NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

2023 Annual Report

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2023 • OCTOBER 1, 2022 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

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NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

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Introduction

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS), by N.J.S.A. 27:5F-18 et seq., is responsible under its Director for developing and implementing, on behalf of the Governor, the New Jersey Highway Safety Program, a comprehensive plan to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage resulting from traffic crashes. The plan is developed in accordance with the U.S. Highway Safety Act of 1966 (P.L.89-564) and any acts amendatory. DHTS is also responsible for procuring and administering federal highway traffic safety funds, and processing and administering grants to state agencies, political subdivisions and nonprofit organizations. As the state's lead highway traffic safety agency, DHTS promotes traffic safety and coordinates the traffic safety activities of state and local agencies as part of a comprehensive statewide traffic safety program. The Highway Safety Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 2023), developed in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 402, is part of this effort.

DHTS is located in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The Division Director is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the Governor. By the terms of N.J.S.A. 27:5F-32, the Director is specifically appointed as the Governor's Representative for highway traffic safety matters to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), although as a functional matter, this also entails all dealings with the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation. The Director is also chairperson of the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (N.J.S.A. 27:5F-31). The Director's administration of the Division is under the auspices of the Governor and the Attorney General.

Mission Statement

The mission of the
Division of Highway Traffic Safety
is the safe passage of all roadway users in
New Jersey as we move toward
zero fatalities.

Executive Summary

The Highway Safety Plan Annual Report for FY2023 (October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023) addresses the use of monies from the annual allotment of Section 402 State and Community Highway Safety funds. The report also addresses the use of funds from the following grant programs: Section 405 (b, c, d, e, f and h), National Priority Safety Program Grants. Funds from these sections supported projects in the following areas: alcohol and other drug countermeasures; occupant protection; pedestrian and bicycle safety; community traffic safety programs; police traffic services and training; traffic records; other vulnerable road users; and paid and earned media. The DHTS awarded 470 federally-funded projects in FY2023. The amount of funds allocated to those projects totaled over $25,000,000 in both new allocations and carryover monies. Projects were implemented by state and local entities and nonprofit organizations. The Division also oversees and coordinates the State Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund, N.J.S.A. 39:4-50.8, the Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund and the Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund. The work to increase traffic safety and reduce crashes and deaths is part of Attorney General Platkin's focus on improving public safety for all New Jerseyans.

The annual report provides an overview of the projects funded during the year and the status of the performance measures identified in the FY2023 Highway Safety Plan. Based on available data from 2022, DHTS anticipates meeting 12 of the 19 core outcome goals set forth in the FY2023 Highway Safety Plan. This is a significant improvement over 2022 when only three of the 19 core outcome goals were met. DHTS will continue to conduct a thorough review of all of its performance measures to determine where additional resources are needed to improve these traffic safety metrics in New Jersey.

The cooperation and participation of governmental and private sector partners of the DHTS are critical to the overall success of the highway safety program. The principal forum for these traffic safety partners is the Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (HTSPAC), which consists of 21 members, appointed by the Governor, who assist in recommending and developing traffic safety policy and programs.

In addition, NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration provide leadership and technical assistance to DHTS. Other partners include the Division of State Police; NJ Motor Vehicle Commission; Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control; Department of Transportation; Department of Education; Department of Health; Office of Emergency Medical Services; Administrative Office of the Courts; Department of Community Affairs; state, county, and local law enforcement agencies, including the Association of Chiefs of Police and the Traffic Officers Association; universities; advocacy groups, including AAA and the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ; the Transportation Management Associations; as well as other private sector businesses and organizations. All of these partner organizations play a key role in developing and implementing New Jersey's traffic safety program.

2020 NJ Strategic Highway Safety Plan

DHTS is committed to assisting in the implementation of the 2020 SHSP tasks throughout its grant programs. The plan's goals and objectives are based on the five Es: engineering, enforcement, education, emergency response, and equity. The plan is a data-driven approach to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.

