

DISTRACTED DRIVING STATE FLEET POLICY AND FAQs

Drivers of State Fleet and other vehicles while conducting state official business may not use cell phones (including hands free) or any other mobile devices while operating the vehicle while in motion or stopped at a stop sign or traffic signal. This includes, but is not limited to, answering or making phone calls, engaging in phone conversations and reading or responding to emails, instant messages, social media or text messages. If the driver needs to use their cell phone while in a vehicle being used for state official business, they must pull over safely to the side of the road or another safe location and put the vehicle in park. Additionally, drivers should:

- Consider turning off, putting on silent or vibrate cell phones or mobile devices before starting the vehicle.
- Consider modifying your voice mail greeting to indicate that you are unavailable to answer calls or return messages while driving.
- Inform others that this policy is in place as an explanation of why calls may not be returned immediately.

This policy does not apply if a wireless communications device is used for obtaining emergency assistance to report a crash, medical emergency, or serious traffic hazard or to prevent a crime about to be committed. Each agency may identify operations that require exemption from this policy, for emergency situations where cell phone use is necessary.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who does this policy apply to?

The policy applies to anyone driving a state fleet vehicle (cars, pickups, SUVs, equipment). Passengers in the state fleet vehicle can use their phones as they wish.

2. What does "other vehicles" mean in the policy?

"Other vehicles" means state agency courtesy vehicles and approved commercial rental vehicles that may be used when traveling for official state business. It will also include personal vehicles when used in the capacity of state official business.

3. Does the policy include using my phone for navigation/GPS?

You can use your phone for navigation purposes, if necessary. Navigation must be set *before* you start driving. Pull over or have a passenger set it or change the route.

4. Can conference calls and webinar meetings be listened to that require no participation?

If there is another state employee passenger that will be operating the cell phone this would be allowed.

5. Can I stream music from my phone while driving?

Yes, however the station or playlist needs to be set while the vehicle is stopped and in park.

6. How do I know if my agency has identified operations that are exempt from this policy?

Agency heads should develop internal policy stating when an operation would be exempt from this policy for emergency cell phone use.

7. What are the consequences for violation of the policy?

As with all State Fleet policies, the agency is responsible for discipline of their employees. Also, please note that texting and driving is illegal in the State of ND.

8. Does “hands free” include use of Bluetooth?

Yes, Bluetooth is a form of hands free so if the vehicle is equipped with Bluetooth it can't be used unless the vehicle is stopped and in park.