

1 AN ACT relating to operating a motor vehicle.

2 ***Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

3 ➔Section 1. KRS 189.292 is amended to read as follows:

4 (1) As used in this section: [,]

5 **(a) "Operating a motor vehicle":**

6 **1. Means to operate a motor vehicle on a highway, including while**  
7 **temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or**  
8 **other momentary delays and circumstances; and**

9 **2. Does not include a circumstance in which the vehicle has pulled over**  
10 **to the side of, or off, an active roadway and has stopped in a location**  
11 **where it can safely remain stationary;**

12 **(b)** "Personal communication device" means a **portable** device capable of two (2)  
13 way audio or text communication that emits an audible signal, vibrates,  
14 displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers communication to the  
15 possessor, including but not limited to:

16 **1. A paging device;**

17 **2. A text-messaging device;**

18 **3. A stand-alone computer;**

19 **4. A tablet;**

20 **5. A laptop;**

21 **6. A notebook computer;**

22 **7. A personal digital assistant;**

23 **8. A global positioning system receiver;**

24 **9. A telephone;**

25 **10. A device capable of displaying a video, movie, broadcast television**  
26 **image, or visual image;**

27 **11. Any substantially similar wireless device that is used to initiate or**

1 receive communication, information, or data; or~~[-and-a]~~

2 12 A cellular telephone;

3 (c) "Stand-alone electronic device" means a portable device other than a  
4 personal communication device that stores audio or video data files to be  
5 retrieved on demand by a user; and

6 (d) 1. "Use" or "uses" means:

7 a. Holding a personal communication device or stand-alone  
8 electronic device in either or both hands or with any other body  
9 part;

10 b. Reaching for a personal communication device or stand-alone  
11 electronic device in a manner that requires the driver to no  
12 longer be in a seated driving position or properly restrained by a  
13 safety belt;

14 c. Watching a video, movie, or live broadcast on a personal  
15 communication device or stand-alone electronic device other  
16 than viewing data mapping related to the navigation of the motor  
17 vehicle or the static background on the personal communication  
18 device;

19 d. Recording, posting, sending, or broadcasting a video, including a  
20 video conference, or a still photograph on a personal  
21 communication device or a stand-alone electronic device. This  
22 prohibition shall not apply to electronic devices used for the sole  
23 purpose of continuously recording or broadcasting a video  
24 within or outside of the motor vehicle;

25 e. Reading from or manually entering data into a personal  
26 communication device, including doing so for the purposes of  
27 single messaging service (SMS) texting, emailing, instant

1 messaging, social media interaction, or engaging in any other  
2 form of electronic data retrieval or electronic data  
3 communications; or

4 f. Manually inputting information into a global positioning or  
5 navigation system that is physically mounted or electronically  
6 integrated into the motor vehicle; and

7 2. "Use" or "uses" does not mean:

8 a. Utilizing an earpiece, headphone device, or device worn on a  
9 wrist to conduct a voice-based communication;

10 b. Pressing a single button to activate, deactivate, or initiate a  
11 feature or function of the device with a single touch or single  
12 swipe, except those functions specified in subparagraph 1. of this  
13 paragraph;

14 c. Utilizing a personal communication device to automatically  
15 convert a voice-based communication to be sent as a message in  
16 a written form;

17 d. Utilizing, by voice-based communication, a global positioning or  
18 navigation system that is physically mounted or electronically  
19 integrated into the motor vehicle; or

20 e. Operating a radio, citizens band radio, citizens band radio  
21 hybrid, commercial two (2) way radio communication device or  
22 its functional equivalent, subscription-based emergency  
23 communication device, prescribed medical device, amateur or  
24 ham radio device, or in-vehicle security or remote diagnostics  
25 system.