Originally, 35 key SHSP emphasis area tasks were identified in the 2020 plan. This has since been expanded to more than 150+ key tasks. As of October, 2023, more that 95% of the year one actions have been completed, more than 47% of the year two actions have been completed, and year three priorities have been approved for implementation.

The following new priority tasks are a part of the 2020-2025 SHSP:

Intersections Priority Actions

1   Safe System Approach training for both signalized and unsignalized intersections.

2   Guidance for safety countermeasures to use on municipal intersections.

3   Best practices and successful projects maintaining sight distances.

Lane Departure Priority Actions

1   Safety improvement strategies/recommendations shared with municipalities and counties for locations with recurring lane departure crashes.

2   Safe System training for lane departure crashes.

3   Methods and resources to help counties and municipalities overcome implementation barriers.

Pedestrians & Bicyclists Priority Actions

1   Best practices for existing arterials to better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

2   Educational outreach recommendations for recent updates to laws and regulations.

3   Best practices for sharing state highway crash data and crash-prone state highway corridors.

4   Enhancements for school zone speed enforcement programs.

5   Guidance/implementation of a comprehensive traffic safety curriculum in elementary schools.
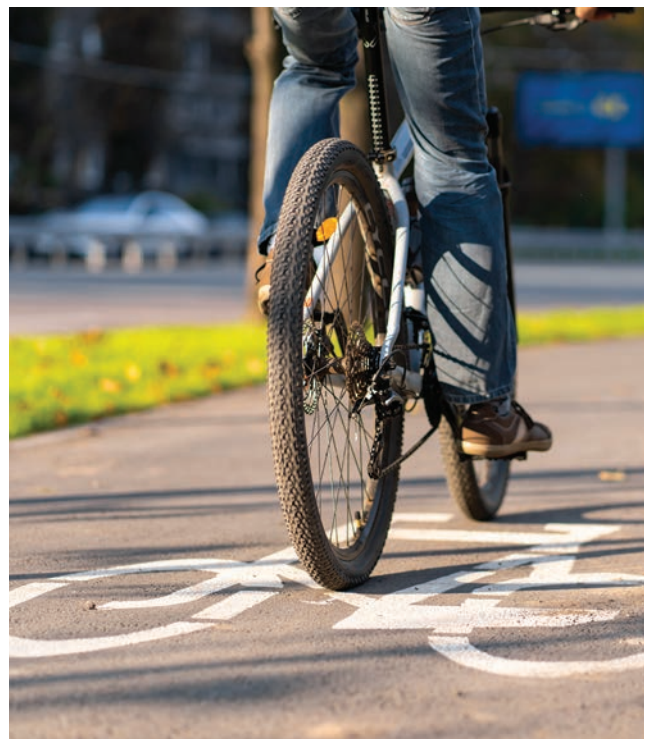
Driver Behavior Priority Actions

