian data elements into the linear referencing system, and providing technical support for the development of the NJ-SHO data dashboard.

**Driver Behavior Emphasis Area:** Updating law enforcement and police recruit training curriculum, implementing driver behavior programs along with education and marketing initiatives, conducting best practice research on addressing aggressive driver behavior through social media efforts, creating cannabis education materials, and conducting a teen seat-belt survey.

**Equity Emphasis Area:** Defining and listing top underserved communities, promoting safety and partnerships through stakeholder engagement, and conducting best practice research to develop equity metrics and tools for active transportation.

**Intersections Emphasis Areas:** Identifying high-crash locations, particularly focusing on crashes related to intersections and those involving pedestrians and bicyclists. Best practice research was conducted on systemic pedestrian safety analysis and intersection sight distance. A guide on how to conduct a Road Safety Audit was developed.

**Lane Departure Emphasis Area:** Identifying high-crash locations, conducting best practice research on fixed objects data collection, providing technical guidance for identifying high-crash locations and recommending countermeasures, and organizing a peer exchange.

**Other Vulnerable Road Users (OVRU) Emphasis Area:** Launching a Mature Drivers website, conducting best practice research infrastructure strategies to reduce mature road user crashes, training motorcycle riders, providing work zone training and education, developing motorcycle-friendly infrastructure, and implementing crossing guard training.

**Pedestrian and Bicyclist Emphasis Area:** Conducting best practice research on the integration of Complete Streets, preparing a Vulnerable Road Users white paper, promoting increased use of the Street Smart Campaign, providing resources to spread awareness on Safe Passing Laws, conducting safety audits at transit stops, and developing a traffic safety toolkit for schools.

It is expected that safety partners will convene in 2025 to further assess progress and update the SHSP.

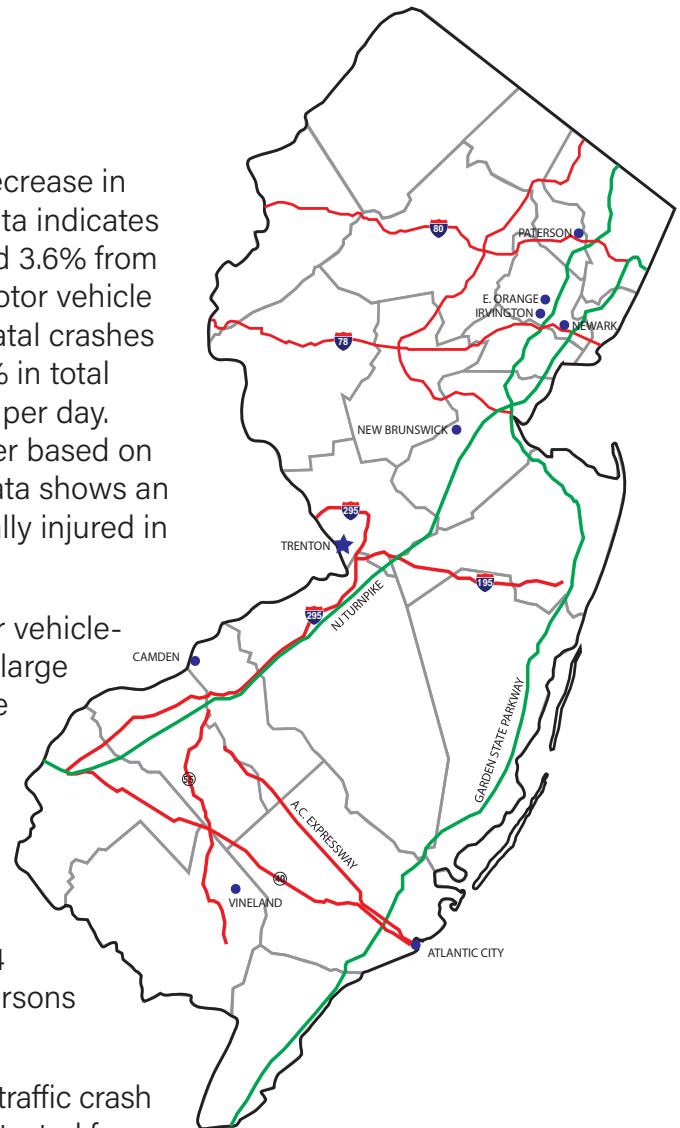
# Traffic Crash Data

New Jersey, like the nation as a whole, saw a decrease in motor vehicle fatalities in 2023. Preliminary data indicates that national motor vehicle fatalities decreased 3.6% from 2022, estimating that 40,990 persons were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. In 2023, New Jersey experienced 574 fatal crashes that resulted in 606 fatalities. This is a decrease of 12% in total fatalities from 685 in 2022 and equates to 1.7 fatalities per day. Fatalities in 2024 trended upward and were 14% higher based on preliminary data as of January 13, 2025. Preliminary data shows an increase in the number of drivers and pedestrians fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes in 2024.

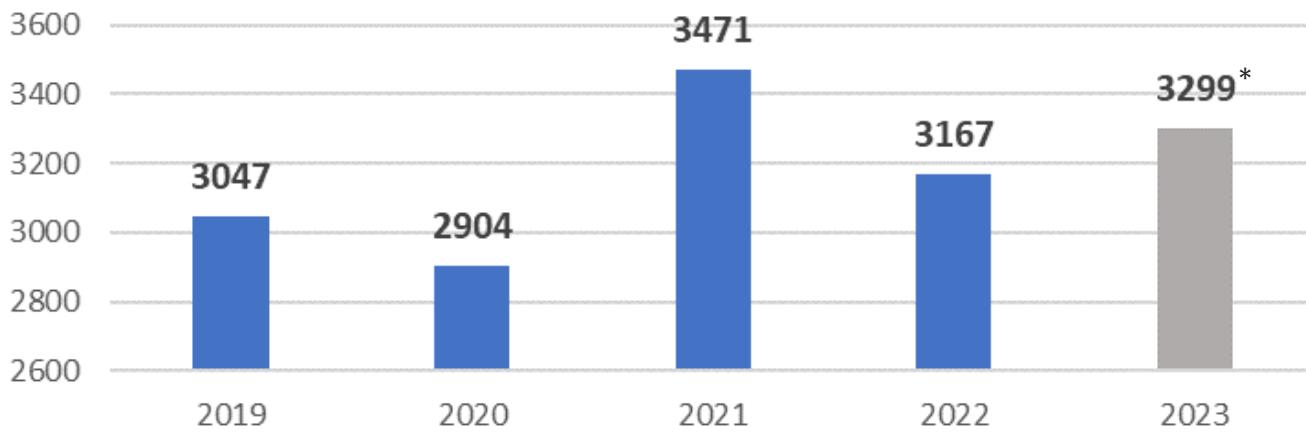
The total number of persons seriously injured in motor vehicle-related crashes increased dramatically in 2019, due in large part to an injury classification definition change on the New Jersey Police Accident Report (PAR- NJTR-1).

Total persons seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes declined 9 percent in 2022, resulting in 3,167 total serious injuries. Serious injury motor vehicle crashes will be closely monitored as the 2023 data continues to be processed. Projected figures show a 4 percent increase in the number of seriously injured persons (3,299).

In 2023, alcohol and drugs had a significant impact on traffic crash fatalities. Out of 606 people killed in crashes, 486 were tested for alcohol. Among those tested, 155, or 31.9%, were found to have



## Total Serious Injuries in New Jersey



\* 2023 data is projected.

alcohol in their system, a slight decrease from 33.3% in 2022. In total, 182 of the 574 fatal crashes involved a driver who tested positive for alcohol or drugs, accounting for 31.7% of the incidents. Additionally, 314 drivers died in crashes in 2023, and of those, 174, or 55.4%, tested positive for alcohol or drugs. At the time of this report, complete 2024 toxicology reports are not available. New Jersey's roads experienced a 10 percent decrease in pedestrian fatalities in 2023 (171 down from 192 in 2022). However, New Jersey experienced another large increase in pedestrian fatalities in 2024. In 2024, New Jersey experienced the highest volume of pedestrian fatalities since 1989 with 223 total pedestrians killed (217 pedestrian fatalities in 1989 and 2021). Bicyclist fatalities nearly doubled in 2023 from 2022 with 27 bicyclist fatalities occurring (16 in 2022). Year-to-date for 2024 there have been 24 reported bicyclist fatalities compared to 26 in 2023.

New Jersey has made great progress over the last several years in reducing the number of teen drivers (16-20 years of age) involved in fatal crashes. Teen driver involved fatalities decreased 3 percent in 2023 (67 involved drivers) when compared to 2022 (69 involved drivers). At the time of this report, preliminary figures show a no-change in young driver involvement in fatal crashes in 2024 from 2023. However, final year-end totals will not be available until later in 2025.

Motorcycle fatalities (drivers and passengers) and lack of helmet use has been on the rise in New

Jersey. In 2023, motorcycle fatalities decreased 5 percent from 2022 (90 from 95). 2022 had the second highest number of motorcyclist fatalities since 2006, the first being in 2021. Motorcyclists made up 15% of all motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey in 2023, up from 14 percent in 2022. The number of fatally injured motorcycle riders that were unhelmeted declined 75 percent in 2023 from 2022, however, preliminary estimates are showing an increase in unhelmeted fatalities in 2024 (7).

Driver behavior issues will continue to be an area of focus for traffic safety initiatives. In 2023, speeding contributed to 28 percent and distracted driving 26 percent of all roadway fatalities in the state.

Traffic related deaths continue to be one of the leading causes of accidental deaths in New Jersey and the nation. Through enforcement, education programs, community engagement, and new partnerships with the motoring public, DHTS 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 its partners, DHTS will continue to strive to meet the goals outlined in the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan while looking for new, innovative ways to address areas where goals were not met.



# Assessment of Progress

States are required to report the progress on the set of performance measures used in the development and implementation of the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan. The eighteen core outcome measures and one behavior measure set forth in the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan and updated in the FY2025 Annual Grant Application are listed below:

KEY	Baseline	Actual	Target	
			Off Track	On Track

CORE PERFORMANCE GOALS								
BASELINE VALUE	619		BASELINE START YEAR	2018		BASELINE END YEAR	2022	
TARGET VALUE	616		TARGET START YEAR	2022		TARGET END YEAR	2026	
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total roadway fatalities by 6 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of total fatalities to equal to or less-than the baseline average of 619, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of total persons fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes by 6 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 0.6 percent reduction from the baseline average of 619 (2018-2022) to 616 (2022-2026).							

Total Fatalities	Baseline							Target	
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	563	558	584	697	694	652	613	576	542
5-Yr Avg	581	582	586	605	619	637	648	647	616
Actual	563	558	586	692	685	606	690*	576	542
5-Yr Avg	581	582	587	605	617	625	652	650	620

\*Estimate

CORE PERFORMANCE GOALS								
BASELINE VALUE	2,700		BASELINE START YEAR	2018		BASELINE END YEAR	2022	
TARGET VALUE	2,649		TARGET START YEAR	2022		TARGET END YEAR	2026	
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total serious injuries by 8 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of total serious injuries to equal to or less-than the baseline average of 2,700, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of total persons seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes by 8 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 1.9 percent reduction from the baseline average of 2,700 (2018-2022) to 2,649 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Serious Injuries	Baseline							Target	
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	1284	3047	2904	3157	3108	2859	2631	2420	2227
5-Yr Avg	1114	1525	1878	2306	2700	3015	2932	2835	2649
Actual	1284	3047	2904	3471	3167	3299*	2631	2420	2227
5-Yr Avg	1114	1525	1878	2369	2775	3178	3094	2998	2749

\*Estimate

FATALITIES/VMT*								
BASELINE VALUE	0.836	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	0.812	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total fatalities per vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rate by 6 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of total fatalities per VMT to equal to or less-than the baseline average of 0.836, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of total persons fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes by 6 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 2.9 percent reduction from the baseline average of 0.836 (2018-2022) to 0.812 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Fatalities/VMT	Baseline						Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	0.726	0.714	0.880	0.946	0.915	0.860	0.809	0.760	0.715
5-Yr Avg	0.760	0.754	0.782	0.814	0.836	0.863	0.882	0.858	0.812
Actual	0.726	0.714	0.883	0.939	0.910	0.795	0.904*	0.753	0.707
5-Yr Avg	0.760	0.754	0.782	0.813	0.834	0.848	0.886	0.860	0.814

\*Estimate

NUMBER OF UNRESTRAINED FATALITIES								
BASELINE VALUE	136	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	135	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total unrestrained occupant fatalities by 8.5 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of unrestrained occupant fatalities to equal to or less-than the baseline average of 136, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of unrestrained fatalities by 8.5 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 1 percent reduction from the baseline average of 136 (2018-2022) to 135 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Unrestrained Fatalities	Baseline						Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	125	109	127	160	160	146	134	123	112
5-Yr Avg	125	123	125	128	136	140	145	145	135
Actual	125	109	127	162	140	144	134	123	112
5-Yr Avg	125	123	125	128	133	136	141	141	131

NUMBER OF ALCOHOL INVOLVED FATALITIES												
BASELINE VALUE	153	BASELINE START YEAR		2018	BASELINE END YEAR		2022					
TARGET VALUE	152	TARGET START YEAR		2022	TARGET END YEAR		2026					
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total alcohol involved fatalities (BAC 0.08+) by 8 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.											
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of Alcohol Involved (drivers with BAC of 0.08 or higher) fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 153, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of alcohol involved fatalities by 8 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 1 percent reduction from the baseline average of 153 (2018-2022) to 152 (2022-2026 average).											

Total Alc Involved Fatalities	Baseline						Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	127	129	153	178	178	164	151	139	128
5-Yr Avg	130	124	133	142	153	160	165	162	152	
Actual	127	129	155	174	177	168*	151	139	128	
5-Yr Avg	130	124	133	141	152	161	165	162	153	

\*Pending

NUMBER OF SPEED RELATED FATALITIES												
BASELINE VALUE	146	BASELINE START YEAR		2018	BASELINE END YEAR		2022					
TARGET VALUE	146	TARGET START YEAR		2022	TARGET END YEAR		2026					
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total speed related fatalities by 10 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.											
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of Speed Involved fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 146, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of alcohol involved fatalities by 10 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in no change (0.3%) from the baseline average of 146 (2018-2022).											

Total Speed Related Fatalities	Baseline						Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	119	110	146	178	178	160	144	130	117
5-Yr Avg	121	123	127	136	146	154	161	158	146	
Actual	119	110	146	187	173	171	144	130	117	
5-Yr Avg	121	123	127	138	147	157	164	161	147	

NUMBER OF MOTORCYCLE FATALITIES					
BASELINE VALUE	80	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022
TARGET VALUE	78	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total motorcyclist fatalities by 6 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.				
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of motorcyclist fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 80, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of motorcyclists killed by 6 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 2.2 percent reduction from the baseline average of 80 (2018-2022) to 78 (2022-2026 average).				

Total Motorcycle Fatalities	Baseline					Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	53	85	74	99	88	83	78	73	69
5-Yr Avg	64	68	73	79	80	86	84	84	78
Actual	53	85	78	101	95	90	91*	73	69
5-Yr Avg	64	68	74	80	82	90	91	90	84

\*Estimate

NUMBER OF UNHELMETED MOTORCYCLE FATALITIES									
BASELINE VALUE	11	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities by 7 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.								
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 11, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of fatally injured motorcyclists that were unhelmeted by 7 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 1.6 percent reduction from the baseline average of 11 (2018-2022) to 10 (2022-2026 average).								

