

	<b>HILLSBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>		<b>SPECIAL ORDER</b>	
	SUBJECT: <b>Distracted Driving</b>		APPROVED BY:	NUMBER
			<b>Chief Duane Hampton</b>	<b>SGO-06</b>
		EFFECTIVE DATE		
		<b>04/29/2015</b>		

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The Hillsborough Police Department recognizes the inherent danger that exists when employees operate vehicles while distracted. The use of cellular phones, computers, or other electronic devices while operating a vehicle can cause unnecessary distractions, presents a negative image to the public, can interfere with the safe operation of a vehicle and can impede a response to a call for service.

It is the policy of the Hillsborough Police Department to reduce or eliminate distractions when possible while operating town-owned vehicles in motion.

**B. DEFINITIONS**

*Distracted Driving* - any activity that could divert a person’s attention away from the primary task of driving. Employees who use a cell phone while driving expose themselves and others to a significant safety risk. Studies on cell-phone related vehicular accidents reveal that those individuals using cell phones while driving were significantly more likely to have an accident than those not using cell phones.

*Electronic Wireless Communication Devices* – any device that can be used to send information and/or communicate wirelessly. This includes, but is not limited to, cellular phones, smart phones, laptops, or tablets, regardless of whether they are provided by the Town or personally owned.

**C. ACCEPTABLE USE**

Employees may utilize electronic wireless communication devices any time they are not operating a vehicle, when they are a passenger in a vehicle, or when a vehicle they are operating is stopped.

**D. PROHIBITIONS WHILE OPERATING A VEHICLE**

1. While operating a Town vehicle in motion, whether on or off-duty, employees:
  - a. Shall not engage in writing, sending, searching, replying, utilizing an application (“app”) or reading any text based communication on electronic wireless communication devices.
  - b. Shall not utilize a cellular phone in any mode other than “hands free” nor for any purpose that is not strictly work related.
  - c. Shall not view, search or otherwise try to manage body-worn or in-car videos.

- d. Shall not eat, read printed material, take care of personal grooming, smoke or engage in any other activity that significantly limits the use of one or both hands and is not directly work-related and cannot be avoided until their vehicle comes to a stop.
2. Employees shall not alter, change or disengage any device designed to reduce distracted driving that is installed in a town vehicle.

## **E. EXCEPTIONS**

1. Operation and use of portable and vehicle mounted radios and RADAR units are exempt from these provisions. In addition, the activation and deactivation of in-car and body worn video cameras is also exempt.
2. Employees may use a Mobile Data Computer while in motion when one button or one-touch responses are needed to indicate an officer is en-route, arriving on scene or to activate an emergency button.
3. The use of a wireless communication device in a manner that is inconsistent with the prohibitions described in Section C is only permitted when significant exigent circumstances exist and no reasonable alternative is available. This includes, but is not limited to, typing or reading information presented over a Mobile Data Computer or utilizing a cellular phone for non-work related calls or in a non-hands-free mode.
4. No exceptions will be allowed when any vehicle that is being operated with lights and/or siren activated or is operating outside of the normally expected rules of the road.

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Duane Hampton  
Chief of Police