1   Plan for translating printed public materials related to driver behavior actions.

2   Research best practices on rear seat belt usage and compliance rates.

3   DUI case outcome review; strategies for improved, consistent and timely DUI adjudication.

4   Impaired driving educational material provided with each cannabis sale.
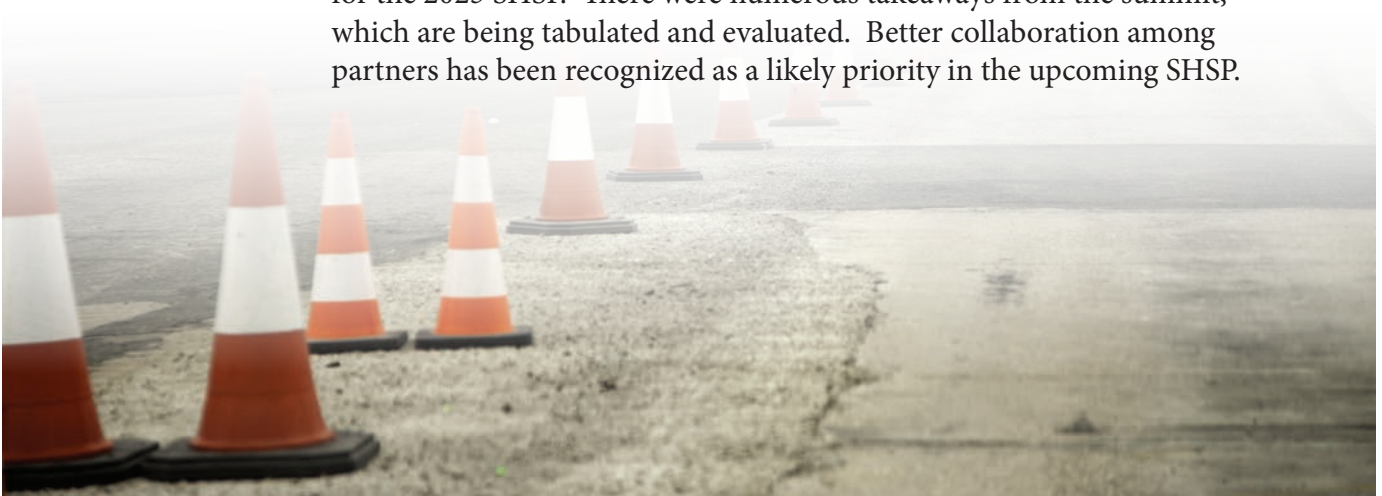
Other Vulnerable Road Users Priority Actions

1   [Motorcyclists] Latest motorcycle-friendly infrastructure design practices to be considered in design, construction and policies.

2   [Work Zones (Protect Road Workers)] Best practices using physical barrier protection.

Data Priority Actions

1   Health outcome and trauma data list to be incorporated with other safety data.

2   Potential pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure elements and volume data to incorporate the planned Linear Referencing System.

3   Develop a research problem statement to survey best practices for safety program/project development.

Equity Priority Actions

1   Engagement and implementation strategy in underserved communities with a demonstration pilot project to enhance safety culture.

2   Identify underserved locations for upgrading pedestrian and bicycle safety needs.

3   In October 2023, DHTS, NJDOT, and more than 300+ public and private partners attended the Fifth Annual SHSP Safety Summit in order to keep progress moving forward on the 2020 SHSP and also to begin planning for the 2025 SHSP. There were numerous takeaways from the summit, which are being tabulated and evaluated. Better collaboration among partners has been recognized as a likely priority in the upcoming SHSP.

Traffic Crash Data

New Jersey, like the nation as a whole, saw a small decrease in motor vehicle fatalities in 2022. Preliminary data indicates that national motor vehicle fatalities decreased 0.3% from 2021, estimating that 42,750 persons were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. In 2022, New Jersey experienced 646 fatal crashes that resulted in 692 fatalities. This is a decrease of 0.7% in total fatalities from 697 in 2021, and equates to 1.9 fatalities per day. Fatalities in 2023 trended downward and were 11% lower based on preliminary data as of January 1, 2024. Preliminary data shows a reduction in the number of drivers, passengers and pedestrians fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes in 2023, while increases are seen in bicyclist fatalities.

The total number of persons seriously injured in motor vehicle-related crashes increased dramatically in 2019, due in large part to an injury classification definition change on the New Jersey Police Accident Report (PAR – NJTR-1). In 2019, there were 3,047 people seriously injured in motor vehicle-related crashes, compared to 1,284 in 2018. In 2020, despite a 31% reduction in overall crashes on New Jersey's roadways, serious injuries only declined 4.7% (4.5% crash reduction) resulting in 2,904 serious injuries. In 2021, 3,157 persons were seriously injured in crashes, a nine percent increase from 2020. Serious injury motor vehicle crashes will be closely monitored as the 2022 data continues to be processed. Projected figures are showing a two percent decline in the number of seriously injured persons (3,108).

Alcohol played a lesser role in motor vehicle crashes in 2022, with 133 alcohol-impaired fatalities reported. This represented a 25% decrease from the 178 alcohol-impaired driving fatalities reported in 2021. Approximately 19% of all motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey in 2022 were a result of one or more drivers being under the influence of alcohol, down from 25.5% in 2021. At the time of this report, complete 2023 toxicology reports are not available.