Total Unhelmeted Motorcycle Fatalities	Baseline					Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	7	15	7	12	12	11	10	10	9
5-Yr Avg	5	7	7	9	11	11	11	11	10
Actual	7	15	9	15	16	4	7*	10	9
5-Yr Avg	5	7	7	10	12	12	10	10	9

\*Estimate

NUMBER OF YOUNG DRIVER INVOLVED FATALITIES								
	BASELINE VALUE	63	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022		
	TARGET VALUE	62	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026		
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total young driver (drivers between 16 and 20 years of age) involved fatalities by 3 percent annually from the 2022 total to through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of young driver involved fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 63, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of fatalities involving young drivers by 3 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 0.7 percent reduction from the baseline average of 63 (2018-2022) to 62 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Young Driver Inv Fatalities	Baseline							Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	52	54	64	77	66	64	62	60	58
5-Yr Avg	56	55	56	59	63	65	67	66	62	62
Actual	52	54	64	77	69	67	67*	60	58	58
5-Yr Avg	56	55	56	59	63	66	69	68	64	64

\*Estimate

NUMBER OF PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES								
	BASELINE VALUE	186	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022		
	TARGET VALUE	181	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026		
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total pedestrian fatalities by 3 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of pedestrian fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 186, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of pedestrians fatally injured by 3 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 2.7 percent reduction from the baseline average of 186 (2018-2022) to 181 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Pedestrian Fatalities	Baseline							Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	173	174	173	217	192	186	181	175	170
5-Yr Avg	171	173	173	184	186	188	190	190	181	181
Actual	173	174	173	217	191	171	215*	175	170	170
5-Yr Avg	171	173	173	184	186	185	193	194	184	184

\*Estimate

NUMBER OF BICYCLIST FATALITIES					
BASELINE VALUE	18	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022
TARGET VALUE	16	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total bicyclist fatalities by 3 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.				
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of bicyclist fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 18, New Jersey aims to reduce the total number of bicyclists fatally injured by 3 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 13 percent reduction from the baseline average of 18 (2018-2022) to 16 (2022-2026 average).				

Total Bicyclist Fatalities	Baseline					Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	18	13	18	26	17	17	16	15
5-Yr Avg	16	17	17	18	18	18	19	18	16
Actual	18	13	18	26	16	27	24*	16	15
5-Yr Avg	16	17	17	18	18	20	22	22	20

\*Estimate

SEAT BELT OBSERVATIONAL USE								
BASELINE VALUE	0.9236	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	0.9249	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Increase the observed seat belt use rate by 0.1 percent by 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To increase the 5-year average of observed front-seat passenger seat belt use rate to equal to or less than the baseline average of 92.4% (0.9236), New Jersey aims to maintain the current observation rate through 2026. This goal would result in a 0.1 percent increase from the baseline average of 92.4% (2018-2022) to 92.5% (2022-2026 average).							

Seat Belt OBS Rate	Baseline					Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	0.945	0.902	0.902	0.939	0.930	0.924	0.924	0.924
5-Yr Avg	0.923	0.928	0.926	0.926	0.9236	0.919	0.924	0.928	0.925
Actual	0.945	0.902	0.902	0.939	0.930	0.929	0.903	0.924	0.924
5-Yr Avg	0.923	0.928	0.926	0.926	0.924	0.921	0.921	0.925	0.922

NUMBER OF DRUG INVOLVED FATALITIES								
BASELINE VALUE	177	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	176	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total drug involved fatalities by 11 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of drug (illicit and/or medication influenced) involved fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 177, New Jersey aims to reduce the total number of drug impaired driving fatalities by 11 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 1 percent reduction from the baseline average of 177 (2018-2022) to 176 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Drug Inv Fatalities	Baseline						Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	154	141	154	219	219	195	173	154	137
5-Yr Avg	133	143	151	167	177	186	192	192	176	
Actual	154	141	154	219	201	179	173	154	137	
5-Yr Avg	133	143	151	167	174	179	185	185	169	

NUMBER OF DISTRACTED DRIVING RELATED FATALITIES								
BASELINE VALUE	129	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	129	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce distracted driving involved fatalities by 7 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of distracted driving involved fatalities to equal to or less than the baseline average of 129, New Jersey aims to reduce the total number of distracted driving cause fatalities by 7 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in no change (-0.1%) from the baseline average of 129 (2018-2022) to 129 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Dist Drv Inv Fatalities	Baseline						Target			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
	Target	98	164	98	136	148	138	128	119	111
5-Yr Avg	157	151	141	130	129	137	130	134	129	
Actual	98	164	98	139	183	160	128	119	111	
5-Yr Avg	157	151	141	130	136	149	142	146	140	

NUMBER OF OLDER DRIVER FATALITIES								
BASELINE VALUE	69	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	68	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total older driver fatalities by 3 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the 5-year average of older drivers (drivers aged 65 and older) fatally injured to equal to or less than the baseline average of 69, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of older drivers fatally injured by 3 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 0.2 percent reduction from the baseline average of 69 (2018-2022) to 68 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Older Driver Fatalities	Baseline						Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	72	62	58	63	88	67	65	63	61
5-Yr Avg	65	66	65	65	69	68	68	69	68
Actual	72	62	58	61	88	74	80*	63	61
5-Yr Avg	65	66	65	65	68	69	72	73	73

NUMBER OF WORK ZONE RELATED CRASHES								
BASELINE VALUE	3,150	BASELINE START YEAR	2018	BASELINE END YEAR	2022			
TARGET VALUE	2,411	TARGET START YEAR	2022	TARGET END YEAR	2026			
GOAL STATEMENT	Reduce the total work zone related crashes by 2 percent annually from the 2022 total through 2026.							
JUSTIFICATION	To reduce the total work zone related crashes to equal to or less than the baseline average of 3,150, New Jersey aims to reduce the number of work zone related crashes by 2 percent annually through 2026. This reduction goal would result in a 23.5 percent reduction from the baseline average of 3,150 (2018-2022) to 2,411 (2022-2026 average).							

Total Work Zone Crashes	Baseline						Target		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Target	4,091	3,825	2,816	2,509	2,509	2,459	2,410	2,361	2,314
5-Yr Avg	4,883	4,329	3,848	3,459	3,150	2,824	2,540	2,450	2,411
Actual	4,091	3,825	2,816	3,021	2,509	3,059*	2,410	2,361	2,314
5-Yr Avg	4,883	4,329	3,848	3,561	3,252	3,046	2,763	2,672	2,531

## Activity Measures

1. <b>Seat Belt:</b> There were 12,826 seat belt citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2024, up from 12,194 in 2023.
2. <b>Impaired Driving:</b> There were 2,441 impaired driving arrests made during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2024, up from 1,724 in 2023.
3. <b>Speed:</b> There were 12,736 speeding citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2024, up from 11,803 in 2023.
4. <b>Cell Phone/Texting:</b> There were 8,923 cell phone/texting citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2024, up from 8,760 in 2023

# Performance Targets

Reviewing performance targets is an important, ongoing process. When targets are not met, programmatic efforts are adjusted accordingly. For FY2024 performance targets not met, DHTS plans the following activities in the Triennial 2024-2026 HSP update for FY2026.

Evaluating performance targets is a crucial and ongoing endeavor, particularly in the context of the Triennial 2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan. Adapting programmatic efforts when targets appear to be off track is essential. While many performance targets showed a positive trend in 2023, 2024 has presented some challenges. The task of meeting these targets is made more complex by the requirements of the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which mandates that states establish performance targets demonstrating "constant or improved performance," even in circumstances where such expectations may be unattainable.

In general, DHTS feels it has appropriate, robust countermeasures in place, especially considering the available countermeasure options within NHTSA's "Countermeasures that Work" document or the NHTSA Highway Safety Program Guidelines. DHTS also believes that many strong traffic safety activities were conducted in FY2024, as demonstrated in this annual report, and are planned for FY2025, as specified in the FY2025 Annual Grant Application.

As noted in the charts on the preceding pages, some performance targets are on track to be met, but many are not. Three of these not-on-track targets are highlighted below for further examination:

## 1. Number of Traffic Fatalities

Motor vehicle fatalities declined in the state in 2022 and 2023, but have increased in 2024. DHTS plans a comprehensive series of efforts in FY2025 and beyond to reverse the recent trend, which will include new forms of data analysis,

grass roots public participation and engagement (PP&E), state-wide communication campaigns, and target enforcement backed by strong law enforcement community collaboration.

DHTS now has access to the New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes (NJ-SHO) Center for Integrated Data Dashboard. This interactive public-facing data analysis tool, powered by aggregate-level data embedded into the Center's website, was launched in May 2024 ([njsho.chop.edu/data/data-dashboard](http://njsho.chop.edu/data/data-dashboard)). It features an interactive data dashboard that enables users to visualize, monitor, and track important traffic safety measures across communities and over time to help reduce injuries and fatalities on NJ roadways.

The data dashboard will be an invaluable tool in identifying negatively affected traffic safety communities. Its integrated data set goes far beyond just crash data by also examining demographic and community characteristics of drivers, passengers, and pedestrians with the goal of promoting transportation equity for all.

A collaborative project involving HTS and other agencies within the Department of Law and Public Safety has led to the development of a new dashboard designed to effectively display fatal crash data. This publicly accessible dashboard enables traffic safety professionals, law enforcement agencies, media, and the general public to easily view and research the data compiled by the state. This public-facing dashboard can be queried for county or municipal-level fatal crash data and is a useful tool for traffic safety project problem identification. All parties involved dedicated significant time and effort to this project, resulting in a user-friendly and highly comprehensive source of information.

The New Jersey FY2024-2026 HSP includes a comprehensive public participation and engagement plan that seeks to undertake community engagement in a multi-faceted way,

which will result in meaningful input and results that will build successful partnerships, inform ongoing traffic safety planning, and positively affect traffic safety in the state. Extensive FY2024 PP&E highlights are included later in this annual report. DHTS plans to implement a series of tasks in FY2025 that align with the community engagement strategies outlined in the FY2024-2026 HSP, based on lessons learned from efforts in FY2023 and FY2024 and realizing that new ideas and best practices will emerge in the years ahead. Guidance will be given, and structures will be put in place for our grantees and partners to work with DHTS to the most effective degree possible.

The media outreach that DHTS plans to undertake in FY2025 will be a critical component of overall efforts to inform the community and engage with them for successful traffic safety programs, which should ultimately contribute to a decrease in fatalities. Strategies will educate community members about projects and programs using paid (advertising), earned (media relations), and owned (social media and website) media outlets. Specifically, content will be tailored to reach targeted audiences. Materials will be translated to provide resources to people who use languages other than English and distributed in multiple ways to reach a broad audience and people in underserved communities.

In FY2025, grant dollars will be allocated to municipal, county, and State law enforcement agencies to participate in high-visibility enforcement efforts designed to deter speeding, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and to increase the use of seat belts, especially in program areas where performance targets are not on track. Saturation patrols will concentrate on problem roadways and locations as identified through a data-driven approach and analysis. A reduction in New Jersey's observed seat belt usage rate in 2024 specifically points to the need for a comprehensive and data-driven approach to seat belt enforcement, which will be undertaken in FY2025 utilizing a combination of sustained enforcement and mobilization crackdowns.

Safety programs carried out by the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) and New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) will put an emphasis on belt usage for the younger driving population. Community engagement programs to be carried out by grass-roots DHTS funded agencies will also be a useful tool to get this important information to underserved locations in the state.

DHTS also expects that new, community collaboration efforts undertaken by the state's law enforcement agencies will bear fruit in the years ahead. DHTS worked actively with its law enforcement partners in FY2024 to incorporate community collaboration into the important traffic safety work done by police agencies. Recognizing the statutory requirement for law enforcement community collaboration, as well as the positive impact on safety that this engagement will bring about, DHTS developed a plan in FY2024 to offer guidance to and collect reports from its law enforcement grant funded agencies relating to their community engagement activities. Several New Jersey law enforcement agencies undertook notable efforts to engage with their communities.

## **2. Number of Pedestrian Fatalities**

Pedestrian injuries and fatalities are traditionally a challenging issue in New Jersey. Despite declines in pedestrian fatalities in 2022 and 2023, an increase is evident in 2024.

A comprehensive NHTSA Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Assessment was held early in FY2025. Preliminary recommendations, which when implemented should strengthen New Jersey pedestrian safety partnerships and program delivery include:

- ◆ **Direct the staff assigned to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, New Jersey Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Coalition, and Pedestrian Resource Center to encourage consistency in the outreach by organizations and individuals.**
- ◆ **Develop a Comprehensive Education and Public Outreach Communications Plan**

**focusing on statewide traffic safety education and outreach specifically addressing pedestrian and bicyclist safety.**

- ◆ **Develop a Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety "media toolbox" for law enforcement to include implementation, calendaring of "Drive Smart," "Street Smart," or any other safety programs.**
- ◆ **Emphasize the lifesaving benefit of enforcing pedestrian and bicyclist laws in both the basic recruit training academy and in-service training for law enforcement officers, giving equal emphasis to bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist education and engagement when training officers and developing community outreach. Incorporating such training into the basic academy curriculum would ensure officers receive consistent and accurate information.**

DHTS will utilize a data driven approach to allocate its pedestrian safety-related funding in an effort to meet this performance target in FY2025 and beyond. The Crash Analysis Tool will develop a list of 100 municipalities in NJ that experienced the highest number of pedestrian crashes over the last five-year period. Pedestrian crash factors, as well as demographic and equity-related considerations garnered from the CHOP NJ-SHO Center for Integrated Data, will also be considered to target pedestrian safety enforcement and educational grant programs.

Grant funds will be prioritized to appropriate municipalities, leveraging other programmatic resources, local champions, and statewide partners who can assist in the effort. Several cities with high pedestrian crash rates, including Newark and Elizabeth, have been awarded funding for FY2025 despite not participating in DHTS grant programs for several years.

### **3. Number of Alcohol-Involved Fatalities**

The number of alcohol-involved fatalities in the state declined in 2023 but remains a concern as this performance target is not on track. Twenty-eight percent of all motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey in 2023 were a result of one or more drivers being under the influence of alcohol, up

from 19% in 2022. Coming up with innovative strategies to target what has been a systemic issue for many decades is a challenge, but for FY2025 and ensuing years, DHTS plans large-scale statewide public information paid media campaigns, as well as additional yearlong sustained enforcement grants in counties and local communities that are ranked high for alcohol-related crashes and fatalities. The DHTS Crash Analysis Tool and CHOP NJ-SHO data dashboard will allow for a more targeted approach to awarding mobilization grants during the national crackdown periods. Targeted social media will be employed to deliver messaging to high-risk, diverse groups.

The recent restructuring of the state's Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund will allow for more effective and efficient use of millions of dollars in non-federal impaired driving countermeasure resources. To support the NHTSA Region II Regional Action Plan, DHTS has undertaken a more holistic approach to impaired driving messaging. New Jersey is putting this concept into action during the FY2024-2026 HSP period by including referral information to the 800-REACH-NJ (reachnj.com) one-stop substance abuse referral site in all marketing materials including printed brochures, social media posts, and paid media impaired driving campaigns. DHTS has partnerships in place with the NJ Cannabis Regulatory Commission and Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey with additional programming planned for FY2025. The goal is to get individuals with substance abuse problems into treatment before they get behind the wheel and potentially injure or kill themselves or others in a crash.

