



Florida's Law Enforcement Liaison Program

Why Do We Have a Law Enforcement Liaison Program?

Florida's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) was developed as a long-term roadmap towards safer roadways. The 2023 SHSP outlines 12 Emphasis Areas, along with specific implementation strategies for each. Florida, along with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), sees active involvement of law enforcement as a key element in the creation of safer highways. In NHTSA's Countermeasures That Work guide, high visibility enforcement and other traffic enforcement strategies are listed as evidence-based countermeasures in the nine highway safety program areas that are examined.

Florida designs and builds some of the best roads and bridges in the country, but in order to have the greatest traffic safety impact, great roads are not enough, a critical part of the process is law enforcement. Together, the Florida Highway Patrol, sheriffs' offices, police departments, and state agencies conduct focused and high visibility operations, creating the voluntary compliance that is necessary for safer roadways. However, traffic safety is just one of many priorities that local law enforcement agencies must address.

The challenges in Florida related to traffic enforcement are not unique. Focus areas for law enforcement span communication, training, coordination, and participation.

The Florida Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) Program is a grant-funded program sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and NHTSA. The goals and objectives of the LEL Program are to partner with law enforcement agencies to promote and increase participation in the NHTSA national enforcement waves and the annual Florida Law Enforcement Liaison Traffic Safety Challenge to increase awareness and participation in traffic safety-related efforts.

In order to keep highway safety a priority and continue the active, enthusiastic involvement of law enforcement, Florida has developed a proactive, engaged LEL program that facilitates ongoing communication, participation, fosters interagency coordination, and promotes the goals and priorities of the FDOT State Safety Office.





National Law Enforcement Liaison Program

The National Law Enforcement Liaison Program (NLELP) was created by NHTSA and the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) in 1997. The NLELP is designed to strengthen the work of a proven network of highway safety professionals with enhanced communications tools, updated training, sharing of best practices, exchanging information on new research, policies, and programs, and highlighting successes. Every state and many Tribal partners currently have an LEL program, and there are approximately 237 LELs nationwide.

In 2022, NHTSA temporarily paused the National LEL Program to focus on state operated LEL programs.



What is a Law Enforcement Liaison?

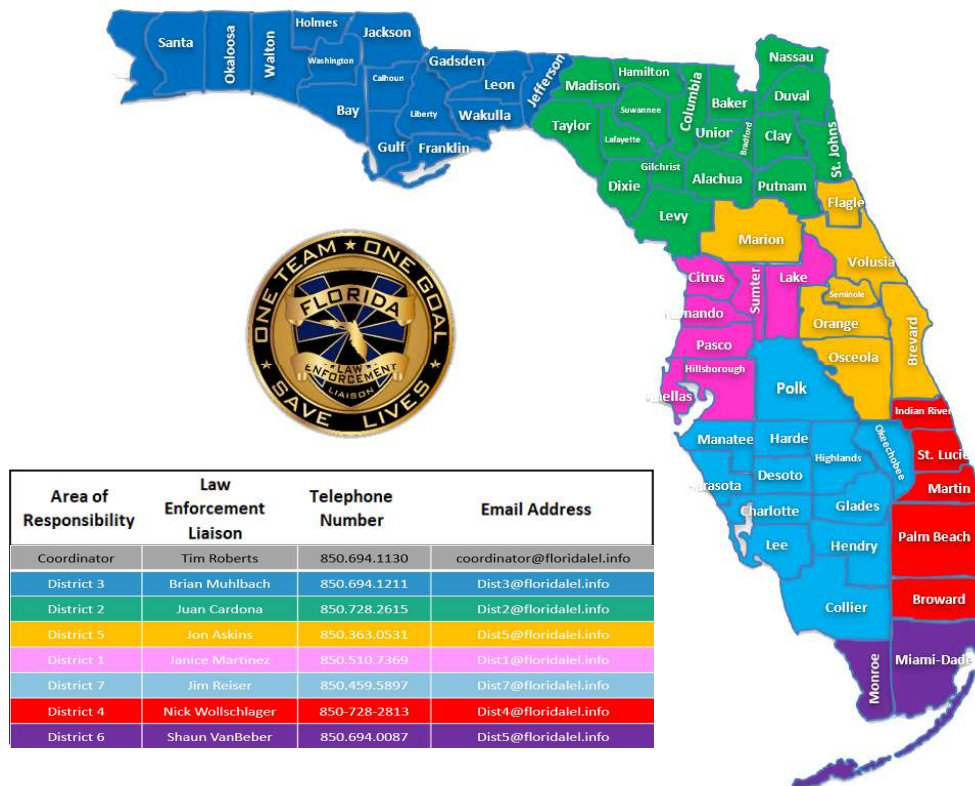
An LEL serves as a vital link and conduit between the State Highway Safety Office (SHSO) and the state's law enforcement community. LELs help promote and enhance state and national highway safety programs, initiatives, and campaigns and perform a myriad of functions, including planning, organizing, networking, promoting, recruiting, implementing, reporting, and evaluating law enforcement's role in traffic safety projects, activities, and achievements.