26 (2) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, a[-no] person shall **not use a**  
27 personal communication device or stand-alone electronic device[-] while

1 operating a motor vehicle~~[ that is in motion on the traveled portion of a roadway,~~  
 2 ~~write, send, or read text-based communication using a personal communication~~  
 3 ~~device to manually communicate with any person using text-based communication,~~  
 4 ~~including but not limited to communications referred to as a text message, instant~~  
 5 ~~message, or electronic mail].~~

6 (3) Subsection (2) of this section shall not apply to:

7 (a) ~~[The use of a global positioning system feature of a personal communication~~  
 8 ~~device;~~

9 (b) ~~The use of a global positioning or navigation system that is physically or~~  
 10 ~~electronically integrated into the motor vehicle;~~

11 (c) ~~The reading, selecting, or entering of a telephone number or name in a~~  
 12 ~~personal communication device for the purpose of making a phone call;~~

13 (d) ~~]~~An operator of an emergency or public safety vehicle, when the use of a  
 14 personal communication device is an essential function of the operator's  
 15 official duties; ~~[or]~~

16 (b)~~(e)~~ An~~[The]~~ operator of a motor vehicle who uses~~[ writes a text message~~  
 17 ~~on]~~ a personal communication device to:

- 18 1. Report illegal activity;
- 19 2. Summon medical help;
- 20 3. Summon a law enforcement or public safety agency; or
- 21 4. Prevent injury to a person or property; or

22 (c) An operator of a school bus, who shall instead be subject to the provisions  
 23 of KRS 281A.205.

24 (4) This section shall not prohibit the operation of a motor vehicle while using a  
 25 device that is accessible through an interface that is embedded in a motor vehicle  
 26 that allows communication without the use of either of the driver's hands, except  
 27 to activate, deactivate, or initiate the feature or function of the device with a

1 *single touch or swipe.*

2 **(5)** The secretary of the Transportation Cabinet may promulgate administrative  
3 regulations pursuant to KRS Chapter 13A to implement the provisions of this  
4 section, including but not limited to updates or advances in the automotive and  
5 information technology industries.

6 ➔Section 2. KRS 189.294 is amended to read as follows:

7 (1) As used in this section, *the following terms*~~["personal communication device"~~  
8 ~~shall] have the same meaning as [defined] in KRS 189.292;~~

9 *(a) "Operating a motor vehicle";*

10 *(b) "Personal communication device"; and*

11 *(c) "Stand-alone electronic device".*

12 (2) Any person under the age of eighteen (18) who has been issued an instruction  
13 permit, intermediate license, or operator's license shall not *use a personal*  
14 *communication device or stand-alone electronic device in any manner, including*  
15 *hands-free operation permitted under Section 1 of this Act, while*  
16 *operating*~~[operate] a motor vehicle, [motorcycle, or moped that is in motion on the~~  
17 ~~traveled portion of a roadway while using a personal communication device,~~  
18 ~~]except to summon medical help or a law enforcement or public safety agency in an~~  
19 emergency situation.

20 ~~(3) [Use of a personal communication device does not include a stand alone global~~  
21 ~~positioning system, a global positioning or navigation system that is physically or~~  
22 ~~electronically integrated into the motor vehicle, or an in vehicle security,~~  
23 ~~diagnostics, and communications system, but does include manually entering~~  
24 ~~information into the global positioning system feature of a personal communication~~  
25 ~~device.~~

26 ~~(4) This section shall not apply to the use of a citizens band radio or an amateur radio~~  
27 ~~by a motor vehicle operator.~~

1 ~~(5)~~—The secretary of the Transportation Cabinet may promulgate administrative  
2 regulations pursuant to KRS Chapter 13A to implement the provisions of this  
3 section, including but not limited to updates or advances in the automotive and  
4 information technology industries.