In addition, the robust Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) callout program that exists in New Jersey will be further expanded during the triennial HSP period, especially in light of the critical role this program plays in determining the effects on traffic safety of the recreational marijuana use law in the state.

# Program Funding

## ***Federally Funded Programs***

### **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 175 grants in FY2024, totaling \$12,531,870.

Section 402 program highlights included: Grant funding to the state's Police Traffic Officers Association and the New Jersey Association of Chiefs of Police; a grant to the NJ Institute of Technology for the state's 2024 seat belt usage survey; a sizable paid media project; 38 comprehensive police enforcement grants; seven county and regional Community Traffic Safety Grants; large police training and public education grants with Rutgers University, Kean University, and the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ; and 80 grants to local police agencies for the 2024 Click It Or Ticket mobilization.

### **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 12 grants, totaling \$1,375,036.

### **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 four grants totaling \$2,027,329.

### **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 151 grants in FY2024 totaling \$5,429,351.

### **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 135 grants with this funding, totaling \$1,795,270.

## **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 \$210,100 under this program.

## **Section 405(g) Non-motorized Safety**

The Section 405(g) 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 26 grants, totaling \$790,745 under this program.

## **Section 405(h) Preventing Roadside Deaths**

The Section 405(h) Preventing Roadside Deaths program awards funding to states that adopt and implement effective programs to prevent death and injury from crashes involving motor vehicles striking other vehicles and individuals stopped at the roadside. DHTS successfully qualified for this funding for the first time in FY2024 and awarded six grants, totaling \$91,792 under this program.

## **State Funded Programs**

### **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

the imposition of the surcharge are entitled to grants representing its proportionate contribution to the fund. Recipients of DDEF grant funds must apply the funds toward supplemental DWI enforcement patrols and sobriety checkpoints in addition to optional equipment that must also be related to DWI countermeasures.

New for State Fiscal Year 2024, eligible law enforcement agencies are now awarded DDEF grant funds through a reimbursement process. The reimbursement process requires agencies to spend their allotted DDEF funds on qualified expenditures using funds from their town's local budget. Each town's DDEF reimbursement submissions are then reviewed by the State DDEF Coordinator to determine if the funds were expended on required overtime salary or qualified DWI enforcement equipment. This new process ensures greater oversight by the State DDEF Coordinator that DDEF funds are being used appropriately to combat intoxicated driving statewide.

State Fiscal Year 2024 was a transition period for the DDEF program. The transition to a reimbursement program required audits of each agency applying for DDEF funds to determine the amount of unexpended DDEF funds in their town's local DDEF account(s). Each town found to have a local DDEF balance was required to expend their local DDEF funds prior to being awarded new DDEF funds. By the end of State Fiscal Year 2024, DHTS reimbursed a total of \$390,324.38 in DDEF funds to local and state law enforcement agencies and finished the fiscal year with an operating balance of \$10,717,262.89.

### **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 2024, eleven pedestrian safety enforcement and education grants were funded in the amount of \$184,960.

### **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 successfully provided to 8,707 riders during 2024 at private locations by state

approved motorcycle safety providers, which was a decrease from 8,920 riders trained in 2023.

### **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 are 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. One grant was awarded in FY2024 to purchase commercial vehicle snow removal equipment. A listing of the 19 snow removal devices funded to date through this program is posted on the DHTS website.



# Funded Projects & Activities

## ***Alcohol & Other Drug Countermeasures – Project Summaries***

### **DWI Training/Drug Recognition Expert Program**

Standardized training courses were offered to law enforcement personnel in FY2024 relating to the detection, apprehension, processing, and prosecution of DWI offenders. The DWI Detection Standardized Field Sobriety Testing five-day course was delivered to 876 officers (up from 744 in FY2023) while another 217 officers completed a four-hour refresher course. The Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training program was conducted, as well, with 67 police officers trained and certified as DREs, 81 officers recertified, and another 10 officers certified as DRE Instructors. Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) courses were held for 341 police officers.

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 an additional 398 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 caused by drug use.

A DRE call-out program is in place in much of the state with established policies 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 FY2024: (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) trained and re-certified in FY2024 on the use of the Alcotest 7110 unit was 3,962 while another 3,086 received training on the new 9510 model, which will continue field validation and statewide roll out in FY2025.

### **College Programs**

Several New Jersey colleges and universities delivered important campus-based educational programs in FY2024 relating to healthy decision making and substance abuse.

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) brought the Arrive Alive impaired/distracted driving simulator to campus and conducted numerous educational programs including Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS), which is a two-hour skill-based training to prevent intoxication, underge

drinking, and drunk driving by enhancing the decision making of college students. A team of peer educators conducted numerous other awareness programs on campus. In addition, 46 students from colleges throughout the state participated in the annual TCNJ Peer Institute, during which students were trained and equipped to engage in bystander intervention relating to impaired driving and other traffic safety issues.

*TCNJ Peer Educators*



### **Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Campaigns**

From December 1, 2023 – January 1, 2024, the state's law enforcement community teamed up to carry out the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2023 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, 132 agencies received overtime grant funds totaling \$795,340. The campaign resulted in 603 DWI arrests (up from 574 in the FY2023 campaign), 1,034 speeding summonses, and 557 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 2024 Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Statewide Crackdown, took place August 16 – September 2, 2024, to coincide with the national enforcement crackdown. For this campaign, \$540,680 in overtime grant funding was awarded to 110 agencies. The campaign resulted in 633 DWI arrests (up from 350 in the FY2023 campaign), 3,568 speeding summonses and 1,608 seat belt summonses.

### **Underage Enforcement**

Funds were provided to the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) in FY2024 to implement a series of educational and enforcement programs relating to the illegal sale of alcohol to minors.

During the project year, 65 licensed ABC establishments were identified for investigation of underage and/or intoxicated patron drinking activity. A total of 129 patrons were approached by local police and ABC enforcement personnel and asked to produce identification in order to verify that they were of legal age. Fifty-two persons were arrested for violation of the NJ Alcoholic Beverage Control Act. An additional six administrative violations were identified and have been submitted to the ABC Enforcement Bureau for prosecution of these violations.

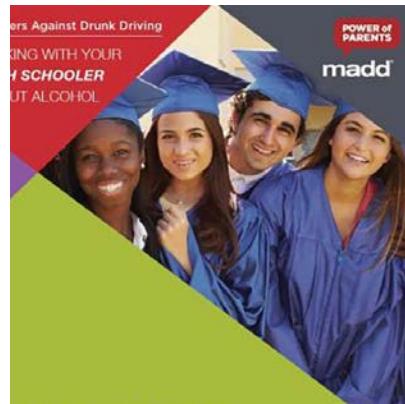
In addition, ABC investigators carried out another round of surveys of licensed establishments to capture how the establishments check and ascertain fictitious identification, to determine best efforts. Also, educational materials from DHTS were distributed by ABC during two large public events in May and September 2024 in Wildwood and Asbury Park, to educate patrons on the consequences of underage drinking and driving as well as the laws and penalties an individual can be charged with for impaired driving. DHTS and ABC continue to collaborate to determine establishments that require training or regulatory enforcement through review of data provided by Last Drink Reports.

Nineteen municipal police departments in five counties (Atlantic, Cape May, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean) participated in the annual 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. There were 23 arrests made and 34 separate charges lodged during the project.

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 17 enforcement details during the grant year, resulting in numerous underage patrons being charged. There were also a number of violations issued against liquor establishments and beach concert permit holders relating to improper sale of alcohol to minors.

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

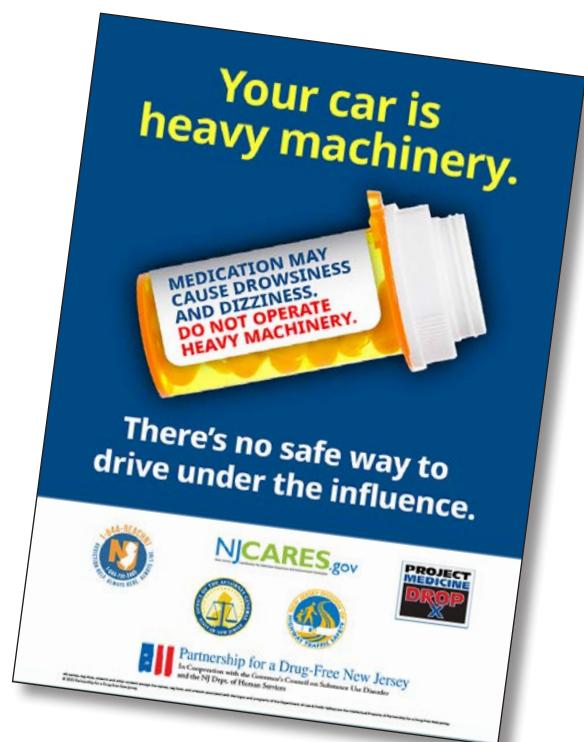
The New Jersey Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) received grant funding in FY2024 to raise important awareness about impaired driving and its consequences. MADD actively collaborated with county coalitions, community-based youth service departments, middle and high schools, and law enforcement officials and agencies, delivered Power of You(th) and Power of Parents presentations and workshops, and coordinated community-based material distribution events during school forums, locally sponsored events, and conferences throughout New Jersey. MADD New Jersey was also part of the national pilot of



the Promposal Program. MADD's Promposal program provides students with reminders about the dangers of underage drinking, cannabis, poly-substance use, and the dangers of getting into a car with an impaired driver, especially during Prom Night.

### **Partnership with Substance Abuse Treatment Community**

HTS continued its collaboration with the Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey and the New Jersey Coordinator for Addiction Response & Enforcement Strategies (NJ CARES) in FY2024. Pharmacy bags embossed with a message about the dangers of driving while impaired by prescription medication were developed and distributed to more than 900 independent pharmacies around the state. More than 200,000 New Jersey residents received the bags when picking up their prescriptions.



## Occupant Protection – Project Summaries



Traffic safety officials from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware gather for the Click It or Ticket kickoff event at Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia.

### Click It or Ticket

The Click It or Ticket seat belt enforcement mobilization for FY2024 began on May 20 and ran through June 2. 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 \$766,010 was awarded to 119 police agencies. These agencies issued 7,854 seat belt summonses (up from 6,989 in the FY2023 campaign), 2,530 speeding summonses, and made 248 DWI arrests.

### Seat Belt Survey

The annual statewide seat belt survey, conducted for DHTS by the New Jersey Institute of Technology, found that the vast majority of New Jersey motorists continue to buckle up, though there was a decline in the usage rate from 2023. The 2024 front-seat belt usage rate is 90.33%. That is a decrease of 2.60% from the last survey result of 92.93% in 2023. The driver and front-seat passenger usage rates were 90.33% and 90.25% respectively. Among the counties included in the survey, Salem, Camden

and Atlantic saw the largest increases in belt use (20.09%, 12.06%, and 5.60%) while Morris and Union both had steep declines based on the survey results (7.54% and 5.99%, respectively).

### Child Passenger Safety

New Jersey's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program continued its work in FY2024 to reduce traffic injury and fatality rates through coordinated enforcement and education programs regarding the proper use of child restraints in motor vehicles. Eleven agencies (two 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, retraining, 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 Child Passenger Safety related material, 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. The program was brought to the public in the form of many Child Passenger Safety educational events held at the community level throughout the year. A highlight was National Child Passenger Safety Week from September 15-21, 2024. During the week, DHTS sponsored child restraint check/educational events throughout the state including multiple events on Seat Check Saturday, September 21, 2024.

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. Seventeen child passenger safety courses were held in 2024, at which 299 new technicians were trained.

In addition, NJ State Police conducted a certification course for 21 of its personnel. Currently, there are 1,204 individuals trained as certified technicians in the state working in public safety, health and injury prevention programs. Thirty-seven of the technicians are certified as CPS instructors. New Jersey recertification rate for its technicians in 2024 was 55%, above the national average of 47%.

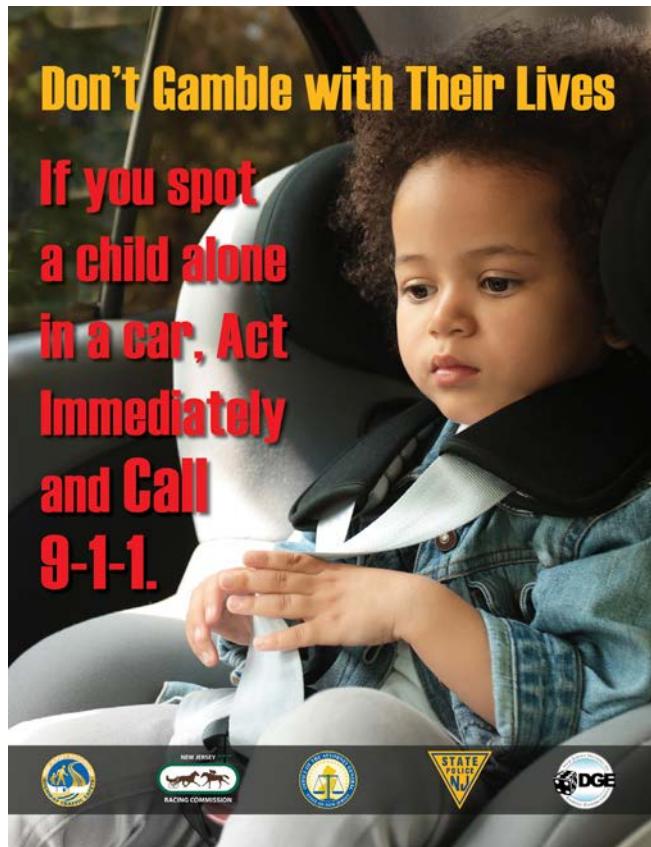
## Unattended Passengers

In May 2024, DHTS launched a statewide campaign aimed at reducing the tragic incidents of children succumbing to extreme heat from being left unattended in vehicles. To reach a broad audience, DHTS collaborated with the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement, the New Jersey Racing Commission, and the New Jersey State Police on a targeted awareness and information campaign in Atlantic City casino parking areas and at horse racing tracks across the state. The initiative included prominently displayed posters near each exit and elevator throughout these parking facilities, reminding

patrons to remain vigilant for unattended children and to notify police immediately if they see a child left alone in a vehicle. Security personnel at these locations were also briefed on the importance of hyperthermia prevention and given specific instructions on how to respond if they encountered a child alone in a vehicle.

During the summer of 2024, no hyperthermia-related child deaths occurred in these monitored locations, a hopeful sign that the message resonated with the public. Given the volume of visitors to New Jersey's casinos, it's likely that this critical awareness reached beyond the immediate audience, potentially raising awareness throughout the region.

Unfortunately, despite these efforts, two young lives were lost elsewhere in New Jersey during the summer of 2024 due to hyperthermia after being left in unattended vehicles. This underscores the need for continued action and innovation in spreading awareness. DHTS is committed to finding new ways to amplify this message to help prevent further tragedies in the future.



# **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Project Summaries**

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Technical Program Assessment**

Recognizing the challenging environment for pedestrians and bicyclists in New Jersey, in FY2024 the state requested NHTSA's assistance in assessing New Jersey's pedestrian and bicyclist safety program. The Pedestrian and Bicyclist Program Assessment Team, consisting of subject matter experts from around the country, conducted the New Jersey Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Program Assessment from August 15 to November 14, 2024.