New Jersey's roads experienced a 12% decrease in pedestrian fatalities in 2022 (192 down from 217 in 2021). In 2021, New Jersey experienced the highest volume of pedestrian fatalities since 1989 (217 pedestrian fatalities in 1989 and 2021). The percent of total pedestrian fatalities within all traffic fatalities in New Jersey is nearly double the national average (27.7% vs. 17%). In 2022, the pedestrian fatality rate per 100K population was 2.07 in New Jersey compared to 2.26 nationally. This means that 2.07 persons out of every 100,000 people died while walking on or across New

Jersey's roadways in 2022. At the time of this, there have been 155 pedestrians killed in 2023 compared to 181 at this same time in 2022. Bicyclist fatalities declined 39% in 2022 from 2021 (26 to 16). Year-to-date for 2023 there have been 21 reported bicyclist fatalities compared to 16 in 2022.

New Jersey has made great progress over the last several years in reducing the number of teen drivers (16-20 years of age) involved in fatal crashes. Teen driver involved fatalities decreased ten percent in 2022 (69 involved drivers) when compared to 2021 (77 involved drivers). At the time of this report, preliminary figures show a decline in young driver involvement in fatal crashes in 2023. However, final year-end totals will not be available until later in 2024.

Motorcycle fatalities (drivers and passengers) and lack of helmet use has been on the rise in New Jersey. In 2022, motorcycle fatalities decreased one percent from 2021 (98 from 99). 2022 had the second highest number of motorcyclist fatalities since 2006, the first being in 2021. Motorcyclists made up 12.7% of all motor vehicle fatalities in New Jersey in 2022. Also, the number of fatally injured motorcycle riders that were unhelmeted saw no change in 2022 from 2021 with 12 persons fatally injured while not wearing their helmet.

Driver behavior issues will continue to be an area of focus for traffic safety initiatives. In 2022, speeding made up 27.2% and distracted driving 26% of all roadway fatalities in the state. 2022 also saw the highest volume of unrestrained passenger fatalities since 2007 (171 total unbelted fatalities).

Traffic related deaths continue to be one of the leading causes of accidental deaths in New Jersey and the nation. Through enforcement, education programs, community engagement, and new partnerships with the motoring public, DHTS will continue to work towards the reduction of motor vehicle fatalities on our roadways. State, county and local agencies, along with our other non-profit partners, remain steadfast in our cooperative effort to promote effective strategies and programs to reduce overall motorist fatalities on our roads. With the help of its partners, DHTS will continue to strive to meet the goals outlined in the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan while looking for new, innovative ways to address areas where goals were not met.

Assessment of Progress

States are required to report the progress on the set of performance measures used in the development and implementation of the 2023 Highway Safety Plan. The eighteen core outcome measures and one behavior measure set forth in the 2023 Plan are listed below:

Core Outcome Measures	
Goal	**Result**
1. To limit total fatalities by the forecasted increase of 14.2% from 586 (2016-2020 average) to 669 (2019-2023 average)	The number of traffic fatalities in 2022 decreased to 692 from 697 in 2021. As of January 1, 2024, there were a total of 612 fatalities which is 11.2% less than 2022. Due to the 11.2% decrease in total fatalities from 2022 to 2023, the performance measure will be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 629).
2. To limit the forecasted increase of total serious traffic injuries to less than 64% from 1,878 (2016-2020 average) to 3,080 (2019-2023 average)	The number of serious injuries is projected to decrease to 3,108 in 2022 from 3,157 in 2021. Beginning in 2019, New Jersey updated the injury severity classification labels/definitions, which DHTS believes led to a sharp increase in reported serious injuries. An updated curriculum component was added to the NJTR-1 refresher trainings pertaining to the Final Rule in FY2020 to clarify the new definitions. Should the number of suspected serious injuries remain below 3108 in 2022, the performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 3,015).
3. To limit the forecasted increase of total fatalities per VMT to less than 16% from .782 (2016-2020 average) to .906 (2019-2023 average)	The fatalities/VMT in 2022 was 0.919, increasing the 5-year moving average from 0.814 (2017-2021) to 0.837 (2018-2023). This represents a 2.2% increase in VMTs from 2021 to 2022 combined with a .7% decrease in overall fatalities during the same period. VMT totals for calendar year 2023 are currently unavailable. Using 2022 VMTs to forecast the 2023 fatality rate, it is expected the performance measure will be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 0.853).
4. To limit the forecasted increase of unrestrained passenger fatalities of 4.6% from 125 (2016-2020 average) to 131 (2019-2023 average)	The number of unrestrained occupant fatalities in 2022 increased to 171 from 160 in 2021, a seven percent increase. The 2023 data is not yet available. The performance measure is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 143).
5. To limit the forecasted increase of alcohol related fatalities of 8.7% from 132.4 (2016-2020 average) to 143.9 (2019-2023 average)	The number of people killed by alcohol impaired driving in 2022 was 133, a decrease from 178 in 2021. The 2023 data is not yet available. Despite the 25% reduction in alcohol impaired fatalities in 2022, the performance measure is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 151).
6. To limit the forecasted increase of total speed related fatalities of 6.4% from 126 (2016-2020 average) to 134 (2019-2023 average)	The number of speed related fatalities in 2022 decreased to 164 from the previous year's total of 178. The 2023 data is not yet available. Speeding and reckless driving have increased throughout the state over the past three years. The 5-year moving average of speed related fatalities continues to increase, and due to the 33% increase in 2020, and 22% increase in 2021, this performance measure is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 152).

Core Outcome Measures

Goal	Result
7. To limit the forecasted increase of motorcycle fatalities of 8.2% from 74 (2016-2020 average) to 80 (2019-2023 average)	There was a total of 98 motorcycle fatalities in 2022, a decrease of one percent from 99 in 2021. As of January 1, 2024, preliminary 2023 data showed there were a total of 63 motorcycle fatalities. Due to the large volume of motorcyclist fatalities in 2021 and 2022, the performance goal is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 88).
8. To reduce the total unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities by 5.6% from 7.2 (2016-2020 average) to 6.8 (2019-2023 average)	There was another significant increase in the number of unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities in 2022 (15) compared to 12 in 2021. A similar increase was experienced in 2019 with 15 unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities compared to 7 in 2018. The 2023 data is not yet available. Though there was a decline in 2020, the performance measure will not be met due to the increases in 2021 and 2022 (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 12).
9. To limit the forecasted increase of young driver involved fatalities of 18.6% from 56.4 (2016-2020 average) to 67 (2019-2023 average)	The number of drivers aged 20 or younger involved in fatal crashes in 2022 totaled 69, a decrease of ten percent from 77 in 2021. As of January 1, 2024, preliminary 2023 records indicate 41 young drivers were involved in fatal crashes. Should the number of young drivers involved in fatal crashes remain below 74, this performance measure will be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 66).
10. To limit the forecasted increase of pedestrian fatalities of 19% from 173.2 (2016-2020 average) to 206.6 (2019-2023 average)	The number of pedestrian fatalities in 2022 totaled 192, a 12% decrease from 2021 (217). As of January 1, 2024, there were a total of 172, pedestrian fatalities representing a 10% decrease compared to the same date last year. With the forecasted reduction in pedestrian fatalities in 2023, New Jersey will meet this performance measure (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 186).
11. To limit the forecasted increase of bicyclist fatalities of 33% from 16.8 (2016-2020 average) to 22.4 (2019-2023 average)	The number of bicyclist fatalities in 2022 totaled 16, representing a 39% decrease from 26 in 2021. As of January 1, 2024, there were a total of 23 bicycle fatalities. Despite the sharp increase in total bicyclist fatalities in 2021 and 2023, this performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 19).
12. To limit the forecasted increase of drug involved fatalities of 3.8% from 151 (2016-2020 average) to 156.5 (2019-2023 average)	The number of drug involved fatalities in 2022 totaled 201, a decrease from 219 in 2021. The 2023 data is not yet available. The methodology for determining drug-involved fatalities has been adjusted, resulting in higher annual totals. The new methodology now accounts for all individuals killed in crashes involving a driver under the influence of drugs and/or medication. This performance measure is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 182).
13. To limit the forecasted increase of drug involved crashes of 9% from 1,555 (2016-2020 average) to 1,694 (2019-2023 average)	The number of drug-involved crashes in 2021 totaled 1,841 up from 1,602 in 2020. Though New Jersey is experiencing an increase in drug-impaired driving, with a 15% increase seen from 2020 to 2021, the performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2018-2022 average is 1,610).
14. To limit the forecasted increase of distracted driving related fatalities of 1% from 141 (2016-2020 average) to 143 (2019-2023 average)	The number of distracted driving fatalities in 2022 totaled 180, an increase from 136 in 2021. The 2023 data is not yet available. This emphasis area fluctuates from year-to-year, making forecasting future years a challenge. Should there be 138 or fewer distracted driving related fatalities in 2023, this performance measure will be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 143).