5 ➔Section 3. KRS 189.990 is amended to read as follows:

6 (1) Any person who violates any of the provisions of KRS 189.020 to 189.040,  
7 subsection (1) or (4) of KRS 189.050, KRS 189.060 to 189.080, subsections (1) to  
8 (3) of KRS 189.090, KRS 189.100, 189.110, 189.130 to 189.160, subsections (2) to  
9 (4) of KRS 189.190, KRS 189.200, 189.285, 189.290, 189.300 to 189.360, KRS  
10 189.380, KRS 189.400 to 189.430, KRS 189.450 to 189.458, KRS 189.4595 to  
11 189.480, subsection (1) of KRS 189.520, KRS 189.540, KRS 189.570 to 189.590,  
12 except subsection (1)(b) or (6)(b) of KRS 189.580, KRS 189.345, subsection (6) of  
13 KRS 189.456, and 189.960 shall be fined not less than twenty dollars (\$20) nor  
14 more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for each offense. Any person who violates  
15 subsection (1)(a) of KRS 189.580 shall be fined not less than twenty dollars (\$20)  
16 nor more than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or imprisoned in the county jail for not  
17 more than one (1) year, or both, unless the accident involved death or serious  
18 physical injury and the person knew or should have known of the death or serious  
19 physical injury, in which case the person shall be guilty of a Class D felony. Any  
20 person who violates paragraph (c) of subsection (5) of KRS 189.390 shall be fined  
21 not less than eleven dollars (\$11) nor more than thirty dollars (\$30). Neither court  
22 costs nor fees shall be taxed against any person violating paragraph (c) of  
23 subsection (5) of KRS 189.390.

24 (2) (a) 1. Except as provided in subparagraph 2. of this paragraph, any person  
25 who violates the weight provisions of KRS 189.212, 189.221, 189.222,  
26 189.226, 189.230, 189.270, or 189.2713 shall be fined two cents (\$0.02) per  
27 pound for each pound of excess load when the excess is five thousand (5,000)

1           pounds or less. When the excess exceeds five thousand (5,000) pounds the  
2           fine shall be two cents (\$0.02) per pound for each pound of excess load, but  
3           the fine levied shall not be less than one hundred dollars (\$100) and shall not  
4           be more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

5           2. Any person who violates a posted bridge weight limit on a state-  
6           maintained bridge that is more than seventy-five (75) years old shall be  
7           fined:

8           a. five hundred dollars (\$500) for the first offense;

9           b. One thousand dollars (\$1,000) for the second offense within a one  
10           (1) year period; and

11           c. Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for any subsequent offense within a  
12           one (1) year period.

13           The Transportation Cabinet shall erect signs warning drivers of the  
14           increased fines in this subparagraph. Signs erected under this  
15           subparagraph shall be placed in such a manner that drivers are given  
16           adequate warning in order to exit the road prior to crossing the bridge. If  
17           warning signs are not erected in accordance with this subparagraph, the  
18           fines in this subparagraph shall not apply and violators shall be fined  
19           under subparagraph 1. of this paragraph.

20           (b) Any person who violates the provisions of KRS 189.271 and is operating on a  
21           route designated on the permit shall be fined one hundred dollars (\$100);  
22           otherwise, the penalties in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall apply.

23           (c) Any person who violates any provision of subsection (2) or (3) of KRS  
24           189.050, subsection (4) of KRS 189.090, KRS 189.221 to 189.230, 189.270,  
25           189.2713, 189.280, or the dimension provisions of KRS 189.212, for which  
26           another penalty is not specifically provided shall be fined not less than ten  
27           dollars (\$10) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

- 1 (d) 1. Any person who violates the provisions of KRS 177.985 while operating  
2 on a route designated in KRS 177.986 shall be fined one hundred dollars  
3 (\$100).
- 4 2. Any person who operates a vehicle with a permit under KRS 177.985 in  
5 excess of eighty thousand (80,000) pounds while operating on a route  
6 not designated in KRS 177.986 shall be fined one thousand dollars  
7 (\$1,000).
- 8 (e) Nothing in this subsection or in KRS 189.221 to 189.228 shall be deemed to  
9 prejudice or affect the authority of the Department of Vehicle Regulation to  
10 suspend or revoke certificates of common carriers, permits of contract  
11 carriers, or drivers' or chauffeurs' licenses, for any violation of KRS 189.221  
12 to 189.228 or any other act applicable to motor vehicles, as provided by law.
- 13 (3) (a) Any person who violates subsection (1) of KRS 189.190 shall be fined not  
14 more than fifteen dollars (\$15).
- 15 (b) Any person who violates subsection (5) of KRS 189.190 shall be fined not  
16 less than thirty-five dollars (\$35) nor more than two hundred dollars (\$200).
- 17 (4) (a) Any person who violates subsection (1) of KRS 189.210 shall be fined not  
18 less than twenty-five dollars (\$25) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100).
- 19 (b) Any peace officer who fails, when properly informed, to enforce KRS  
20 189.210 shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars (\$25) nor more than  
21 one hundred dollars (\$100).
- 22 (c) All fines collected under this subsection, after payment of commissions to  
23 officers entitled thereto, shall go to the county road fund if the offense is  
24 committed in the county, or to the city street fund if committed in the city.
- 25 (5) Any person who violates KRS 189.370 shall for the first offense be fined not less  
26 than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than two hundred dollars (\$200) or  
27 imprisoned not less than thirty (30) days nor more than sixty (60) days, or both. For