The assessment focused on the following elements: program management, education, enforcement, engineering, emergency medical services, and equity and accessibility. Extensive information was gathered on existing pedestrian and bicyclist programs and systems in place in the state, and numerous stakeholders were interviewed in person by the assessment team.

A final report was issued by the assessment team that includes these priority recommendations:

### **Program Management**

- ◆ Continue the use of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds for On-Call Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Consultants.
- ◆ Direct the staff assigned to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, New Jersey Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Coalition, and Pedestrian Resource Center to encourage consistency in the outreach by organizations and individuals.
- ◆ Provide training or guidance to the New Jersey Department of Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program project managers and local recipients of HSIP funds on data analysis, outreach, and post-project evaluation.

### **Education**

- ◆ Develop a Comprehensive Education and Public Outreach Communications Plan

focusing on statewide traffic safety education and outreach specifically addressing pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

- ◆ Develop a Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety "media toolbox" for law enforcement to include implementation, calendaring of "Drive Smart," Street Smart," or any other safety programs.
- ◆ Develop a "media toolbox" of public outreach and education for Emergency Medical Services professionals and administer through special programs such as school assemblies, Safe Kids-bike safety and helmet distribution, driver education offerings (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and First Aid), and procedure guides and programs.

### **Enforcement**

- ◆ Emphasize the lifesaving benefit of enforcing pedestrian and bicyclist laws in both the basic recruit training academy and in-service training for law enforcement officers, giving equal emphasis to bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist education and engagement when training officers and developing community outreach. Incorporating such training into the basic academy curriculum would ensure officers receive consistent and accurate information.
- ◆ Stress the importance of collection and documentation of pedestrian and bicyclist information and unique crash scene evidence during basic law enforcement officer training on crash investigation.
- ◆ Seek recognition opportunities for officers who show a dedication and devotion to the education and enforcement of laws protecting vulnerable roadway users. Such recognition encourages the continued involvement of officers in traffic safety efforts and recognizes individual lifesaving efforts on the part of the officer.

### **Engineering**

- ◆ Work with the New Jersey Local Technical Assistance Program to develop pedestrian and bicyclist safety programs that can be applied at the local level.

- ◆ Establish a local pedestrian and bicyclist safety program in partnership with the New Jersey Local Technical Assistance Program.
- ◆ Publish and distribute the updated Complete Streets Policy and provide any necessary training to agencies and organizations affected by this policy.
- ◆ Establish a clear policy that requires transportation investment and programs focusing on underserved communities.
- ◆ Formally adopt the Safe System Approach to create a comprehensive, equitable approach to highway safety in the next State Highway Safety Plan.

### ***Emergency Medical Services***

- ◆ Take the necessary legislative and other steps, as a long-term goal, to establish regulatory authority over all forms of Emergency Medical Services provider agencies. This will level the field for pedestrians and bicyclists in need of Emergency Medical Services care, so they know whichever agency and personnel arrive to assist them, those agencies and personnel have met state established standards for quality.
- ◆ Complete implementation of the New Jersey State Health Outcomes initiative in conjunction with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. This is a national model for an injury surveillance system and research tool that other states can replicate.

### ***Equity and Accessibility***

- ◆ Assess which communities are missing from existing coalitions like The New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council using the existing relationships from community engagement and the Americans with Disabilities Act transition plan to engage the minority and disabled communities earlier in the policy and planning process.
- ◆ Create a communication plan with best practices for engaging community members with sensory and intellectual disabilities using the updated Complete Streets legislation as an opportunity to create a communication plan alongside design practices for people with autism spectrum disorder and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- ◆ Create a Complete Streets database to document which New Jersey Department

- of Transportation projects and New Jersey Department of Transportation-funded projects include complete streets elements and track which infrastructure improvements are being implemented across the state.
- ◆ Include stronger Complete Streets and safety requirements for Local Aid grants.
- ◆ Create a statewide mapping project for pedestrian infrastructure data, including curb cuts and Accessible Pedestrian Signals. NJDOT would contribute data on the state routes and coordinate the local data already collected by Metro Planning Organizations and counties. New Jersey Department of Transportation would establish a standard sidewalk condition rating that could be incorporated into straight line diagrams.
- ◆ Create a program to monitor completeness and implementation of local jurisdiction's Americans with Disabilities Act transition plans; this could be under the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Division of Civil Rights/Affirmative Action.
- ◆ Remove all exemptions in the Complete Streets policy and reiterate its purpose to protect vulnerable road users and non-drivers across the state, including rural areas.

DHTS recognizes that many of the recommendations do not fall within its purview but nonetheless looks forward to working in partnership with other state agencies and stakeholders to enact many of the recommendations in FY2025 and beyond to foster safer roads for pedestrians and bicyclists in the state.

### **Pedestrian Enforcement and Education**

Increasing the safety of pedestrians in New Jersey is a priority, as the state traditionally has one of the highest rates of pedestrian fatalities in the nation. In FY2024, the Division's primary pedestrian safety countermeasure involved working with the Federal Highway Administration, New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority to expand and

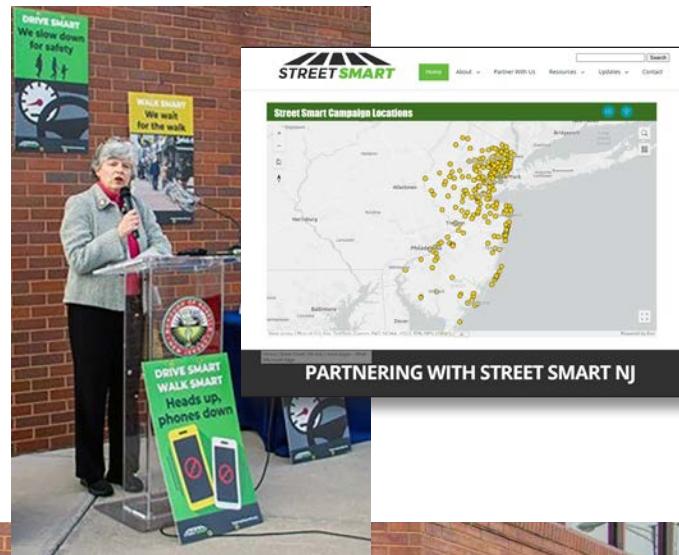
strengthen the Street Smart NJ Campaign. The Street Smart NJ Campaign uses a combination of community-wide grass roots education and awareness backed by strong law enforcement measures to reduce pedestrian injury crashes.

Forty-four agencies received grants from the State Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund and Federal Sections 402 and 405(g) Non-Motorized Fund. The grant funds were used to pay for overtime police enforcement that targeted high pedestrian crash locations and provided Street Smart NJ Campaign 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 250 communities and organizations have participated in the program, 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.

Among the many communities to undertake a significant Street Smart NJ program in 2024 was the Borough of Roselle. The police department there worked with city and county officials, the EZ Ride TMA, and the school district to educate students, employees, and residents about safe driving and walking practices and to enforce driver and pedestrian-related laws with a specific focus on West 2nd Avenue in the borough.

Greater Mercer TMA teamed up with Hopewell Borough and Hopewell Township for a Street Smart NJ campaign in those communities. Highlights of the effort included the distribution of lawn signs, an online survey, posters throughout the local business district, and a Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day event hosted by the police department on May 9, 2024.





## Crossing Guard Program

For more than a decade, the New Jersey Safe Routes Resource Center at the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at Rutgers University has been conducting research on crossing guard training and developing and implementing a statewide uniform, comprehensive Crossing Guard Training Program. With funding from DHTS, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund of New Jersey (NJMEL), VTC continues to train and provide resources to crossing guards and their supervisors, all of which can be found on the program website: [www.njcrossingguards.org](http://www.njcrossingguards.org).

With the support of DHTS grant funding, representatives of the VTC conducted two virtual crossing guard supervisor classes on May 30 and August 6, 2024. In all, 95 participants took part in these trainings, representing all parts of the state. In addition, in-person crossing guard trainings were conducted in three underserved communities: North Bergen on April 1, 2024, Trenton on August 27, 2024, and Passaic on August 29, 2024. A Spanish-language version of the Crossing Guard Instructional Training Video was also created and posted on the program website.

## Bicycle Safety

The New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, with the support of grant funding from DHTS, continued its comprehensive public awareness campaign on the state's "Safe Passing Law." The law aims to prevent the near misses, injuries and deaths that often occur when motorists pass cyclists, pedestrians, scooters, people in wheelchairs, or other vulnerable road users unsafely. It provides many benefits including increasing the space given by careful drivers



therefore enhancing the comfort level and safety of other road users. The 4-foot distance also protects falling cyclists from colliding with passing vehicles. An active website is in place that contains information on the law, downloadable materials and resources, a social media toolkit, and other useful links.



The 13th Annual NJBWC Summit took place on May 18, 2024 at Middlesex College. The event brought together bicycle and pedestrian advocates, elected officials, transportation and urban planners, bike shop owners and managers, cycling, walking, fitness and health enthusiasts and others who are interested in making New Jersey a better place to live through safer streets and equitable mobility.

options. The Summit was attended by over 200 participants and featured three keynote speakers, 16 workshops with 50 panelists and presenters.

Bicycle safety programming for riders of all ages was delivered at the local level by the eight Transportation Management Associations in New Jersey. Bicycle rodeos were conducted to teach young riders important safety lessons about cycling and proper helmet usage. 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. Major goals of these efforts included fostering bike friendly communities and an equitable transportation network, while also promoting the benefits of regular physical activity.



## Community Traffic Safety Programs - Project Summaries

### Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSP)

The community-based traffic safety projects funded each year by the Division play a critical role in engaging with local residents and delivering essential safety programming. In FY2024, 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 2024: Atlantic, Cape May, 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, engagement, and education with community groups, corporate employers and students. Examples of activities conducted in FY2024 included the following projects:

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) made significant strides in traffic safety awareness and community engagement during FY2024 through workshops, web-based training, expanded community partnerships, social media outreach, and participation in various meetings and conferences. BIANJ conducted 295 workshops and safety events, reaching over 10,000 individuals, including 23 workshops held in Spanish.

BIANJ continued to focus on cities with high crash rates and underserved populations, particularly in Camden City, Newark, and the Mercer/Greater Trenton Area. These targeted outreach efforts resulted in 150 workshops and events in settings that reached children, parents, and adults of all ages. To enhance the digital engagement, BIANJ partnered with a marketing firm to launch a pedestrian safety campaign utilizing social media influencers. This strategy yielded impressive results, bringing 16k new users to the Jersey Drives website and achieving 621K impressions through influencer content. These engagement ads effectively boosted interactions, with video content outperforming traditional ads.

Now, in its 14th year, the U Got Brains Champion Schools Program has continued to make a substantial impact on teen driving safety, reaching nearly one million students since its inception. This year, 58 high schools across 18 counties participated in this peer-to-peer program that provides teens an opportunity to develop unique campaigns addressing driving safety. Program evaluations demonstrated positive effects on teen driving behaviors; notably, the percentage of students who reported speeding decreased by 67%, while seatbelt usage increased by 27%, and focused driving improved by 44%.

In its second year, the peer-to-peer College Roads and Safety Habits program (CRASH) partnered with four colleges: Rutgers University, NJIT, William Paterson University, and Passaic County Community College. All institutions successfully completed their requirements and submitted final reports. The virtual CRASH award showcase highlighted Rutgers University-New Brunswick winning first place, with Passaic County Community College as the runner-up.

Additionally, BIANJ continue to engage older adults through a comprehensive approach to enhancing road safety. This year, BIANJ conducted 72 workshops for seniors in English and Spanish, reaching 1,604 individuals across 16 counties. The curriculum includes brain health education alongside traditional topics like impaired walking or driving, distraction, and speeding. By addressing both physical and cognitive aspects of safety, BIANJ aims to reduce crashes and fatalities among the 50-80 age group. This approach ensures that seniors receive relevant information to maintain their well-being and safety.

To enhance awareness and enforcement of Title 39 laws, BIANJ and a consultant conducted regional training workshops for police officers to improve their understanding of cycling and motorist interaction laws, including a segment on the

new Safe Passing law (39:4-92.4). Five trainings were conducted across five counties, attended by a total of 58 police officers representing 24 agencies. Each session included pre- and post-surveys to evaluate effectiveness. Training has shown significant improvement in understanding Title 39 laws, with pre-training test scores averaging 55% and post-training scores over 80%.

Lastly, BIANJ continues to host the New Jersey Bike and Pedestrian Safety Coalition quarterly meetings and develops unified social media messaging weekly that is distributed to almost 300 partners, in addition to all police departments across the state. These messages are provided in both English and Spanish.

The North Jersey Foundation for Safety (AAA Clubs of New Jersey) conducted older driver safety presentations and Car Fit sessions both in person and virtually, and certified new Car Fit Technicians and event coordinators across the state. A safe driving awareness program "Slow Down/Move Over" was sponsored at all rest stops on the New Jersey Turnpike, Garden State Parkway, and Atlantic City Expressway as well as on buses and billboards throughout the state. Teen drivers received important impaired driving related information through the course Shifting Gears: The Blunt Truth on Marijuana and Driving. Law enforcement officers received pedestrian and bicycle safety training in the form of the courses Cops in Crosswalks and Title 39: A Bike's Eye View.

*AAA CarFit program participants*



New Jersey's eight Transportation Management Associations (Avenues in Motion, Hudson TMA, 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 FY2024 at the local level. The TMAs 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 released throughout the year by the TMAs, to coincide with major national campaigns as well as local initiatives. The traffic safety work of the TMAs is highlighted in detail in the Public Participation and Engagement section of this report.

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, 43,860 community members were reached. Through its child safety seat inspection stations, SKNJ checked 5,100 car seats, reaching 11,088 parents/

caregivers and 4,840 children. A total of 1,085 car seats and 3,495 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, Project Prom Night, Safety Town, and Never Leave Your Child Alone (Heatstroke Prevention).

Kean University, through its Statewide Comprehensive Traffic Safety Project, took the lead in hosting 25 crash investigation training courses in FY2024 (Basic Crash Investigation, Advanced Crash Investigation, and Math and Physics Review Courses) with 621 police officer attendees successfully completing the classes. 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. There were 40 police officers recognized in FY2024 as having completed either Level I or Level II of this program.

---



## ***Public Participation and Engagement – Project Summaries***

### **Public Participation and Engagement**

During FY2024, DHTS continued its focus on prioritizing meaningful community engagement initiatives throughout New Jersey. Having reviewed and reevaluated efforts from FY2023, the Division readjusted FY2024 efforts by adopting a robust platform focusing on three main components:

- 1. Statewide public engagement initiatives;**
- 2. Connectivity with and between state, county and local agencies and non-profit organizations; and**
- 3. Support for both sub-grantees and state agencies.**

From these three starting points, the Division's efforts thrived. Initiatives included establishing a presence throughout the state by participating in community engagement activities carried out at the local level with both former and new partners, collaborating with non-profit sub-grantee organizations on ideas, projects and initiatives, offering continuing guidance and training of the Division's staff with an emphasis on encouraging best practices for effective community engagement strategies, offering training and ongoing guidance and support of the Division's sub-grantees, and collecting, evaluating and following through on required reporting forms for all sub-grantees to gauge

their individual achievements in engaging and collaborating with their respective communities.

