

January 11, 2007

MISSOULA COUNTY INATTENTIVE DRIVING POLICY

Purpose

This policy addresses the risks of inattention while operating a vehicle. Driving is demanding yet almost all drivers engage in other activities while behind the wheel, including using a cell phone, eating, reading a map, drinking a beverage, adjusting the radio, talking to passengers, etc. As the primary responsibility of a driver is to give full attention to the safe operation of the vehicle, the dangers of multitasking must be minimized. In adopting this policy, Missoula County seeks to alert its employees to the hazards of inattentive driving and to emphasize the paramount importance of driving safely.

For purposes of this policy, "employee" includes all County employees, elected officials, and appointed members of boards, commissions, and councils.

Scope

Subject to the exclusion that follows, this policy is applicable to all County departments and entities. Departments may apply additional requirements as long as they are equal to or more restrictive than these standards. This policy does not apply to law enforcement and public safety.

Administration

Department heads are responsible for the implementation of the policy within their departments and on-going employee compliance.

Other References

Loss Control Policy and Accident/Injury Reporting.

Policy

Employees are routinely provided with electronic devices to assist with job functions. Missoula County has every expectation that such equipment will be used safely, according to operating instructions, and for job-related activities. When daily activities include driving, where the primary focus must be on the safe and lawful operation of the vehicle, employees are encouraged to plan work schedules in advance to avoid distractions, including those associated with the use of electronic devices. If the need to use electronic communications arises while driving, the vehicle should be brought to a complete stop in a safe location and placed in "park".

The following exceptions apply:

- In an emergency situation, a cell phone or radio may be used to coordinate responses from various departments.
- County radios may be used while a vehicle is in motion for communications of short duration.

Use of devices in any manner that is not compliant with this policy is prohibited. This applies equally to county owned equipment or the occasional use of a personal vehicle or device for work purposes. Violation of this policy, including the improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use of operation of Missoula County equipment or vehicles may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.