



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Transportation Cabinet**

Andy Beshear, Governor

Jim Gray, Secretary

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Kentucky Office of Highway Safety joins NHTSA in promoting motorcycle safety month
Campaign highlights shared safety practices by all highway users

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 4, 2020) – In recognition of May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) joins the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in reminding motorists and motorcyclists to “share the road” conscientiously and courteously to help prevent crashes, injuries and deaths on Kentucky roadways.

“Safety is a mutual responsibility for motorists and motorcyclists alike,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “We’re entering the warmer months and that typically means more drivers may operate motorcycles on our roadways. With more than 95,000 registered motorcycles in Kentucky, all road users must stay alert and look out for one another.”

According to NHTSA, per vehicle miles traveled, motorcyclists are approximately 28 times more likely than people in passenger cars to die in a traffic crash. Additionally, when motorcycles and other vehicles collide, it is usually the other (non-motorcycle) driver who violates the motorcyclist’s right-of-way.

“As one of the smallest vehicles on the road, a motorcycle may ‘hide’ in a vehicle’s blind spots, so we advise motorists to ‘look twice to save a life’ before changing lanes and making turns,” said Transportation Cabinet Secretary Jim Gray. “Additionally, using a turn signal will alert motorcyclists of your intentions.”

In 2018 there were 1,501 crashes involving motorcycles in Kentucky. Of those crashes, 803 involved a motorcycle and at least one other vehicle, while 698 involved only the motorcycle.

“Just as we ask passenger vehicle drivers to obey all traffic laws, we expect the same from motorcyclists,” said KOHS Acting Executive Director Jason Siwula. “Additionally, we ask that they take the extra step of using proper protective gear, including a helmet and reflective clothing.”

In 2018, the 1,501 crashes resulted in 322 injuries and 88 deaths to motorcyclists. Of those killed, 54 were not wearing a helmet.

The KOHS offers the following tips for drivers:

- A motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the rights and privileges of any other motor vehicle. The person under that helmet could be a parent, sibling or friend;
- Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width – never try to share a lane;
- Perform a regular visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or exiting a lane of traffic, and at intersections;

- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic;
- Don't be fooled by a flashing turn signal on a motorcycle – motorcycle signals are often not self-canceling and riders sometimes forget to turn them off. Wait to be sure the motorcycle is going to turn before you proceed;
- Allow more following distance – three or four seconds – when behind a motorcycle to give the motorcyclist time to maneuver around obstacles in the roadway, or stop in an emergency;
- Pay attention.

The KOHS offers the following tips for motorcyclists:

- Wear a DOT-compliant helmet;
- Use turn signals for every turn or lane change, even if the rider thinks no one will see it;
- Signal intentions by combining hand signals and turn signals;
- Wear brightly colored protective gear and using reflective tape and stickers to increase visibility;
- Position in the lane where most visible to other drivers;
- Never ride impaired; and
- Take a rider training course. Find information at www.msf-usa.org

For more information on motorcycle safety, visit NHTSA's website [here](#).

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