Core Outcome Measures

Goal	Result
15. To reduce distracted driving related crashes by 4.2% from 141,812 (2016-2020 average) to 135,923 (2019-2023 average)	The number of distracted driving crashes in 2021 totaled 110,066, up from an anomalous year of 91,335 in 2020. Distracted Driving involvement in crashes has maintained a downward trend, as the crash reports indicate. Due to this downward trend, this performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 119,015).
16. To reduce speed related crashes by 8.2% from 16,346 (2016-2020 average) to 15,012 (2019-2023 average)	The number of speed related crashes in 2021 totaled 14,860, an 18% increase from 12,539 during pandemic-related totals in 2020. Despite the large increase seen in 2021 from 2020, the moving average is still trending downward. Should there be fewer than 14,200 speed related crashes in 2022, this performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 15,007).
17. To reduce older driver fatalities by 5.4% from 65.2 (2016-2020 average) to 61.7 (2019-2023 average)	The number of older driver (65+ years of age) fatalities in 2022 totaled 88, an increase of 40% from 63 in 2021. As of January 1, 2024, there were a total of 74 older driver fatalities. This represents an 16% decrease from 2022. Despite the forecasted reduction in older driver fatalities in 2023, this performance measure is not expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 69).
18. To reduce work zone crashes by 16.4% from 4,329 (2016-2020 average) to 3,617 (2019-2023 average)	The number of work zone related crashes in 2021 totaled 3,365, the second lowest number of work zone crashes since electronic record keeping began. There was also a drastic decline in the volume of roadwork projects and vehicles on the roadway for much of 2020, which may have affected early 2021. This performance measure is expected to be met (forecasted 2019-2023 average is 2,995).

Behavior Measure

Goal	Result
1. To obtain a seat belt observational usage rate of no less than 92 percent	The annual statewide seat belt usage survey, conducted by the New Jersey Institute of Technology in 2023, found the state's front seat belt usage rate to be at 92.93 percent, a decrease of .04 percent from the 2022 observed usage rate of 92.97 percent. This performance measure, established in FY2023, has been met.

Activity Measures

1. **Seat Belt:** There were 12,194 seat belt citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2023, down from 13,354 in 2022.

2. **Impaired Driving:** There were 1,724 impaired driving arrests made during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2023, up from 1,646 in 2022.

3. **Speed:** There were 11,803 speeding citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2023, down from 15,666 in 2022.

4. **Cell Phone/Texting:** There were 8,760 cell phone/texting citations issued during grant-funded enforcement activities in FY2023, down from 9,758 in 2022.

Unmet Performance Targets

Reviewing performance targets is an important, ongoing process. When targets are not met, programmatic efforts are adjusted accordingly. For FY2023 performance targets not met, DHTS plans the following activities in the Triennial 2024-2026 HSP update for FY2025.

