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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kentuckians Urged to Protect Those Who Protect Us

Slow Down and Move Over for Emergency Vehicles

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 1, 2023) – In an effort to protect those who protect us, Kentuckians are urged to slow down and move over if safely possible when passing emergency vehicles.

“Every day on our roadways, emergency responders and public safety personnel put their lives at risk to protect the citizens of the commonwealth, and it’s important to do what we can go to support them in return,” said Gov. Andy Beshear, who has made all aspects of highway safety a top administration priority. “Please slow down and move over to help keep these dedicated heroes safe as they work to protect the lives of Kentuckians.”

To raise awareness, the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) is joining the Kentucky State Police (KSP) and AAA to promote the “Slow Down and Move Over” message through Aug. 15.

“Our goal is to create a safe and equitable transportation system for all Kentuckians, including our first responders,” said Kentucky Transportation Secretary Jim Gray. “While some drivers may believe that moving over is just a courtesy, it is not – it’s the law.”

Kentucky passed its Move Over law in 2003 requiring motorists to move over to the adjacent lane when approaching an emergency vehicle or public safety vehicle with flashing lights ([KRS 189.930](#)). If changing lanes is impossible or unsafe, motorists must slow down and use caution. Failure to do so can result in fines, jail time or both ([KRS 189.993 \(8\)](#)).

The law protects all first responders, including law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, safety service patrols and towing vehicles.

“Imagine trying to do your job as vehicles fly past you at alarming speeds,” said KSP Captain Paul Blanton. “Think about it the next time you see those flashing lights ahead.”

Unfortunately, first responders are killed every year by drivers who fail to move over. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association, 149 law enforcement officers – just one category of first responder – have been killed in traffic-related incidents since 2017.

“We’re used to working in dangerous situations; however, our risk increases when a vehicle speeds past us,” said Capt. Blanton. “Giving first responders the space we need allows us to perform our job safely and effectively.”

Emergency personnel can only do so much to keep themselves safe on the side of the road. The rest of the responsibility falls on other motorists.

“Stay alert, slow down and move over,” said Lori Weaver Hawkins, Public Affairs Manager, AAA Blue Grass. “Those are three simple—yet critical—actions that will save lives. It’s not only the right thing to do, it’s the law.”

All 50 states have enacted “Move Over” laws. The first was South Carolina in 1996. Hawaii became the 50th and final in 2012.

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Editor's notes:

Click [here](#) for photo of Trooper Matt Sudduth with his daughter, Emilyn.

Click [here](#) for Move Over logo.