## **1. New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety – Statewide Public Engagement and Community Collaboration**

The Division is housed within the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS), a department under the supervision of the Office of the New Jersey Attorney General. Also located in LPS, is the Office of Community Engagement, which undertakes a vigorous effort in serving the many communities in this diverse state. Through the Office of Community Engagement and additional community-centered functions in several other LPS Divisions – particularly, the Division on Civil Rights and the Division of Criminal Justice – LPS has created an invaluable communication network with and between state and local officials, community leaders and organizers, and the more than 500 county and local police departments in New Jersey. With that network comes action. The New Jersey Attorney General, being the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in the state, maintains ongoing working partnerships with the many agencies within the network. Therefore, when the Division sought to expand its focus to include meaningful PP&E, it had great support and experience to draw from.

In FY2024, the Division followed through on its goal of expanding its statewide presence at the community level. As a starting point, the Division looked to its core mission – to ensure safe passage of all roadway users in New Jersey. The FY2024 platform included both continued support for and focus on its many sub-grantees but also an effort to underscore traffic safety awareness throughout the state regardless of grant status.

One of the great features of New Jersey is its diversity and the strong presence of community involvement and contact with government officials. Keeping communities safe is a serious matter. Whether it be advocacy for underserved communities, senior citizens, children, LGBTQIA+

people, culturally diverse individuals or faith-based groups, the calendar year contains many events and opportunities to serve individual communities. New Jersey, a state of more than 9 million people with a relatively small area encompassing just over 7,300 square miles, provides an excellent opportunity for Division staff and other partners to easily visit and connect with densely populated and diverse communities in each corner of the state. Organizing, attending and supporting events geared to assist these communities underscores the Division's mission while also directly supporting the safety efforts of DHTS sub-grantees.

In FY2024 DHTS began a program that was originally intended to be a collaboration with two non-profit sub-grantees, the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ), one of the foremost non-profit agencies in New Jersey that delivers its safety messages and regularly engages with the communities, and Safe Kids New Jersey. Safe Kids New Jersey is led by the Central Jersey Family Health Consortium and is part of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global nonprofit organization working to help families and communities keep kids safe from injuries. Although these organizations do exemplary work in reaching all residents of New Jersey, they were looking to expand their reach to include both schools and individual communities within the state. Because the Division and LPS have access to a directory of community leaders through New Jersey, DHTS worked to connect BIANJ and Safe Kids New Jersey with these leaders so that they could amplify their safety messages, especially where safety issues impacting children resonate most. The ultimate goal was to learn what these community leaders observe from their communities and perhaps learn innovative ways of reaching different demographics.

The project was launched early in FY2024 with the first virtual event. From this initial meeting, the Division continues to host regular Virtual Traffic Safety Roundtables. At the table are faith-based and community leaders, community members, traffic safety service providers and



Representatives from the Division, AAA, the New Jersey State Police and the Burlington County, NJ Prosecutor's Traffic Safety Division

traffic safety officials to share information and ideas, pool resources, partner with each other.

In FY2024, DHTS engaged with communities, spoke with residents, and responded to traffic safety concerns. In the spring of 2024, the Division participated in the Burlington County Senior Expo, an event that brought out scores of seniors from throughout New Jersey's most expansive county. Division staff spoke with area seniors about safety measures pertinent to mature drivers and listened to their observations. Several residents from a large 55+ Community called Leisure Towne expressed concerns about what they termed reckless driving. They invited the Division to address the residents in their large community center on matters relevant to mature drivers. This sparked an initiative to institute a forum geared toward engagement and collaboration.

Division Grant Manager Emelin Corado engages attendees at the Burlington County Senior Fest.



DHTS, along with AAA Mid-Atlantic, the New Jersey State Police and members of the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office, visited Leisure Towne for a forum with concerned homeowners. The session included education and awareness, provided important resources for mature drivers, and sought feedback from attendees regarding their traffic safety concerns. The Division plans to use this forum as a template for future presentations to 55+ Communities and senior centers throughout New Jersey.

In FY2024, DHTS actively participated in the Capitol City Community Coalition (4Cs), a Trenton-based coalition consisting of health professionals, faith-based leaders, school officials, local community organizations, law enforcement professionals and government representatives. The 4Cs is a forum for practical and practicable solutions to the challenges faced by people in the area, many of whom are underserved. Members provide information and resources for combating educational disparities, stemming and undermining the prevalence of substance abuse, ending poverty, assisting with reemergence into society from prison, providing medical services, and other safety issues.

The Division recently learned about a traffic safety issue at 9th Street Academy, where heavy traffic, speeding, and distracted driving threaten the safety of students and staff. In response, the Division contacted the Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association (TMA), which provides bicycle and pedestrian

safety training and conducts safety audits in the Trenton area. Together, they will work to address this problem and connect with school officials and community organizations to understand and respond to local concerns.

Looking forward to FY2025, the Division plans to expand its presence on the boards and panels of faith-based and other community organizations like the 4Cs. These forums provide an opportunity for DHTS to collaborate with communities, learn about and address unattended traffic safety matters, and inform local organizations and law enforcement agencies about DHTS grant opportunities.

The Division also participated in the 33rd Annual Conference of the Camden County Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse, Inc. (CCCADADA). Camden County borders the City of Philadelphia in Southern New Jersey. CCCADA brings together professionals from the state with the goal of reducing the prevalence of alcoholism and substance abuse. Division Staff provided general traffic safety information with an emphasis on impaired driving and engaged and garnered input from attendees. The Division is committed to continuing to expand its presence throughout the state and to establish and initiate additional programs to spread awareness of traffic safety and to learn whether and how to adjust and respond depending on the input from those it serves.



*Division Grant Manager Loresa Daniel represents the Division at the 33rd Annual Conference of the CCCADA.*

## **2. Connectivity with and between state, county and local agencies and non-profit organizations**

Connecting communities with New Jersey's abundance of resources goes together with the Division's engagement efforts. Although distinct from the Division's public engagement and collaboration initiatives, it is certainly not disconnected. The Division's commitment to engagement and connectivity serves the same individual purpose. Furthermore, for each instance in FY2024 where the Division provided connectivity, the Division participated in the solution.

The Division is committed to ensuring the safety of all New Jersey communities and those that use the state's roadways. To that end, the Division may not have the capacity or resources to address every concern in the state. However, it has connections and partnerships with an array of service providers in New Jersey that may have that capacity. What matters is that the Division can connect those in need with those who can address their needs.

DHTS partnered with representatives from the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) for a forum on health awareness. This Wellness Wednesday Event was hosted by the Office of the Attorney General and took place at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton. The event provided employees of state agencies and members of the public with



*Division Director Michael J. Rizol (center) with Maureen Donnelly and Sue Quick from BIANJ, and Division Grant managers Emelin Corado and Loresa Daniel.*

opportunities for regular health checks, cancer awareness, CPR demonstrations, administration of Naloxone, mental health assistance and counseling services, and pedestrian and car seat safety. BIANJ and DHTS provided hundreds of attendees with car seat safety demonstrations and general traffic safety related information and also discussed with and listened to attendees about their concerns.

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Center for Injury Research and Prevention partnered with DHTS to develop and launch the New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes (NJ-SHO) data dashboard in FY2024. The initiative shares important injury, safety, and transportation equity information and data with diverse stakeholders across the state through an interactive dashboard on the Center's website. The dashboard links records from motor vehicle crashes, with licensing, hospital, birth, death,



and census-level data. The Center plans to use the data to identify underserved and overrepresented communities.

As part of project, the hospital engaged and will continue to engage communities in a variety of ways including: (1) promoting and disseminating their research findings from the Data Warehouse through research papers, blog posts, policy briefs, education materials, and the hospital's and DHTS's social media and websites; (2) attending and presenting at in-person and virtual meetings throughout New Jersey; and (3) implementing ongoing engagement by

conducting interviews with key stakeholders and sending out an online survey to a large and diverse audience of stakeholders across New Jersey. The hospital's promotion plan for its NJ-SHO Center for Integrated Data is officially underway, so that community members can use it to guide and evaluate solutions for reducing the burden of injuries and death and improving transportation equity. The hospital plans to continue its community engagement initiatives into the future.

### 3. Support for both sub-grantees and state agencies

Key among the Division's duties is support for its sub-grantees. To be optimally effective, the Division not only must continue to reinforce its own focus on best practices for community engagement and collaboration but also that of sub-grantees who rely on it for guidance. The Division focused on four initiatives designed to support sub-grantees: 1) progress reporting; 2) providing training, guidance and other resources geared toward best practices for meaningful community engagement and collaboration; 3) increasing the Division's presence at and occasional participation in statewide events; and 4) visiting on-site traffic safety service providers to observe their work.

The Division required its sub-grantees to submit quarterly Public Participation and Community Engagement Planning and Progress Reports detailing their community engagement efforts during FY2024. Quarterly reporting has proved to be an optimal means for the Division to gauge the progress of the individual sub-grantees throughout the course of the fiscal year. The reports also allow the sub-grantees to gauge their own progress. These reports required sub-grantees to:

- ◆ **Review the narrative description from their individual FY2024 grant applications and identify the communities affected by the traffic safety issues listed in their problem statement.**

- ◆ **List in detail the agency's planned steps to engage these communities, including specifics on the outreach events/activities/initiatives during FY2024.**
- ◆ **List the engagement activities conducted and the type of event (e.g., stakeholder or community meetings, town hall events, focus groups, surveys, online engagement, etc.) including location(s), date(s), and a summary of the issues covered.**
- ◆ **Describe the type and number of participants at each community engagement event (e.g., specific community and constituent groups, general public, first responders, highway safety committees, program stakeholders, governmental stakeholders, and political subdivisions).**
- ◆ **Describe the specific input they received at each event and detail which group provided the feedback.**
- ◆ **Describe how the information learned during their public engagement efforts was used or will be used to plan future traffic safety improvement initiatives.**

With information from the quarterly reports, the Division sought to learn where its sub-grantees either succeeded with promoting effective community engagement and public participation strategies or required additional guidance on the practice of engaging their respective communities and including them in grant funded initiatives.

In addition, DHTS hosted a mandatory meeting for its partner agencies and grantees in March 2024. More than 200 new and potential DHTS grantees attended the virtual session. Information was presented on the FY2025 grant process, priorities and expectations. Presentations were given by federal and state partners relating to public participation and engagement strategies and law enforcement community collaboration.

Some FY2024 highlights of where the Division lent support and participated in meaningful public engagement initiatives sponsored by its sub-grantees include:

- ◆ In May, 2024, the Division participated in Walk to School with Bloomfield, New Jersey Police, an event which involved students, parents, teachers and police in promoting safety while walking and riding bicycles.
- ◆ Representatives from DHTS sat on a panel to judge the Gloucester County Student Film Contest, in which students were tasked with submitting 30-second videos depicting traffic-safety messages.
- ◆ Division personnel participated in the Ewing Township Community Fest, providing traffic safety information to the residents of one of its sub-grantees and interacting with hundreds of people from throughout the area who attended.
- ◆ The Division attended Collingswood National Night Out to assist its sub-grantee with engaging with the Community. Scores of neighbors, parents and children attended, engaged in fun events and spoke with DHTS about what they see and experience in their area.



*Division Grant Manager Tameka Fogg participated in the Ewing Township, New Jersey Community Fest, providing traffic safety information to the residents of one of its sub-grantees where hundreds of people from throughout the area attended.*

- ◆ The Division joined the Plainsboro Police Department in support of its bike rodeo, where they provided a host of fun and educational activities for children throughout the area, all geared toward appropriate bicycle safety.

*The Division joined the Plainsboro Township Police Department in support of its Bike Rodeo.*



The Division's grant-funded nonprofit agencies deserve commendation for their extensive community engagement activities in FY2024. The dedicated representatives from these organizations work diligently to educate and enlighten people from all corners of New Jersey and support DHTS in its mission.

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) conducted outreach and engagement with youth, teens and young adults and older adults to not only deliver its safety messages that are specific to each demographic group but also to provide a forum for these groups to become involved by raising awareness of traffic safety issues. Throughout FY2024, BIANJ staff appeared either virtually or in-person



The Plainsboro Township Police Department and The Plainsboro Township Recreation Department invite you to our 2024 Bike Rodeo.

Bring Your Bike & Helmet!  
(Must be accompanied by an adult)  
Bicycle Safety Checks  
Bicycle Safety Course / Education

Partnerships: Greater Mercer TMA, Boys and Girls Club of Mercer County, Bike Exchange, Brain Injury Alliance NJ, Penn Medicine Princeton, Safe Kids Middlesex County, Lakeland Bank

Event parking available on Enterprise Drive



Registration and waiver required



at approximately 70 local events throughout the state. These appearances allowed BIANJ to deliver messages of safety and tailor the messages to the groups whom they appear before. In May, 2024, BIANJ hosted its 14th Annual New Jersey Showcase at Six Flags Great Adventure. At the event, BIANJ announced the winners of safety projects and other safety related categories from which students entered. 58 schools from 18 of New Jersey's 21 counties attended.

Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) operates in New Jersey's Hudson County, a densely populated county of nearly 725,000 people in an area of slightly over 46 square miles. Jersey City is the county's largest city in terms of both population and area and is among the state's most ethnically diverse cities, with a minority population exceeding the regional threshold for disadvantaged communities.

JCMC evaluated feedback it received from a prior grant-cycle survey and developed a more in-depth survey made available through a QR Code as well as directly to residents availing themselves of JCMC's ongoing car seat safety check initiative. Residents who participated in JCMC's traffic safety programs were asked to evaluate the programs and provide feedback on several categories. JCMC also partnered with social services agencies and schools in the surrounding community and worked closely with the hospital's marketing department to communicate its various programs and services.

Morristown Medical Center's Injury Prevention/Safe Kids/Safe Communities Team embarked on four initiatives that demonstrate increased awareness, increased programming, and increased engagement with the communities they serve. These included involving community members in selecting partners to conduct car seat safety checks, inviting community members to share and discuss individual traffic-related issues, reviewing the Trauma Registry to identify any patterns in crashes, researching information on electric scooter safety and sharing results with the public, working with local police

departments, specifically chiefs of police in a tri-county region in northern New Jersey, to introduce their work and to bring awareness of both injury prevention programming, training, and educating First Aid Fire Squads on child passenger safety.

Like New Jersey's non-profits, New Jersey's Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) individually serve respective areas of the state to provide traffic-safety related services and transportation services to their residents. The Division turns to the TMAs to learn how they execute their well-honed community engagement activities. In FY2024, grant-funded TMAs hosted and engaged in dozens of community-centered events and initiatives. Many of them were traffic-safety education and awareness forums.

**Avenues in Motion**, a TMA whose service area encompasses the northwestern part of New Jersey, examined crash data to determine which local areas were most affected. They analyzed the data by using a scoring system to overlap high crash areas with what they defined as 'overburdened communities' using demographic data: minority, low income, limited English proficiency (LEP), disabled persons, households with no access to a vehicle, and foreign-born. The analysis revealed that the town of Dover, New Jersey, required attention.