1 each subsequent offense occurring within three (3) years, the person shall be fined  
2 not less than three hundred dollars (\$300) nor more than five hundred dollars  
3 (\$500) or imprisoned not less than sixty (60) days nor more than six (6) months, or  
4 both. The minimum fine for this violation shall not be subject to suspension. A  
5 minimum of six (6) points shall be assessed against the driving record of any person  
6 convicted.

7 (6) Any person who violates KRS 189.500 shall be fined not more than fifteen dollars  
8 (\$15) in excess of the cost of the repair of the road.

9 (7) Any person who violates KRS 189.510 or KRS 189.515 shall be fined not less than  
10 twenty dollars (\$20) nor more than fifty dollars (\$50).

11 (8) Any peace officer who violates subsection (2) of KRS 189.520 shall be fined not  
12 less than thirty-five dollars (\$35) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100).

13 (9) (a) Any person who violates KRS 189.530(1) shall be fined not less than thirty-  
14 five dollars (\$35) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100), or imprisoned  
15 not less than thirty (30) days nor more than twelve (12) months, or both.

16 (b) Any person who violates KRS 189.530(2) shall be fined not less than thirty-  
17 five dollars (\$35) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100).

18 (10) Any person who violates any of the provisions of KRS 189.550 shall be guilty of a  
19 Class B misdemeanor.

20 (11) Any person who violates subsection (3) of KRS 189.560 shall be fined not less than  
21 thirty dollars (\$30) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for each offense.

22 (12) The fines imposed by paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and subsections (6) and (7) of  
23 this section shall, in the case of a public highway, be paid into the county road fund,  
24 and, in the case of a privately owned road or bridge, be paid to the owner. These  
25 fines shall not bar an action for damages for breach of contract.

26 (13) Any person who violates any of the provisions of KRS 189.120 shall be fined not  
27 less than twenty dollars (\$20) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for each

- 1 offense.
- 2 (14) Any person who violates any provision of KRS 189.575 shall be fined not less than  
3 twenty dollars (\$20) nor more than twenty-five dollars (\$25).
- 4 (15) Any person who violates subsection (2) of KRS 189.231 shall be fined not less than  
5 twenty dollars (\$20) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for each offense.
- 6 (16) Any person who violates restrictions or regulations established by the secretary of  
7 transportation pursuant to subsection (3) of KRS 189.231 shall, upon first offense,  
8 be fined one hundred dollars (\$100) and, upon subsequent convictions, be fined not  
9 less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500) or  
10 imprisoned for thirty (30) days, or both.
- 11 (17) (a) Any person who violates any of the provisions of KRS 189.565 shall be guilty  
12 of a Class B misdemeanor.
- 13 (b) In addition to the penalties prescribed in paragraph (a) of this subsection, in  
14 case of violation by any person in whose name the vehicle used in the  
15 transportation of inflammable liquids or explosives is licensed, the person  
16 shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than five  
17 hundred dollars (\$500). Each violation shall constitute a separate offense.
- 18 (18) Any person who abandons a vehicle upon the right-of-way of a state highway for  
19 three (3) consecutive days shall be fined not less than thirty-five dollars (\$35) nor  
20 more than one hundred dollars (\$100), or imprisoned for not less than ten (10) days  
21 nor more than thirty (30) days.
- 22 (19) Every person violating KRS 189.393 shall be guilty of a Class B misdemeanor,  
23 unless the offense is being committed by a defendant fleeing the commission of a  
24 felony offense which the defendant was also charged with violating and was  
25 subsequently convicted of that felony, in which case it is a Class A misdemeanor.
- 26 (20) Any law enforcement agency which fails or refuses to forward the reports required  
27 by KRS 189.635 shall be subject to the penalties prescribed in KRS 17.157.