Florida's LELs are active and retired law enforcement officers working under a grant-funded program sponsored by the FDOT and NHTSA. One of their most important tasks is to recruit and encourage state and local law enforcement participation in the national and state traffic safety mobilizations, thus continuously working toward a culture of sustained and effective traffic enforcement programs. The involvement of state LELs has increased the number of law enforcement agencies participating in traffic safety activities, and this contributes to crash reductions.



Florida's Law Enforcement Liaison Program

Florida's LEL Program started in 2000 and currently has eight members made up of one Coordinator and seven LELs assigned to each of the seven FDOT districts.



Florida's Law Enforcement Liaisons' Primary Duties

Encourage and Support Law Enforcement Participation

NHTSA requires continued law enforcement participation in the following three national education and enforcement campaign waves for the state to receive federal funding:

Approximate Dates	Campaign	Target
• May 13 – June 2	<i>Click It or Ticket</i>	Safety Belt Use
• August 14 – September 2	<i>Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over</i>	Impaired Driving Prevention
• December 26 – January 1	<i>Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over</i>	Impaired Driving Prevention



Additional NHTSA Campaigns

In addition to the three required national campaigns, NHTSA strongly encourages states and law enforcement agencies to participate in additional education and enforcement campaigns:

Approximate Dates	Campaign	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none">July 15-20	<i>Operation Southern Slow Down</i>	Speeding Prevention
<ul style="list-style-type: none">August 30	<i>Hands Across the Border</i>	Impaired Driving Prevention

Traffic Safety Coalitions

Florida's LEL program participates with the FDOT traffic safety coalitions. Currently at least one LEL sits on each of the following coalitions:

- Impaired Driving Coalition
- Motorcycle Safety Coalition
- Occupant Protection Coalition
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coalition
- Safe Mobility for Life Coalition
- Traffic Records Coordinating Committee
- Teen Safe Driving Coalition

Subgrant Opportunities

The Florida LEL program assists the FDOT State Safety Office with helping law enforcement agencies apply for subgrants from FDOT to support their increased traffic safety enforcement. FDOT awards subgrants to traffic safety partners who undertake priority area programs and activities to improve traffic safety and reduce crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities. Subgrants may be awarded for assisting in addressing traffic safety deficiencies, expansion of an ongoing activity, or development of a new program. The LEL program assists agencies with crash data identification for the grant year, review of current enforcement focused efforts and provides best practice approaches to thirteen Emphasis Areas of the data-driven Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

District Community Traffic Safety Teams

Each FDOT district has multiple Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTSTs) that focus on local projects to reduce crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities. The Florida LEL program assists the district CTSTs in raising awareness and providing safety resources to their local areas using data driven approaches to address areas with the highest number of crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities. The Florida LELs participate with all the active CTSTs, with each district currently having the following number of CTST teams:

- District 1 – 11 CTSTs
- District 2 – 8 CTSTs
- District 3 – 10 CTSTs
- District 4 – 4 CTSTs
- District 5 – 8 CTSTs
- District 6 – 2 CTSTs
- District 7 – 6 CTSTs



Florida's Law Enforcement Liaison Program



Law Enforcement Coordination

The Florida LEL program regularly assists many federal, state, local, and nonprofit agencies with any needed assistance for coordination with law enforcement agencies participating in traffic safety initiatives. Agencies regularly assisted include:

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)
- Florida Sheriffs Association (FSA)
- Florida Police Chiefs Association (FPCA)
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

Florida Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Challenge

The Florida Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Challenge was started in 2010 and recognizes the best overall traffic safety programs in Florida. The areas of concentration include efforts to enforce traffic safety laws and educate the public about distracted and impaired driving, motorcycle safety, occupant protection and child passenger safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, speed and aggressive driving, and other area issues that impact the safety of roadway users.