Unrestrained Passenger Fatalities (4):

Despite having a traditionally high seat belt usage rate in New Jersey (92.93% in 2023), the number of unrestrained passenger fatalities in the state merits attention. Renewed efforts will be made to remind motorists of the lifesaving benefits of seat belt usage. DHTS will make seat belt information a part of a large annual paid media messaging campaign that is in development and work with its media partners to target messaging to different, diverse audiences. Sustained enforcement grant funding will be expanded wherever possible to focus seat belt enforcement in areas shown by data to be hot spots for unrestrained crashes and injuries and alternative agencies will be employed when necessary to reach these recognized high-risk communities. Safety programs carried out by the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) and New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) will put an emphasis on belt usage for the younger driving population. Community engagement programs to be carried out by grass-roots DHTS funded agencies will also be a useful tool to get this important information to underserved locations in the state.

Alcohol-related Fatalities (5):

Although alcohol-related fatalities decreased by 25% in 2022, this performance measure was not met. Upcoming plans in the impaired driving realm include a large-scale statewide public information paid media campaign in FY2024 in partnership with NJ State Police. Impaired driving enforcement efforts will also be enhanced wherever possible in the form of additional yearlong sustained enforcement grants in counties and local communities that are ranked high for alcohol-related crashes and fatalities. The DHTS Crash Analysis Tool will allow for a more targeted approach to awarding mobilization grants for the national crackdown periods. Targeted social media messaging will be employed to get messaging to high-risk, diverse groups. Other activities that should have a positive impact include a DWI case outcomes study to be conducted by Kean University and an enhanced programmatic partnership with MADD to deliver crucial education on impaired driving. The recent restructuring of the state's Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund will allow for more effective and efficient use of millions of dollars in non-federal impaired driving countermeasure resources. To support the NHTSA Region II Regional Action Plan, DHTS will undertake a more holistic approach to impaired driving messaging. Referral information for substance abuse treatment will be included in materials and media outreach relating to drug or alcohol impaired driving.

Speed Related Fatalities (6):

Speed related fatalities declined in 2022. While indicating a positive trend, the performance measure was not met. DHTS plans to target this critical issue through enforcement, equipment, and education. This program area relies heavily on police enforcement of existing speed laws. The state has a robust speed enforcement program in place at the local, county, and state levels and to bolster these efforts new agencies will be solicited to participate in grant funded and non-federally funded sustained enforcement projects. The equipment needed for law enforcement to monitor motor vehicle speeds will be enhanced through the purchase of additional radar speed detection units for NJ State Police, which will result in more of these units in service on the roads of New Jersey. The issue of excessive motor vehicle speeds, which has taken on renewed focus in the pandemic and post pandemic years, will be a major focus of DHTS social and paid media initiatives in the FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan period.

Motorcycle Fatalities and Unhelmeted Motorcycle Fatalities (7) and (8):

There has been significant fluctuation in both motorcycle fatalities and unhelmeted motorcycle fatalities in recent years. While the total number of motorcycle fatalities decreased in 2022, the percentage of those killed in motorcycle crashes who were not wearing a helmet increased. Plans for the FY2024-2026 HSP period include working with the Motor Vehicle Commission, which coordinates rider training programs for the state, to increase enrollment in the classes. The statewide Motorcycle Coalition will utilize a professional media consultant to review and modify the various "Share the Road" safety messaging that goes out to motorcycle riders and motor vehicle operators through traditional and social media, with a goal of diversifying messaging and reaching underserved communities. Though federal-funded programs and messaging targeting helmet usage by motorcyclists is restrictive, this important information will be disseminated moving forward by DHTS's non-federally funded partners. DHTS will also support the work of the statewide Quality Assurance Program, which ensures that every rider training center meets national standards set by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

Drug Involved Fatalities (12):

Drug-involved fatalities declined in 2022 but remain a source of concern. A large-scale statewide public information campaign will be carried out in FY2024 focusing on drug and alcohol impaired driving, in partnership with NJ State Police. DHTS has an active DRE program that will be the focus of enforcement efforts in this realm. Work is underway to add new county participants to the state's DRE call out program during the FY2024-2026 term. The newly restructured state Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund will also be used to address drug-impaired driving challenges through programs and equipment not typically fundable through federal programs. Recently, DHTS partnered with AAA, the NJ Cannabis Regulatory Commission,

and the NJ Cannabis Trade Association to provide point-of-sale impaired driving educational materials with every cannabis purchase statewide. Other innovative initiatives that should have a positive impact include an impaired driving case outcomes study to be conducted by Kean University and an enhanced educational and awareness programmatic partnership with MADD.