- 1 (21) A person who operates a bicycle in violation of the administrative regulations  
2 promulgated pursuant to KRS 189.287 shall be fined not less than ten dollars (\$10)  
3 nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100).
- 4 (22) Any person who violates KRS 189.860 shall be fined not more than five hundred  
5 dollars (\$500) or imprisoned for not more than six (6) months, or both.
- 6 (23) Any person who violates KRS 189.754 shall be fined not less than twenty-five  
7 dollars (\$25) nor more than three hundred dollars (\$300).
- 8 (24) Any person who violates the provisions of KRS 189.125(3)(a) shall be fined fifty  
9 dollars (\$50). This fine shall be subject to prepayment. A fine imposed under this  
10 subsection shall not be subject to court costs pursuant to KRS 24A.175, additional  
11 court costs pursuant to KRS 24A.176, the fee imposed pursuant to KRS 24A.1765,  
12 or any other additional fees or costs.
- 13 (25) Any person who violates the provisions of KRS 189.125(3)(b) shall ~~not be issued a~~  
14 ~~uniform citation, but shall instead receive a courtesy warning up until July 1, 2009.~~  
15 ~~For a violation on or after July 1, 2009, the person shall~~ be fined thirty dollars  
16 (\$30). This fine shall be subject to prepayment. A fine imposed under this  
17 subsection shall not be subject to court costs pursuant to KRS 24A.175, additional  
18 court costs pursuant to KRS 24A.176, a fee imposed pursuant to KRS 24A.1765, or  
19 any other additional fees or costs. A person who has not been previously charged  
20 with a violation of KRS 189.125(3)(b) may elect to acquire a booster seat meeting  
21 the requirements of KRS 189.125. Upon presentation of sufficient proof of the  
22 acquisition, the charge shall be dismissed and no fees or costs shall be imposed.
- 23 (26) Any person who violates the provisions of KRS 189.125(6) shall be fined an  
24 amount not to exceed twenty-five dollars (\$25). This fine shall be subject to  
25 prepayment. A fine imposed under this subsection shall not be subject to court costs  
26 pursuant to KRS 24A.175, additional court costs pursuant to KRS 24A.176, the fee  
27 imposed pursuant to KRS 24A.1765, or any other additional fees or costs.

- 1 (27) Fines levied pursuant to this chapter shall be assessed in the manner required by  
2 KRS 534.020, in amounts consistent with this chapter. Nonpayment of fines shall  
3 be governed by KRS 534.020 and 534.060.
- 4 (28) A licensed driver under the age of eighteen (18) charged with a moving violation  
5 pursuant to this chapter as the driver of a motor vehicle may be referred, prior to  
6 trial, by the court to a diversionary program. The diversionary program under this  
7 subsection shall consist of one (1) or both of the following:
- 8 (a) Execution of a diversion agreement which prohibits the driver from operating  
9 a vehicle for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days and which allows the  
10 court to retain the driver's operator's license during this period; and
- 11 (b) Attendance at a driver improvement clinic established pursuant to KRS  
12 186.574. If the person completes the terms of this diversionary program  
13 satisfactorily the violation shall be dismissed.
- 14 (29) A person who violates the provisions of subsection (2) or (3) of KRS 189.459 shall  
15 be fined two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). The fines and costs for a violation of  
16 subsection (2) or (3) of KRS 189.459 shall be collected and disposed of in  
17 accordance with KRS 24A.180. Once deposited into the State Treasury, ninety  
18 percent (90%) of the fine collected under this subsection shall immediately be  
19 forwarded to the personal care assistance program under KRS 205.900 to 205.920.  
20 Ten percent (10%) of the fine collected under this subsection shall annually be  
21 returned to the county where the violation occurred and distributed equally to all  
22 law enforcement agencies within the county.
- 23 (30) (a) *Prior to January 1, 2025,* any person who violates KRS 189.292 or 189.294  
24 shall *not be issued a uniform citation, but shall instead receive a courtesy*  
25 *warning. On or after January 1, 2025, any person who violates Section 1 or*  
26 *2 of this Act shall* be fined:  
27 *1. Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, not less than*

