

Missouri's Hands-Free Law Takes Effect, Prohibiting Handheld Cell Phone Use While Driving

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Employers with employees in Missouri who drive as a part of their employment may want to take appropriate measures to inform employees of a new law that prohibits the use of cell phones and other handheld devices while driving on any highway or public roadway in Missouri.

Quick Hits

- The Siddens Bening Hands Free Law bans individuals from using electronic communication devices for a broad range of activities while driving on highways or public roads in Missouri.
- The law became effective on August 28, 2023, but law enforcement officers may not issue citations until January 1, 2025.
- Employers may want to update their handbooks and driving policies ahead of the law's enforcement date.

Under the [Siddens Bening Hands Free Law](#), which went into effect on August 28, 2023, the following activities are generally prohibited for individuals who are driving on any public roadway:

- Physically holding or supporting any electronic communication device
- Writing, reading, or sending any text-based communication (including text messages, instant messages on social media, and email)
- Making any communication on an electronic communication device (including phone calls and voice messages) unless the driver is using a voice-operated or hands-free function
- Manually entering letters, numbers, or symbols into any electronic communication device
- Watching videos or movies on any electronic communication device (except for navigation-related data)

The Siddens Bening Hands Free Law excludes communications made using a hands-free or voice-operated feature. The restrictions also apply only while the driver is operating the vehicle but do not apply while lawfully stopped or parked. Law enforcement officers may not issue citations for violations of the statute until January 1, 2025, so employers may want to update their handbooks and implement or revise their driving policies ahead of the enforcement date, and allow employees time to adapt to the new requirements.

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