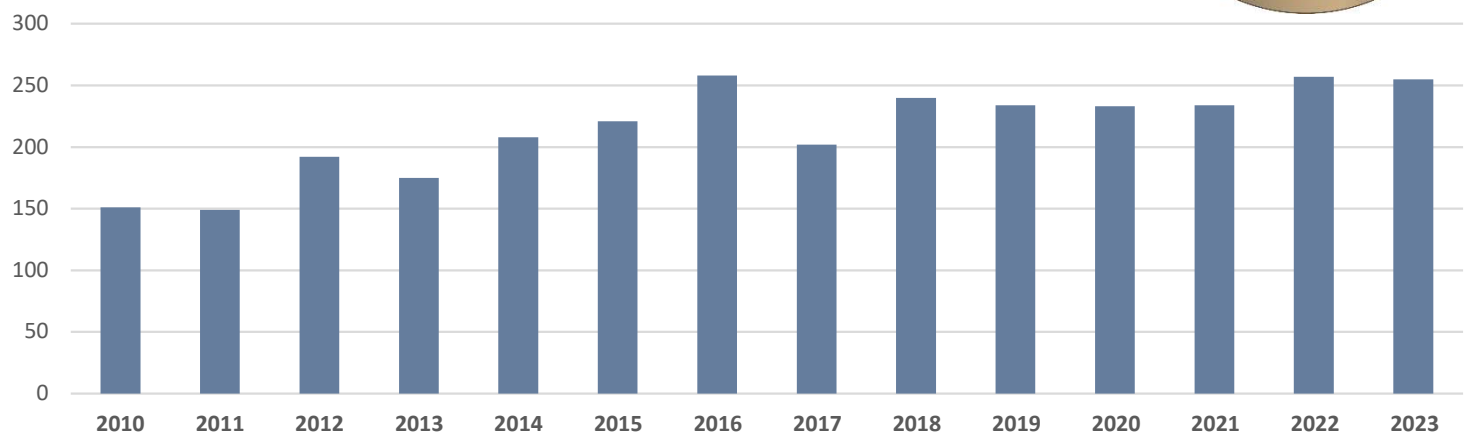
Through the challenge, the State's seven Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) work with local, county, and state law enforcement agencies to encourage participation in state mobilizations and the three NHTSA traffic safety national mobilizations and campaigns. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to conduct routine enforcement patrols to address particular program areas, as well as high visibility enforcement operations (i.e., saturation patrols, checkpoints), educational programs, and earned media activities.

Participating agencies submit applications via the Florida Law Enforcement Liaison Program website by a given deadline. Evaluation of the safety program and efforts of the agency submitting the application are based upon the following:

- Policy & Guidelines
- Training of Officers
- Officer Recognition
- LEL Program Participation
- Public Information & Education
- Traffic Enforcement Activity
- Traffic Safety Effectiveness



Florida Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Challenge
Agency Participation (2010 - 2023)





NHTSA *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* Campaign Waves

One condition of the traffic safety federal funding requires Florida to have law enforcement agencies participate in the two national *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaigns.