1                   *fifty dollars (\$50) nor more than one hundred dollars (\$100) for a first*  
 2                   *or second offense;*~~twenty five dollars (\$25) for the first offense and~~  
 3                   ~~fifty dollars (\$50) for each subsequent offense.]~~

4                   *2. Not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than one hundred*  
 5                   *ninety-nine dollars (\$199) for a third or subsequent offense, or if the*  
 6                   *violation results in an accident; and*

7                   *3. Not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) nor more than two hundred*  
 8                   *fifty dollars (\$250) if the violation occurs:*

9                   *a. In a work zone when employees of the department or*  
 10                   *construction workers are present; or*

11                   *b. In a marked school zone when any warning flasher is in*  
 12                   *operation.*

13                   *(b) Except as prohibited under KRS 281A.185 for a person who holds or is*  
 14                   *required to hold a commercial driver's license, for a first offense of any type*  
 15                   *under this subsection, regardless of the circumstances of the offense, a*  
 16                   *person may choose to attend a state traffic school established pursuant to*  
 17                   *KRS 186.574 in lieu of paying a fine.*

18                   *(c) In addition to the penalties prescribed in this subsection, three (3) points*  
 19                   *shall be assessed against the driving record of any person who violates*  
 20                   *paragraph (a)2. or 3. of this subsection.*

21                   (31) Any person who violates KRS 189.281(5) or (7)(b) shall be subject to a fine of two  
 22                   hundred fifty dollars (\$250). This fine shall be subject to prepayment. A fine  
 23                   imposed under this subsection shall not be subject to court costs pursuant to KRS  
 24                   24A.175, additional costs pursuant to KRS 24A.176, the fee imposed pursuant to  
 25                   KRS 24A.1765, or any other additional fees or costs.

26                   ➔Section 4. KRS 189.2327 is amended to read as follows:

27                   (1) Subject to the requirements of subsection (2) of this section, *and except as provided*

1        in subsection (30) of Section 3 of this Act, if a violation of KRS 189.290 to  
2        189.580 or 189.910 to 189.960 occurred in a highway work zone, the fine  
3        established under KRS 189.394, 189.990, or 189.993 shall be doubled.

4        (2) In order for a fine to be doubled under this section, the highway work zone must  
5        have:

6        (a) Signs displayed informing drivers of the existence of a highway work zone  
7        and that fines are doubled in it; and

8        (b) At least one (1) bona fide worker present.

9        (3) All fines collected for violations in a highway work zone under subsection (1) of  
10       this section shall be deposited into a separate trust and agency account within the  
11       Transportation Cabinet known as the "highway work zone safety fund." The  
12       highway work zone safety fund shall be used exclusively by the Transportation  
13       Cabinet to hire or pay for enhanced law enforcement of traffic laws within highway  
14       work zones.

15       ➔SECTION 5. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 281A IS CREATED TO  
16       READ AS FOLLOWS:

17       *A person who holds or is required to hold a commercial driver's license shall be subject*  
18       *to Section 1 of this Act. However, if the penalties under federal regulation for conduct*  
19       *prohibited under Section 1 of this Act are more stringent than the penalties outlined in*  
20       *Section 3 of this Act, the person shall be subject to the penalties under federal*  
21       *regulation.*

22       ➔Section 6. This Act may be cited as the Phone-Down Kentucky Act.