Having narrowed its focus through data, the TMA began to conduct crosswalk observations in a heavily trafficked area near a downtown park featuring soccer fields, basketball courts, playgrounds, and a walking path. The TMA then began to engage with community stakeholders (local government, police departments, schools, employers, senior groups, local organizations) and conducted surveys of residents within the area who use the park. Survey results revealed that residents who regularly visit the park reported that drivers drive too fast and are not inclined to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks. Residents were asked whether an art project, consisting of colorful and

attractive street designs placed on the streets near the crosswalks, would ease concerns. The respondents overwhelmingly answered positively. Avenues in Motion completed its Asphalt Art Project in FY2024, enhancing the downtown area with vibrant and beautiful artwork designed to attract attention and alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians. Surveys conducted after the project revealed that residents not only found the artwork appealing but also felt safer walking to the park

**EZ Ride**, a TMA serving the densely populated northeastern part of the state, engaged in several projects involving community members. EZ Ride worked with officials in seven towns they identified as Targeted Urban Municipalities, with more than 35 percent low-income populations, more than 40 percent minorities, and more than 40 percent limited English-speaking. The TMA conducted surveys in each of these designated towns, tailoring them to both the diverse languages spoken (English, Spanish, Haitian Creole) and the types of traffic safety projects relevant for each location (pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, roadway safety and enhancement, location of signage and other safety information, asphalt art installations). EZ Ride plans to use what it learned from these surveys and projects to expand efforts within its service area.

The work of **goHunterdon**, a TMA serving the diverse and heavily trafficked area of Hunterdon County exemplifies the impact of meaningful community engagement and public participation in forming traffic safety initiatives. Among goHunterdon's strategies is to facilitate



dialogue with individuals and groups that are disproportionately affected by crashes. Moreover, due to diversity of the residents it serves, goHunterdon employs a bi-lingual outreach associate tasked with reaching out and listening to Latino populations in the region. In FY2024, goHunterdon focused efforts in Flemington Borough on the Latino population who rely on bicycling and walking as their primary mode of transportation.

Through listening sessions with focus groups and direct interviews of bicyclists on the street, goHunterdon learned that 90% of bicyclists in the targeted area felt it was unsafe to ride their bikes due to unsafe driving on the roads. goHunterdon reached out to local businesses in the area to encourage them to take active roles in keeping their employees safe. The TMA furnished fliers in English and Spanish promoting safety messages and urged local businesses to invite the TMA to their respective workplaces to talk to their employees about bicycle and other traffic safety issues.

**Greater Mercer TMA** serves two distinctly different areas of the state, Mercer County, where the capitol city of Trenton is located, and Ocean County, a large and diverse area encompassing many Jersey shore communities. In FY2024, this TMA continued its efforts to provide safety information to the public and to involve and collaborate with residents to both hear their concerns and elicit feedback on safety initiatives. In Trenton, Greater Mercer TMA worked with the East Trenton Collaborative (ETC), a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring East Trenton's economic vitality through programs that support youth employment and small businesses. A Traffic Safety Audit produced a comprehensive list of current traffic safety issues in the neighborhood and a set of recommended solutions for improving the conditions in one of Trenton's most dangerous areas for traffic safety.

Greater Mercer TMA engaged in several initiatives with positive impacts throughout Ocean County, which experiences a huge influx

of traffic during the summer months. Greater Mercer TMA conducted traffic and pedestrian audits in several communities prior to summer 2024, partnering with local officials, town engineers, parents, and residents. In May 2024, the TMA kicked off a Be Street Smart campaign in the shore town of Harvey Cedars. The town proudly announced efforts to improve bike lanes, repair broken or missing sidewalks, and install clearly visible pedestrian crosswalk strips. The campaign reminded drivers to obey speed limits, stop for pedestrians in crosswalks, avoid distractions, and maintain a safe distance when passing someone on a bicycle.

**Keep Middlesex Moving** is a TMA serving Middlesex County, through which many major highways pass, and is home to Rutgers University, New Jersey's state college. Keep Middlesex Moving adopted Bike Easy, Walk Safely, an effort to coordinate a safe system approach to the transportation system throughout Middlesex County by aligning community and county goals to implement the program. It regularly hosts 'listening' sessions with officials and other stakeholders in all 25 municipalities within the county to align local bicycle and pedestrian safety plans with the county's commitment to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of transportation systems.

The TMA additionally introduced the concept of a Safety Town, a secure setting for children to learn walking and bicycle skills, in Dunellen, New Jersey. The TMA met and consulted with the Dunellen mayor and members of his Pedestrian Safety Task Force to discuss the development of a Safety Town, a major undertaking that is still in the planning stages. The TMA hosted a Central Jersey Micromobility Conference and an Earth Day Bike Rodeo & Ride Along in April 2024 in New Brunswick and partnered with the Town of Metuchen to host a screening of "The Street Project", a documentary film addressing the importance of designing roads and community spaces that are safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

# Police Traffic Services and Training – Project Summaries

## Comprehensive Law Enforcement Programs

Sustained enforcement activity by law enforcement in key program areas such as speed, occupant protection/seat belts, distracted driving, and impaired driving was a central focus of DHTS grant funding efforts in FY2024. 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. There were 75 sustained enforcement grants funded in total in FY2024, utilizing Section 402 and 405 funds.

Among these sustained enforcement programs was a targeted multi-jurisdictional grant funded campaign along the White Horse Pike in Camden County. In response to an increase in serious and fatal crashes along this roadway, including eight fatalities in 2023, DHTS provided grant funding to 14 local police agencies to undertake enhanced enforcement and educational activities. Specifically, the project targeted aggressive driving and pedestrian safety.

Numerous partner agencies assisted in the campaign including the Camden County Prosecutors Office, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, AAA South Jersey, Brain



Injury Alliance of New Jersey, Safe Kids South Jersey, NJ Manufacturers Insurance Co., End Distracted Driving.org, Delaware Valley River Planning Commission, and the Cross County Connection TMA.

Countywide police agencies in other parts of the state also received grant funding in FY2024 to undertake yearlong sustained enforcement, including the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic, and Union.

The Bergen County Sheriff's Department reported issuing 595 summonses for speeding and another 517 for careless driving during the project year while the Essex County Sheriff's Office was also active, issuing 564 seat belt or child restraint violations and more than 500 summonses for speeding. At the local level, the Woodbridge Police Department focused on seat belt usage, speeding, and cell phone use by motorists in the community, which is one of the largest and most heavily-traveled in the state, and issued more than 325 summonses in those priority categories.

## Distracted Driving Crackdown

New Jersey qualified to receive distracted driving incentive grant funds in FY2024. These funds enabled the state to fund a significant enforcement effort in support of the national UDrive. UText. UPay. distracted driving crackdown.

The 2024 UDrive. UText. UPay. distracted driving crackdown took place during the month of April. The \$1.3 million in grant funding was awarded to 182 state, county, and local police agencies. During the campaign, these grant funded agencies issued 7,349 summonses for hand held use of a cell phone while driving. An additional 4,105 summonses were issued for careless driving.

## **Crash Investigation Training**

The Crash Investigation Training program, funded by DHTS and carried out in partnership with NJ State Police and Kean University, offered a robust schedule of courses in FY2024. The Basic Crash Investigation course was offered 12 times at various police academies around the state and eight sessions of Advanced Crash Investigation were held. Through these 20 courses a total of 578 officers were successfully trained. Nine specialty courses were conducted on topics including traffic crash reconstruction, pedestrian/ bicycle crash investigation, and Event Data Recorder (EDR) Use for Crash Reconstruction. These courses were successfully completed by 238 attendees.

## **Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor**

Three Deputy Attorneys General in the Department of Law and Public Safety worked as Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutors (TSRPs) during FY2024. The TSRPs conducted and attended trainings, sat on committees, attended traffic safety-related workshops, provided assistance to county 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 TSRPs conducted several training programs including Prosecutor Alcotest Training, Radar Instructor Refresher course, Basic Motor Vehicle Course for DCJ Investigators, and Basic DRE Course legal aspects.

A significant amount of time was spent in FY2024 with legal challenges to the implementation and roll out of the Alcotest 9510, New Jersey's new evidential breath testing instrument. Two of the TSRPs are part of the litigation team and, as such, attended case management conferences with the court-appointed Special Master and met with experts to discuss the 9510 and NJ's evidential breath testing program. The TSRPs are an important

part of New Jersey's traffic safety program and regularly participate and provide updates on their activities at HTSPAC, New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association, NHTSA Region II, and Regional Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL)/ Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL) meetings.

## **Fatal Crash Unit**

The New Jersey State Police Fatal Accident Investigation Unit (FAIU) 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 Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) reporting, which is critical to DHTS program and planning efforts. Unit personnel relied on their advanced training and technical expertise as well as specialized equipment and support, funded in part by DHTS again in FY2024, in order to effectively and efficiently perform these vital functions.

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

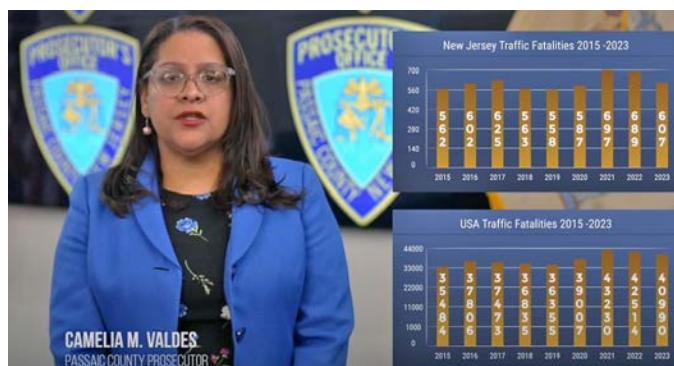
The New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association (NJPTOA) was founded in 1974, and 50 years later, remains one of the nation's only dedicated statewide organizations devoted to the work of police traffic officers. The organization has proven an invaluable partner to DHTS and DHTS again awarded grant funding to the Association in FY2024. The NJPTOA reports on all contemporary traffic safety issues including the DHTS'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 state's needs. The NJPTOA utilizes a web site, monthly meetings and newsletter as well as mass emails to keep its membership informed on critical issues facing the traffic safety community. The NJPTOA monthly meetings also serve as a forum for the Director of DHTS to address local law enforcement officers and promote new grant funded projects.

## Law Enforcement Liaison

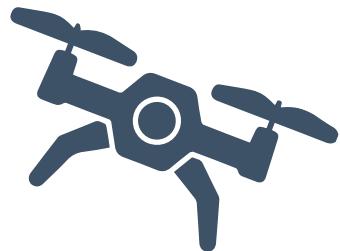
FY2024 was another active year for New Jersey's Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL), funded through a grant from DHTS to the NJ State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP). Work of the LEL included: providing assistance to DHTS staff in the promotion of law enforcement grants during the seat belt, impaired driving and distracted driving mobilizations, promoting the division's traffic safety initiatives at monthly meetings of the NJSACOP and at monthly meetings of the NJPTOA, sharing news on traffic safety topics and initiatives with municipal chiefs of police and other partners via regular email blasts, and assisting DHTS leadership with ongoing projects and special events as needed.

To raise awareness within the law enforcement community regarding the concerning rise in crash and roadway fatality statistics and, more crucially, to emphasize the essential role that law enforcement plays in mitigating these incidents, the NJSACOP produced an inspiring training video in FY2024. The video tackles the growing issue of rising traffic fatalities and aims to resonate with officers on a personal level, encouraging them to embrace their responsibilities as traffic safety officers.



Rutgers University provided a variety of training programs to the law enforcement community of the state in FY2024 through its Comprehensive Police Training Grant from DHTS. The Data-Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety course first debuted in FY2021 and was offered in one session in FY2024. The 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). During the session held in FY2024, 18 officers were trained representing 16 different police agencies.

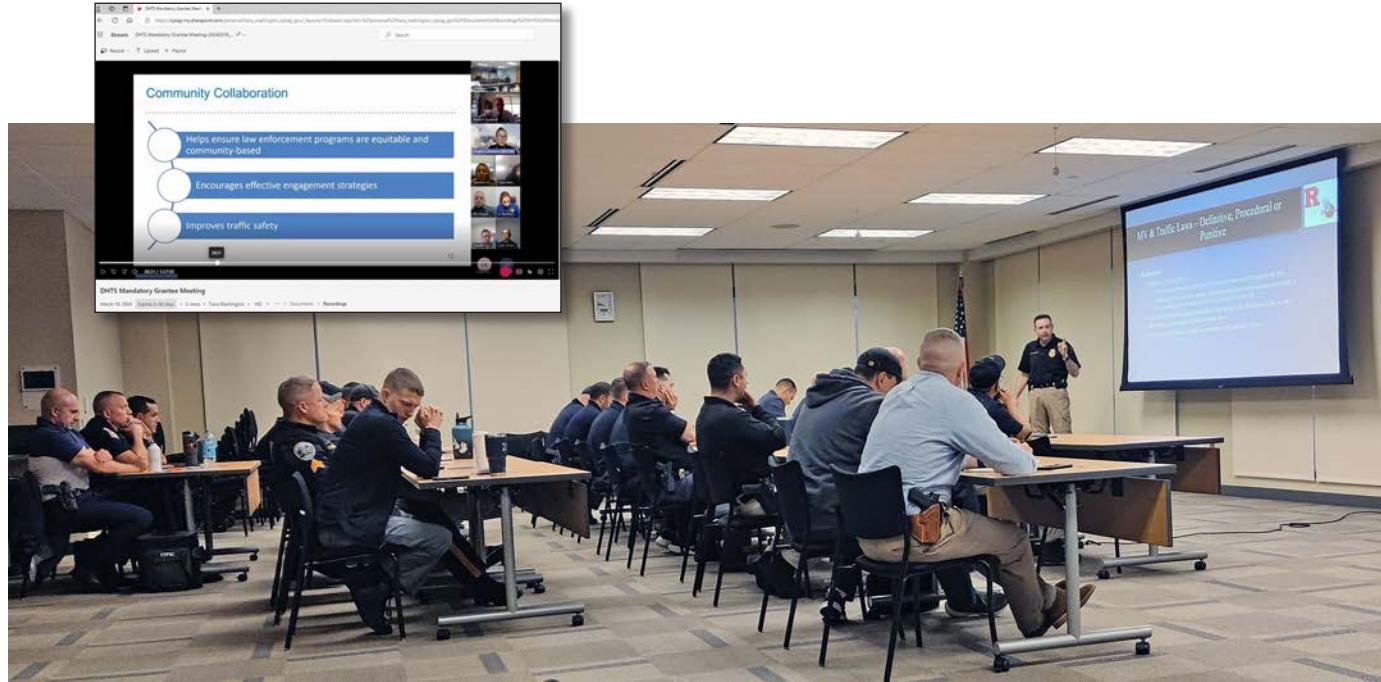
The Drone Certification and Crash Reconstruction Workshop focused on the use of unmanned aircraft (drones) in crash investigation. During two five-day workshops held in April and June of 2024, 38 certified NJ Crash Reconstructionists were trained to receive FAA licenses to operate drones to assist in reconstructing crash scenes. Other areas of training included NJTR-1 Crash Reports (described in the Traffic Records area of this Annual Report), and Work Zone Safety (described in the Other Vulnerable Road Users area of this annual report).



A new training course, Traffic Enforcement and Engagement Acuity Workshop, debuted in FY2024. Three sessions were offered and 104 officers attended. The course focuses on the importance of traffic safety, courtroom testimony, and interacting with the public in a professional manner.

As part of the FY2025 planning process, DHTS hosted a mandatory meeting for its partner

agencies and grantees in March 2024. More than 200 new and potential DHTS grantees attended the virtual session. Information was presented on the FY2025 grant process, priorities and expectations. Presentations were also given by federal and state partners relating to important issues such as public participation and engagement strategies, law enforcement community collaboration, data resources for grantees, and social media and marketing.



## Traffic Records – Project Summaries

An efficient traffic records system is critical to New Jersey's highway safety program. Projects that were funded and/or supported in FY2024 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.