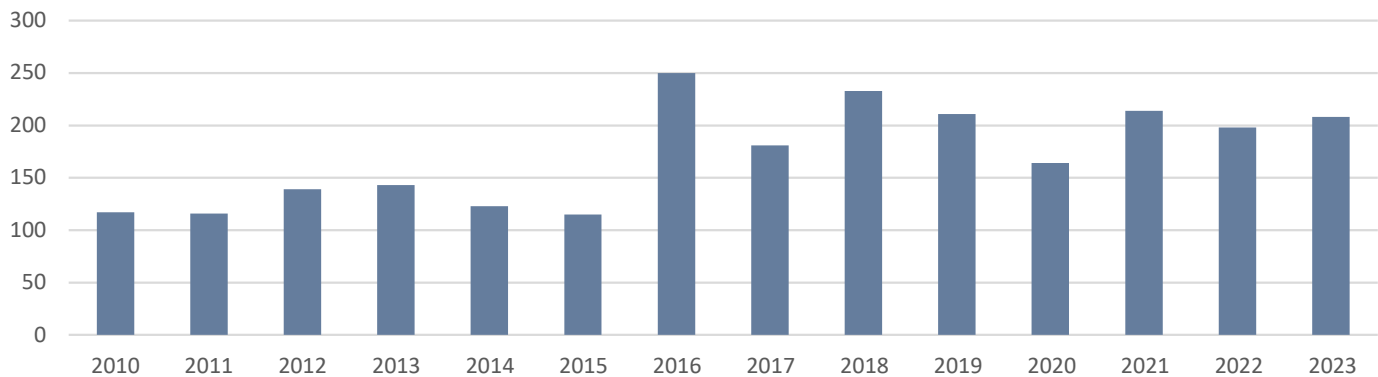
Because of the impaired driving campaigns' importance to highway safety, and the central role that law enforcement plays in the initiative, Florida developed the Florida LEL Impaired Driving Awareness Program to encourage enthusiastic involvement through the use of educational printed materials. The program is designed to keep Impaired Driving enforcement as a priority throughout Florida and maintain the high participation levels of the crackdowns' most important component: law enforcement.

The goal of the program is to reduce the number of alcohol-related crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities that occur on Florida's roadways by encouraging law enforcement agencies to increase their emphasis on routine impaired driving enforcement and high visibility DUI enforcement operations (sobriety checkpoints), increase DUI enforcement training among law enforcement personnel, and promote public awareness of the State's impaired driving crash problem.

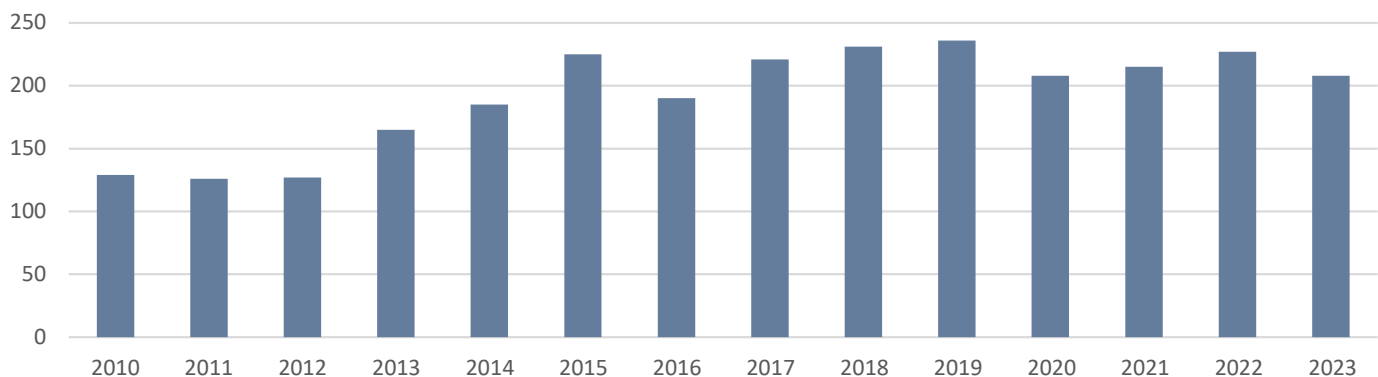
To participate, agencies must submit *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* activity reports online by a specific deadline. Reports are compiled and then separated into two different categories based upon the campaign.



**Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over - Labor Day Campaign
Agency Participation (2010 - 2023)**



**Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over - Holiday Campaign
Agency Participation (2010 - 2023)**





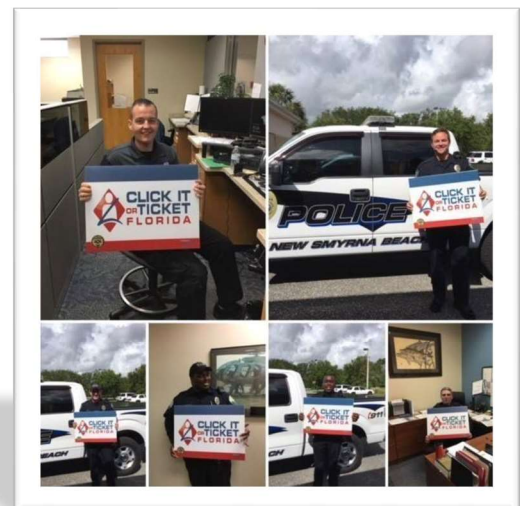
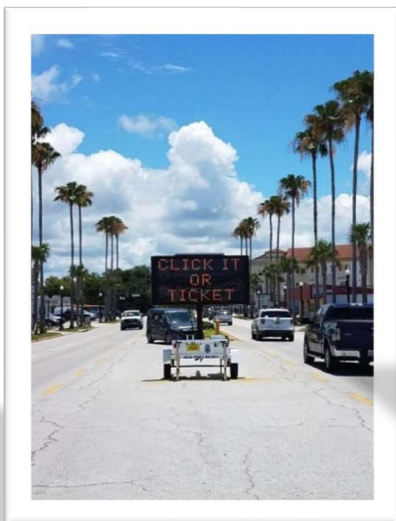
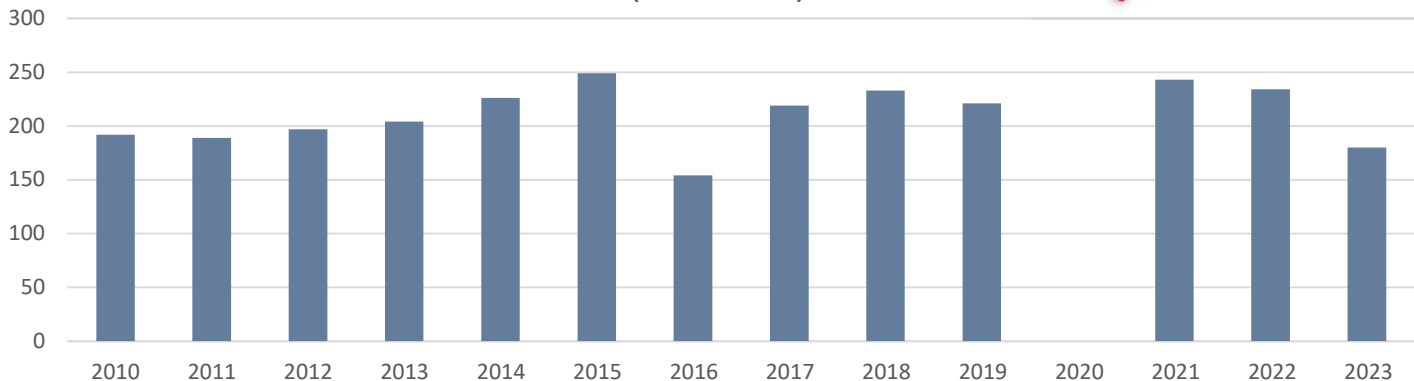
NHTSA *Click It or Ticket* Campaign Wave

Another condition of the traffic safety federal funding requires Florida to have law enforcement agencies participate in the national Occupant Protection campaign.

To keep Florida's law enforcement agencies actively and enthusiastically involved in occupant restraint enforcement, the Florida LEL Occupant Protection Awareness Program seeks to increase safety belt and child restraint high visibility enforcement by providing printed educational materials, such as banners and yard signs, while providing recognition to the model's most important component: law enforcement.

Law enforcement agencies across Florida will be encouraged to conduct high visibility enforcement operations during the campaign wave and submit activity reports online by a specific deadline.

Click It or Ticket Campaign
Agency Participation
(2010 - 2023)





