

A Driver's Commitment to Safety, Family and Friends

Whether I am a new driver or have been driving for years, I understand the great responsibility I have in safeguarding the lives of others and myself when I get behind the wheel. I also understand that my choices can have a life-changing effect on those who care about me, especially if my decisions lead to a crash. I pledge to drive safely and to minimize my risks, and I hope to lead by example, because *my* family and friends are out there on the roadways – as drivers, motorcyclists, bicyclists, or pedestrians – and I want to protect their lives. By initialing the following statements, I agree to:

- ___ **Be Aware of the Risks Associated with Driving** – I understand that safe driving requires dedicated attention to the task and a mindful awareness of everything around me. I also understand that vulnerable roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists, rely on me to be aware of them and to drive safely and predictably in their presence.
- ___ **Get Trained and Licensed** – I will take a professional driver education course, offered at my school or at a private facility, to learn proper mental strategies and driving skills before driving. I will get a driver's permit or license, as appropriate, and obtain proper insurance for my vehicle to demonstrate that I am a responsible driver.
- ___ **Before You Start the Car** – I will prepare for each drive by adjusting the seat, mirrors and steering wheel; securing my children, pets, and/or cargo; setting up my cell phone; and programming my music and navigation systems before putting my car in gear. When the car is in motion, I will focus on driving and will not text, use a hand-held device, shave, put on makeup, adjust infotainment or navigation systems, allow passengers or pets to distract me or engage in any other distractions.
- ___ **Use the Seat/Shoulder Belts** – I will always choose to properly use the safety features of my vehicle when I drive, most importantly the seat/shoulder belt, regardless of my destination or the duration of my trip.
- ___ **Use a Safe-Driving Strategy** – I will maintain awareness of the traffic environment and my position within it by using safe-driving strategies such as SEE (Search, Evaluate, Execute) and a 2-second minimum following distance. Before making a left turn at an intersection or into a driveway, I will look ahead carefully to ensure that I am not cutting in front of an oncoming motorcycle or other vehicle. In addition to using my mirrors I will always turn my head to assess the location of other vehicles or pedestrians before turning, changing lanes or backing up.
- ___ **Prepare for the Unexpected** – I will always remember that traffic is unpredictable. I will be on the lookout for vehicles that I do not expect to see on the road, such as ATVs, dirt bikes, side-by-sides, and farm equipment, plus pedestrians and animals.
- ___ **Be a Courteous Driver** – I will always use my turn signals to communicate my intentions. I will allow other motorists to merge into my lane ahead of me as appropriate. To ensure efficient traffic flow, I will use the left-most lane (on multi-lane roadways) only as a passing lane, not a driving lane. I will not tailgate, cut off other motorists, or engage in rude and potentially hazardous behavior.
- ___ **Drive Within My Limits** – I will not drive aggressively or make risky maneuvers. Driving too fast for the conditions, tailgating, and weaving through gaps between vehicles increase my chance of crashing or causing other drivers to crash. I realize that if I rush because I'm late, I run the risk of arriving much later or not at all because of being pulled over or put in an ambulance after a crash. I will honestly assess my capabilities and mental attitude before I start my engine as both aspects are required to safely navigate my vehicle on the street.
- ___ **Drive Unimpaired** – I will never be impaired by alcohol, marijuana, or other drugs when driving. Driving is a serious activity that requires intense focus, accurate perception, and split-second decision-making. I am aware that almost one-third of all drivers killed in crashes were under the influence of alcohol. I also will not be influenced by negative peer pressure, and will make my own appropriate decisions based on my regard for traffic safety, my life, and the lives of others.
- ___ **Keep My Vehicle in Excellent Operating Condition** – I will follow the maintenance schedule as outlined in the owner's manual, and I will ensure repairs are made promptly. I will regularly check the tires because inflation pressure and overall condition affect tire grip on the road. I will have fluid leaks fixed promptly, since fluids on road surfaces increase the risk that other motorists, especially motorcyclists, will lose traction and possibly crash.

I acknowledge that if I drive untrained, recklessly, impaired, distracted, or without safety belts, I am increasing the risk of a life-altering injury or death to other roadway users and myself. This would not only affect the victims and me, but could affect their family and friends as well as my family and friends. I love my life and respect the lives of others; therefore, I am committed to being a safe and responsible driver.

signed: _____

date: _____

printed name: _____

witness: _____