**New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes Center for Integrated Data**

The goal of this multi-year project is to create the New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes (NJ-SHO) Center for Integrated Data as a forum to disseminate important injury-, safety-, and transportation equity-related information to stakeholders across the state. The Center fulfills a critical need among NJ's safety and health communities by facilitating access to data and analytic expertise to guide and evaluate

local and statewide solutions for reducing the burden of injuries and deaths in the state. At the Center's foundation is a data warehouse that is a comprehensive resource for researchers who have access to longitudinal information about health and safety on 24 million individuals of all ages spanning almost 20 years.

The New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes (NJ-SHO) Center for Integrated Data Dashboard, as discussed on page 14 of this report, highlights the unique features of the data warehouse, in particular the ability to describe more detailed information on crash-related injuries through the integration of crash reports with hospital discharge data, the identification of residential communities among crash-involved individuals, and the ability to incorporate equity measures at the individual-level (e.g., race and ethnicity) and community-level (e.g., community resilience estimates).

By linking records for the same persons across datasets, their experiences can be seen within the larger context of their lives. The NJ-SHO data warehouse gives researchers a rich set of information to draw from. Researchers have used data from the warehouse to publish dozens of peer-reviewed papers, covering topics such as the effects of Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) policies in New Jersey, child passenger safety, driving across the lifespan, transportation equity, and vulnerable road users like bicyclists and pedestrians.



## 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 FY2024, ten refresher workshops were held (6 in person and 4 virtually). A total of 438 state, county, and municipal police officers and safety personnel from 112 agencies were trained on how to properly complete the crash form. Technical assistance was provided to more than 100 other 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 FY2024. STRCC work was instrumental in contributing to the successful data integration and enhancement efforts highlighted throughout this program area.

## Electronic Patient Care Reporting and EMS Data Repository

In FY2024, 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 or cellular connection, 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.

The EMS Data Repository continues to see significant growth in the quality of data being submitted by EMS providers through the ePCR. The total number of records transmitted to the data bridge increased in 2024 by 3.1% from 1,826,445 in 2023 to 1,882,037. The average number of days for the data to be entered (timeliness) improved by 5.5% from 2.00 days to 1.89. For completeness, the overall number of agencies non-compliant with ePCR (not submitting data) was reduced to zero in 2024.

## **Electronic Data Transfer**

The New Jersey Department of Transportation deployed the state's first integrated and all-inclusive crash reporting system in FY2021, which electronically accepts crash reports from police departments into the state system. This application was developed and maintained by Lexis Nexis on behalf of the New Jersey DOT to serve as a portal into the State of New Jersey's repository for traffic crash reports. The program, known as NJ Crash, provides a revolutionary new approach for law enforcement agencies to create and submit crash reports.

A major catalyst in the effort to increase EDT usage was the signing into law in March 2023 of legislation requiring all police departments in New Jersey to begin implementing the NJ Crash

electronic crash reporting application either through their third-party RMS/CAD vendors or through NJ Crash directly.

As of the end of FY2024, 90% of New Jersey police agencies (551 of 613) are submitting their crash reports electronically through NJ Crash, with efforts ongoing to reach 100% compliance during FY2025.

## **Crash Analysis Tool (Numetric)**

DHTS utilizes the crash safety application suite from Numetric to make data driven decisions for traffic safety programmatic and grant funding priorities. The system is also used by other public and private agencies and traffic safety professionals to help identify and assess the most cost-effective ways to improve safety on the state's roadways. The Crash Analysis Tool is a critical program that is used in all aspects of the Division's traffic safety efforts.

In FY2024, there were 847 unique users in the system, with 44 accounts retired and 148 new users added in the last year. The user base consists of law enforcement agencies, local governments, and partnering stakeholders including NJDOT. Six Crash Analysis Tool workshops were held in FY2024, in addition to the Data Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety Courses hosted by Rutgers University.

Recent updates to Numetric include the Network Screening and Sliding Window Applications. Similar to Crash Query, filters can be applied to the entire network using dynamic charts or graphs or typing an attribute into a query bar. The application contains a powerful text-to-search feature to run custom roadway network screening requests. The Network Screening Application also allows the user to query for specific Behavioral Countermeasures that could be deployed throughout New Jersey's roadway network. The application generates the top-ranking roadway segments pertaining to NHTSA funded enforcement areas such as impaired driving, pedestrian safety and seat belt use and where the highest volumes and

rates are taking place. The system also allows users to identify and target specific traffic safety issues in disadvantaged communities that can be drilled-down by several filterable categories. This enables DHTS to pin-point the locations that would benefit most from strategic safety enforcement and education.

Plans for FY2025 include further enhancements of the data elements filterable and exportable in the Network Screening Application, and deploying an intersection ranking list application that will enable users to target intersections in their communities or along specific roadways.

## Traffic Engineering Interns

Through a long-running project, the Warren County Engineer's Office again received grant funding 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 2023 Warren County Traffic Crash Data and Road Safety Assessment Report was produced and contains the top crash locations involving county roadways, based on 2023 data, with recommendations for improvements. The 2024 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

### Younger Drivers

A grant funded partnership was carried out again in FY2024 with the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA), the governing body for high school sports in New Jersey. A paid and social media campaign based around the slogan "Be a Winner Behind the Wheel" was carried out to deliver important traffic safety messages to young drivers and their parents through NJSIAA's year-round calendar of athletic tournaments and events and its 435-member high schools. The campaign included banners and print ads, public address announcements at major events, social media posts, and innovative tools to reach and engage young drivers, parents, teachers, and school administrators.



## Older Drivers

The Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University received funding again in FY2024 to broaden its older driver safety training curriculum and resources housed on a web-based Older Driver Traffic Safety Resource Center. The Resource Center [maturedriversnj.org](http://maturedriversnj.org) is now the focal point for New Jersey's mature driver safety program. It contains safety materials, links, and educational programming that can be accessed and utilized by New Jersey safety partners in a coordinated approach to this important issue.

In FY2024, a well-attended train-the-trainer virtual course was offered, with 70 participants. The program equips community members with the skills to instruct mature drivers about driving safer longer, driving limitations, driving retirement, and transportation alternatives. In addition, two promotional videos were developed to inform the public about the resource center and the train-the-trainer course.

## Motorcycle Safety

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) has expanded its motorcycle safety programs through a comprehensive approach combining community events, media campaigns, and strategic partnerships. BIANJ's community engagement efforts were extensive, encompassing over 100 safety events, including 8 conducted in Spanish, which collectively reached almost 35,000 people across 21 counties. BIANJ also conducted workshops in driver education classrooms statewide.

This year, BIANJ enhanced its pledge programs to encourage safer road behaviors among both motorcyclists and motorists, with a particular



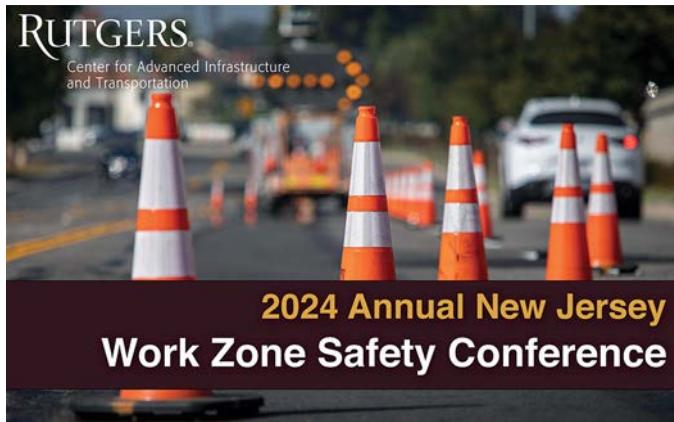
focus on engaging high school and college students. These initiatives were promoted across educational institutions and community events, resulting in over 3,600 individuals pledging to Share the Road with motorcycles. Additionally, BIANJ received pledges from motorcyclists, offering incentives up to \$250 for safety gear or rider training courses, supported by a private sponsor.

To amplify the reach of motorcycle safety messaging, BIANJ collaborated with a marketing firm, implementing targeted social media ads during Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. The organization also maintained a strong presence at various events including motorcycle runs, bike nights, sporting events, and fairs, with a particular emphasis on high-crash areas. These efforts, combined with digital media placements, significantly increased traffic to the Share the Road (STR) page and associated social media platforms. The JerseyDrives website, updated quarterly, served as a key resource for public education, complemented by weekly safety messages disseminated through social media channels. These platforms emphasized the importance of good judgment, proper gear usage, and continuous learning for motorcycle riders.

## Work Zone Safety

Through the Rutgers University Comprehensive Police Training Grant, work zone safety training and education was provided throughout FY2024 to law enforcement officers, municipal traffic engineers, and public works personnel.

The annual statewide Work Zone Safety Conference was held on April 4, 2024. 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. The conference agenda included a presentation by the FHWA on recent additions and alterations to the 11th Edition of the MUTCD and presentations addressing some of the root



causes of fatalities and injuries in work zones. There were 284 people who attended the conference.

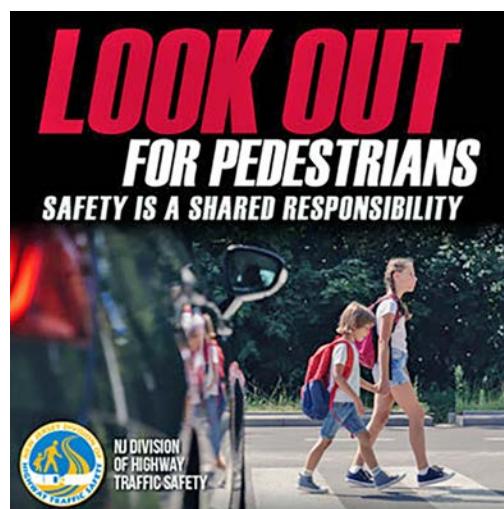
In addition, one virtual and one in-person Work Zone Safety Train-the-Trainer for Police workshops were conducted, resulting in 43 officers being trained and two virtual Work Zone Safety Awareness for Police workshops were held, resulting in 64 officers being trained.

## **Paid/Earned Media & Public Information – Project Summaries**

### **Comprehensive Paid Media Campaign**

DHTS carried out a comprehensive statewide paid media campaign in FY2024 focusing on the important traffic safety issues of impaired and distracted driving, seat belt usage, pedestrian and motorcycle safety, and the state's Move Over Law. The campaign ran on social channels including Facebook, and Snapchat, as well as static billboards, paid search, radio, streaming audio, and sports/entertainment venues. In total, more than 169 million impressions were generated.

Highlights of the impaired driving portion of the campaign included Hero Touchscreen Ads, which are interactive digital touchscreen kiosks present in more than 500 New Jersey bars and restaurants. The engaging touchscreen interface is a digital jukebox which showed multimedia traffic safety messaging alongside the patron's music choices, as well as an interactive quiz to test knowledge of safe driving habits. The interface also included a cab finder function so users could call for a safe ride home. This tactic garnered nearly 20 million impressions in a four month period.



Digital billboards were employed to spread the message of the dangers involving driver distraction. The billboards were on display along major roadways in Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Passaic counties, resulting in more than 10 million impressions.

Pedestrian safety advertisements were placed on NJ Transit bus tails across the state, garnering over 14 million impressions. Due to slow turnover and a lack of advertisers available to replace the DHTS ads, some ads remained in rotation for many months after the paid campaign ended, resulting in additional impressions.

## Social Media

During FY2024, the Division continued its robust social media presence with a goal of promoting safety on the roads and increasing awareness of the state's 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:

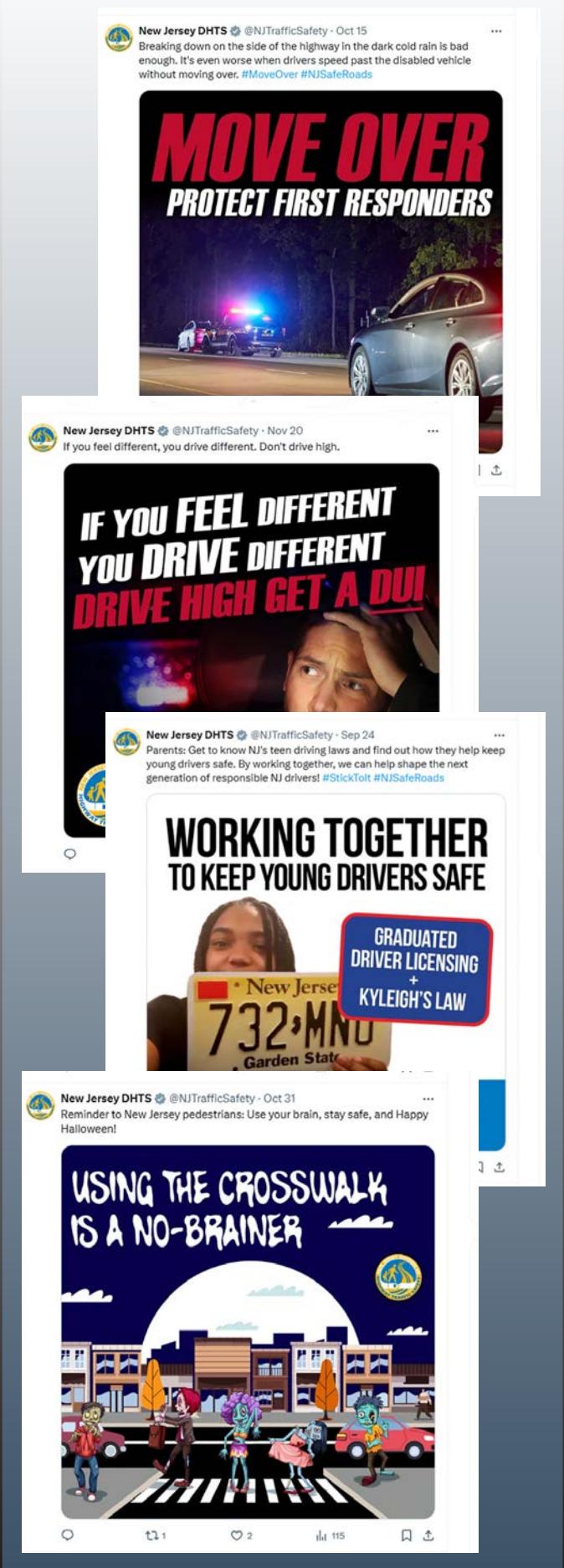
**Facebook - @NewJerseyDivisionofHighwayTrafficSafety**

**Twitter - @NJTrafficSafety**

**Instagram- @NJTrafficSafety**

The social media channels were integral in disseminating safety messaging to the public in FY2024. With impaired driving and speeding more prevalent in recent years, 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 NHTSA have allowed consistent and cohesive messages to be distributed for maximum reach and effect.



# Projects Not Implemented

*The following projects included in the FY2024 Annual Grant Application were not implemented:*

## **Program Area: Alcohol and Other Drugs**

### **Countermeasure Strategy: Law Enforcement Training**

To allow for enhanced testing capabilities to detect impairing drugs, the NJ State Police Office of Forensic Science Toxicology Unit was provided grant funding in FY2023 to purchase two state-of-the art drug screening devices (Agilent LC-QTOFs). The instruments will be used to process DUI cases more efficiently and with greater sensitivity, resulting in an increase in case output and productivity and a decrease in turnaround time. In cooperation with the NJ Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC), the testing data will be analyzed to determine trends in specific drug use or poly drug use in impaired driving crashes.