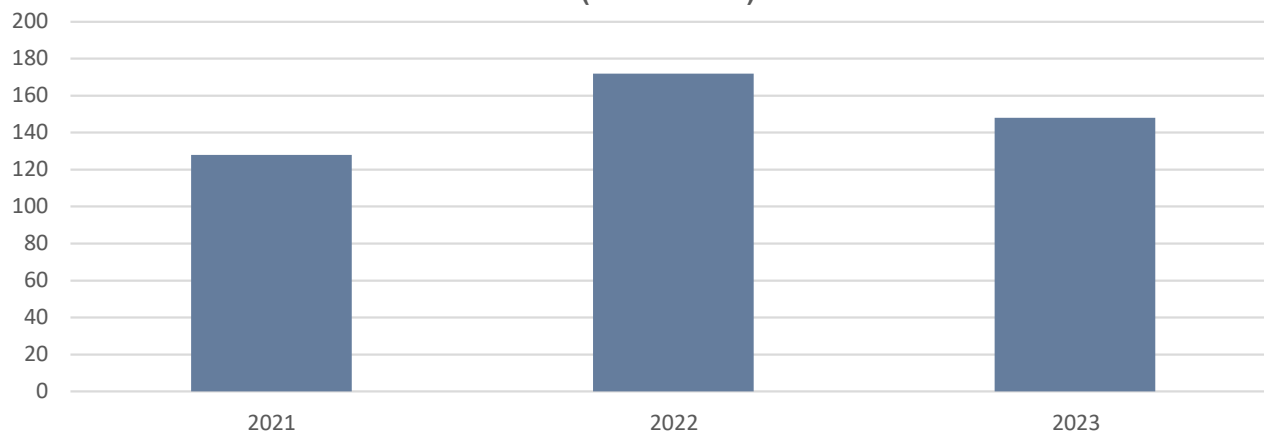
Southern Slow Down Campaign

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration requested that the states within NHTSA Region IV actively participate in the traffic safety campaign called *Operation Southern Slow Down*. During the month of July, Florida joins Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee in a week-long speed enforcement campaign.

State and local law enforcement agencies in all five states conduct the week-long speed enforcement campaign focused on detecting and citing drivers for ignoring the posted speed limits, with the overall aim of illuminating and reducing the prevalence of this risky behavior. Press events are also held at State Welcome Centers with neighboring states to help spread the message and reduce the speed-related crashes, serious injuries, and fatalities on our interstates, major highways and local roads.



Operation Southern Slow Down Campaign
Agency Participation
(2021 - 2023)



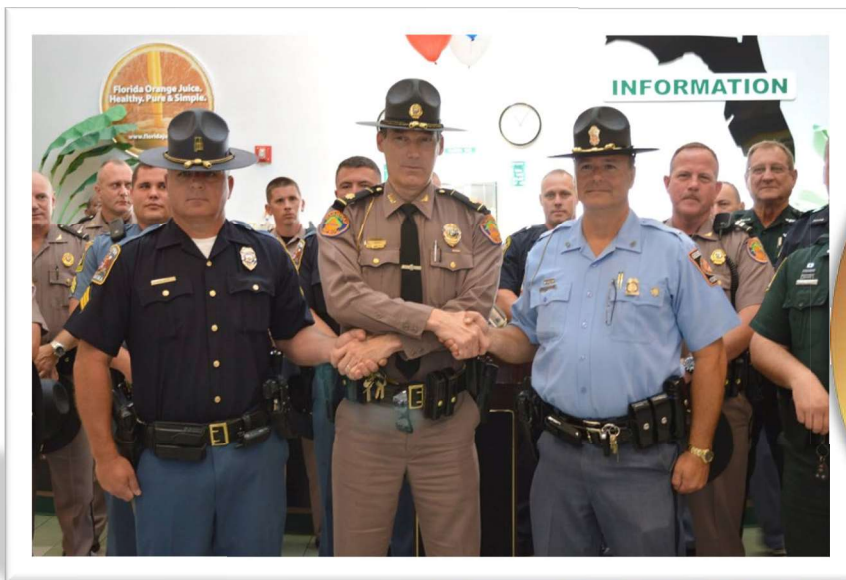


Hands Across the Border Campaign

With the increase in summer holiday travel comes an unfortunate increase in crashes on Florida's highways and roadways. Impaired driving, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and the failure of drivers and passengers to wear their seatbelts results in an increase in serious injuries and fatalities on Florida roadways.

The annual *Hands Across the Border* event started in 1991 as an effort to combat impaired driving. During the annual *Hands Across the Border* event, law enforcement from Florida teamed up with Georgia and Alabama law enforcement agencies to conduct roadside sobriety checkpoints and show a common solidarity and goal of helping to decrease the number of fatalities and injuries on our roadways.

For six days leading up to the Labor Day weekend, the Florida Highway Patrol and local law enforcement agencies join their partners in bordering states, forming a major zero-tolerance impaired driving enforcement effort across the Southeast. Troopers, police, and sheriffs' deputies from Florida, Georgia, and Alabama converged in areas near the state lines to show their common goal to save lives. These events are signified by the iconic handshake of the different law enforcement agencies' command staff, reaffirming their commitment to this campaign.





**For more information:
www.floridalel.info**



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