Due to the size, scope, and technical nature of this project it was decided that the priority for FY2024 should be the training of the device operators and validation testing of the units, therefore the decision was made not to award grant funding for the purchase of additional testing units in FY2024.

## **Program Area: Community Traffic Safety Programs**

### **Countermeasure Strategy: Community Programs and Outreach**

Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSPs) are local, county, or regional groups of highway safety advocates who are committed to solving traffic safety problems through a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary approach. Members include city, county, state, and occasionally federal agencies, as well as private industry representatives and local citizens. The

boundaries of the project area are up to the individuals comprising the team, and can be a city, a county, a region consisting of multiple counties, or any other jurisdictional arrangement. Community Traffic Safety Program members share a vision of saving lives and preventing injuries caused by traffic related issues and their associated costs to the community. CTSPs serve as "satellite offices" for DHTS, in a sense, as they help disseminate important traffic safety educational materials and deliver grass roots programming.

The Burlington County CTSP project was funded for several years. Unfortunately, project activity and utilization of approved funding dropped in recent years. This resulted in the decision of DHTS not to continue this grant in FY2024.

## **Program Area: Community Traffic Safety Programs**

### **Countermeasure Strategy: Community Programs and Outreach**

Rowan University proposed an innovative research project utilizing fixed cameras to study the interactions and causes of crashes between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists within intersections. DHTS had planned to approve the project, based in part on the success of Rowan's previous multi-year research project relating to driver distraction. However, the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project ultimately came into question and DHTS made the decision not to approve the project for FY2024 implementation.

# ***Evidence-Based Traffic Safety Enforcement Program / Law Enforcement Community Collaboration***

Conducting evidence-based enforcement requires several components. It begins with an analysis of relevant data to form problem identification. The second phase is deployment of proven countermeasures targeted at the problems identified during the analysis. The deployment of these countermeasures should include active collaboration with the community to get buy-in for the efforts, strengthen the bonds between law enforcement and the people they serve, and identify any disparate elements of enforcement activities. Ongoing follow-up and necessary adjustments to the plan are also critical.

At both the state and local level, the Numetric Crash Analysis Tool is used to analyze crash data. This multi-layered support program is made available to law enforcement personnel and other decision makers to help identify and assess the most cost-effective ways to improve safety on the state's roadways through a data driven approach. The system provides a suite of applications that aid in the breakdown of over four million crash records into digestible information for analysis, performance measuring and reporting.

## ***Evidence-based Enforcement and Community Collaboration***

The New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes (NJ-SHO) Center for Integrated Data Dashboard, as discussed on page 14 of this report, proves to be very valuable for evidence-based enforcement research. This innovative tool allows users to access information about crash-related injuries by integrating crash reports with hospital discharge data. It also identifies residential communities of individuals involved in crashes and incorporates equity measures at both the

individual level (such as race and ethnicity) and community level (including community resilience estimates). The NJ-SHO data warehouse provides researchers with a comprehensive set of information to analyze.

DHTS uses three primary sources of data for its evidence-based enforcement program: the New Jersey Crash Records system maintained by the DOT, Bureau of Safety Programs, the FARS, maintained by the Division of State Police, and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) citation data. All reportable crashes in the state are submitted to DOT for entry into the statewide crash records system. The data contained in the New Jersey Crash Records System allows for the analysis of crashes within specific categories defined by person (i.e., age and gender), location (i.e. roadway type and geographic location) and vehicle characteristics (i.e. mechanical conditions), and the interactions of various components (i.e. time of day, day of week, driver actions, etc.).

Beginning in 2023, DHTS began receiving statewide motor vehicle citation data from the AOC on a monthly basis. This data includes all moving violations issued by New Jersey law enforcement agencies during the prior month. DHTS uses this new data source as a means to evaluate the general enforcement activity within DHTS program areas. Trend analysis of citation, crash, and fatal data is conducted for the four NHTSA sponsored annual mobilization campaigns. The analysis aims to identify locations throughout New Jersey where enforcement is having a positive impact on traffic safety, as well as the areas that necessitate a refreshed strategy.

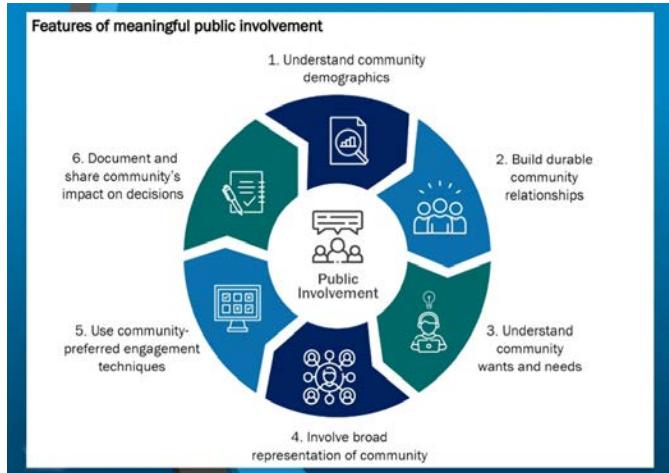
## Law Enforcement Community Collaboration – Project Summaries

### Law Enforcement Community Collaboration

DHTS worked actively with its law enforcement partners in FY2024 to incorporate community collaboration into the important traffic safety work done by police agencies. Recognizing the statutory requirement for law enforcement community collaboration, as well as the positive impact on safety that this engagement will bring about, DHTS developed a plan in FY2024 to offer guidance to and collect reports from its law enforcement grant funded agencies relating to their community engagement activities.

In addition to regular communication and dissemination of information relating to community collaboration, DHTS hosted a training webinar for all of its law enforcement partners to offer guidance and answer questions about the topic. The session included an overview of the requirement for community collaboration, laid out expectations for the sub-grantees, discussed strategies and techniques for effective engagement, outlined the importance of setting goals for meaningful collaboration, and discussed ways to measure the effectiveness of strategies. During the seminar, three law enforcement agencies discussed their initiatives as a means of demonstrating best practices.

Coinciding with the virtual training, DHTS provided a survey to its law enforcement sub-grantees to learn where the agencies succeeded and whether the agencies experienced any issues in their collaboration efforts. Many agencies expressed a desire for further guidance and information. In response, the Division is working with one of the state's Transportation Management Associations (TMAs), goHunterdon TMA, to develop a comprehensive guide to effective community collaboration. The training curriculum will provide detailed and



### Results of Year 1:

- **GOAL:** Reduce the amount of collisions attributed to vehicles traveling at an unsafe speed on 25 mph roadways by 3% in 2023
  - **RESULT:** Crashes attributed to vehicles traveling at unsafe speeds decreased from 9.95% in 2022 to 4.61% in 2023
- **GOAL:** Reduce the amount of collisions by young drivers (16-20 years old) attributed to vehicles traveling at an unsafe speed on 25 mph roadways by 4% in 2023
  - **RESULT:** Crashes attributed to vehicles traveling at unsafe speeds involving young drivers decreased to 20% in 2023 (historically 29.20%)



reliable strategies for targeting an audience, understanding community culture, identifying community partners, inviting community conversation, street level engagement and maintaining community relationships.

In FY2024, several New Jersey law enforcement agencies undertook notable efforts to engage with their communities and include them in program initiatives. From town hall meetings to bike rodeos to community festivals to community walks, DHTS law enforcement partners undertook meaningful and effective community collaboration strategies with positive impacts on grant funded traffic safety measures. In many cases, DHTS staff either attended or participated in these events to support its sub-grantees.

One of the best efforts was by the Piscataway, New Jersey Police Department. With a racially diverse population, Piscataway sits within or

near several of New Jersey's major roadways and highways (including the New Jersey Turnpike) and is adjacent to the main campus of Rutgers University, the State College of New Jersey. Piscataway is reflective of many densely populated towns in New Jersey, a relatively small state (in area) with a large and equally diverse population. Piscataway, in effect, can serve as a template for many similar towns in New Jersey.

Piscataway's Safe Streets Campaign employs a comprehensive strategy including infrastructure and tech, education, community collaboration, and increased speed enforcement. At the start of the Safe Streets Campaign, traffic officers reviewed citizen complaints about unsafe driving and consulted crash data to determine focus locations and where to expend efforts. Officers began to provide the town with traffic safety information and hosted a series of events – Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out events, street fairs, senior center visits, school assembly presentations – and, in May 2024 hosted a well-attended town hall event. At the event, traffic officers outlined traffic safety issues, informed the residents of their efforts, and encouraged feedback and suggestions. Attendees broke off by neighborhood (or residential area) to discuss specific issues with a designated officer. This allowed officials to learn what residents see and need at the granular level. Other elements of the campaign included the production and distribution of hundreds of yard signs with safe driving messages, a public engagement web portal for feedback, and social media posts.

Input received from residents directly resulted in changes to police department activities in the form of choosing locations for enforcement details and rumble strips, and a more robust ongoing method of addressing citizens traffic safety complaints. Most importantly, township-wide crashes decreased in 2023 in the two key focus areas of this campaign: speed involved crashes and young driver crashes.

The City of Clifton Police Department identified a dangerous traffic corridor through examination of

crash data and police records and hosted a large public forum, attended by approximately 150 residents, engineers, political representatives, Traffic Safety Committee members, and emergency services members. Attendees were invited to voice opinions and give input on both the safety issues and the types of actions the police could take to address the situations. Residents provided useful feedback and requested increased enforcement in the targeted corridor. The event allowed the department to review and reconsider engineering plans.

The City of Garfield Police Department used demographic analysis, a comprehensive review of its police department's Record Management System of crash data, including areas of crashes involving motor vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists, and sought community input to design a program. The department's targeted outreach campaign included working with local schools to integrate traffic safety education into the curriculum and using social media to both amplify safety tips and provide real time traffic updates. Officers conducted periodic high visibility enforcement and participated in awareness campaigns in identified high-risk areas.

Sponsored events included visiting schools for sessions on traffic safety, visiting a community-based residential treatment facility for the disabled to host a traffic safety session with residents, and meeting with community members at a local VFW center to discuss pedestrian safety concerns and to learn where safety improvements were needed. Discussions included potential safety improvements, such as better lighting and crosswalk enhancements. These events have informed the department and will lead to more informed programs.

The Mansfield Township Police Department engaged in several effective community collaboration initiatives, including Coffee with a Cop, a program designed to offer residents and business owners an opportunity to discuss

concerns, including traffic safety matters, with local officers, and Heroes Night, a forum the officers use to speak with and listen to the community. These events allowed the officers not only to educate the community about traffic safety awareness but also to educate themselves as to the community's traffic safety concerns.

The Township of Wayne Police Department undertook a traffic safety plan targeting high school and elementary school students. Officers visited the Wayne Valley High School Auto Shop to review safe driving habits, emphasizing the dangers of speeding and distracted driving. They also visited the elementary schools within the township to conduct presentations on bicycle and pedestrian safety. Students, parents, teachers, school resource officers, and traffic officers attended these events. Officers took questions from high school students related to dangers of impaired and distracted driving, and the associated penalties. The younger children focused on safety while riding bikes and walking. These engagement activities revealed the need for increased police presence in the area's lake communities, especially in the warmer months when pedestrian and bicycle traffic increases.

## **Collecting Data and Identifying Disparities**

Gathering detailed traffic stop data from police departments is essential for identifying and tackling disparities in law enforcement practices. By keeping track of information such as the outcomes of driver stops, DHTS can analyze trends that may highlight discrepancies in how funds are used. A closer look at the specific violations cited during these stops also sheds light on enforcement priorities. Focusing on serious violations like speeding, reckless driving, and impaired driving has proven to enhance road safety and save lives.

Conversely, placing too much emphasis on minor infractions, particularly those that disproportionately impact individuals who

do not pose a risk to public safety, can erode community trust. This approach runs counter to the goals of initiatives funded by DHTS.

DHTS continually evaluates how grant funds, like those allocated for campaigns such as "Click It or Ticket," "U Drive, U Text, U Pay," and "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over," are utilized by law enforcement agencies. Beginning in FY2024, DHTS expanded reporting requirements for all law enforcement agencies receiving these funds, particularly for yearlong sustained enforcement grants. Participating officers are now required to provide more detailed reports on their stop outcomes, allowing the Division's program staff to ensure alignment with grant objectives. Officers will now report on 24 distinct violations, giving DHTS a clearer picture of how they enforce dangerous driving laws. Previously, too many violations fell into a vague "other" category, making it difficult to discern the specifics of what was being enforced.

With these updates, DHTS staff will better understand law enforcement activities. This will help them make more informed decisions about future grant applications. This ensures that funds are directed toward effective enforcement strategies that prioritize public safety and advance its intended goals. By tracking outcomes, such as reductions in impaired driving incidents or increased seatbelt usage through enforcement, DHTS aims to hold agencies accountable. By engaging in comprehensive data collection and analysis, DHTS and law enforcement agencies can address any potential misunderstandings related to funding objectives, foster best practices, and improve traffic safety for all road users.

# Recent Legislative Enactments

*The following highway safety legislation was approved or enacted during calendar year 2024.*

## **P.L. 2023, c.216**

Requires certain permit holders to complete practice driving hours to obtain probationary driver's license.

This legislation requires holders of examination permits and special learner's permits under the age of 21 to complete at least 50 hours of practice driving, at least 10 of which are to be completed during hours of darkness. The parent, guardian, or the supervising driver of a permit holder is to certify that these hours of practice driving were completed. The Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission is to suspend the driving privileges of any permit holder who submits a fraudulent certification. The bill also requires a sample practice driving log to be included in informational brochures distributed to parents and guardians of beginning drivers under the age of 18.

This act shall take effect on the first day of the 13th month after enactment.

Approved January 8, 2024.

## **P.L. 2023, c.325**

The legislation imposes conditions on drivers approaching disabled vehicles.

The law imposes conditions on motor vehicle drivers approaching a disabled vehicle with flashing hazard warning signal lights or utilizing road flares or reflective triangles. Motor vehicle drivers approaching a disabled vehicle displaying these lights, road flares, or reflective triangles are required to either move to a lane that is not next to the disabled vehicle or, if the driver is unable to safely or legally move over, to slow down to a speed less than the posted speed limit.

This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 16, 2024.

## **P.L. 2024, c.11**

The legislation concerns motor vehicles overtaking certain pedestrians and persons operating bicycles and personal conveyances.

Under previous law, the operator of a motor vehicle was required to take certain actions when approaching a pedestrian, bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, low-speed electric scooter, or any other lawful personal conveyance on the roadways of this State.

Additionally, previous law did not define "personal conveyance." Under this legislation, "personal conveyance" includes, but is not limited to, a low-speed electric bicycle, a low-speed electric scooter, a manual wheelchair, a motorized wheelchair or a similar mobility assisting device used by persons with physical disabilities or by persons whose ambulatory mobility has been impaired by age or illness, an electric personal assistive mobility device, a motorized scooter, a skateboard, a motorized skateboard, roller skates, or any other device used by a person for transportation.

This legislation also makes clarifying changes to the previous definition of "pedestrian." The new definition of "pedestrian" includes, but is not limited to, a pedestrian as defined under current law or any other person who is upon the roadway and outside of a motor vehicle for work, emergency response, or recreation.

This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved May 2, 2024.







# SAFE PASSAGE

*moving toward zero fatalities*

[WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM](http://WWW.NJSAFEROADS.COM)