Older Driver Fatalities (17):

The Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University has developed older driver safety training curriculum and resources based on national best practices, which are housed on a web-based Older Driver Traffic Safety Resource Center. The Resource Center is the focal point for New Jersey's mature driver safety program. It contains safety materials, links, and educational programming that can be accessed and utilized by New Jersey safety partners in a coordinated approach to this important issue. A newly developed older driver educational program is posted and available to be delivered by community-based agencies during FY2024-2026. Educating older drivers to assess their driving capabilities and limitations will be provided through an expanded series of CarFit training programs that will be offered to senior adults. CarFit, a program aimed at helping mature drivers ensure that their vehicle "fits" them properly (i.e., mirror placement, distance seated from the steering wheel and gas and brake pedals, etc.), will be offered by safety partners at senior housing units, community centers and some child passenger safety check events. AAA also plans, with the support of grant funding, a series of general senior traffic safety educational programs, targeted for those areas of the state overrepresented in older driver crashes.

Program Funding

A. Section 402 Program

The State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program is administered at the federal level primarily by NHTSA and partially by the Federal Highway Administration. The funds are intended to be used as seed money for innovative programs and as leverage to garner other state, local and private resources. The 402 program provides funds to improve the enforcement of existing laws, change public attitudes through education, and build state and local leadership in highway safety. DHTS awarded 155 grants in FY2023, totaling $10,816,043.

Section 402 program highlights included: Grant funding to the state's Police Traffic Officers Association and the New Jersey Association of Chiefs of Police; a grant to the NJ Institute of Technology for the state's 2023 seat belt usage survey; 37 comprehensive police enforcement grants; nine county and regional Community Traffic Safety Grants; large police training and public education grants with Rutgers University, Kean University, and the Brain Injury Alliance of NJ; and 76 grants to local police agencies for the 2023 Click It Or Ticket mobilization.

B. Section 405(b) Occupant Protection Program

The Section 405(b) Occupant Protection Program provides funds to implement effective occupant protection programs to reduce deaths and injuries resulting from individuals riding unrestrained or not properly restrained in motor vehicle child safety seats. DHTS awarded 17 grants, totaling $1,176,413.

C. Section 405(c) State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements

The Section 405(c) Traffic Records Program establishes a state traffic safety information system improvement grant program. The program encourages the coordination of safety data systems across agencies and the development and maintenance of a comprehensive traffic safety information system. Projects that improve the timeliness, completeness, uniformity, accessibility, and quality of crash data qualify for funding. DHTS awarded four grants totaling $2,177,819.

D. Section 405(d) Impaired Driving Countermeasures

The Section 405(d) Impaired Driving Countermeasures Program provides funds to implement programs to reduce traffic safety problems resulting from individuals driving motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or the combination of alcohol and drugs. DHTS awarded 145 grants in FY2023 totaling $6,119,298.

E. Section 405(e) Comprehensive Distracted Driving

The Section 405(e) Comprehensive Distracted Driving Program encourages states to enact and enforce laws prohibiting texting while driving and youth cell phone use while driving. Funds are used to educate the public about the dangers of texting or using a cell phone while driving and for enforcement of distracted driving laws. DHTS awarded 122 grants with this funding, totaling $2,632,303.

Section 405(e) regulations allow for 50% of the annual award to be reallocated into other programmatic areas. DHTS exercised this option and utilized new and carryover 405(e) flexed funds as follows: $500,000 for an impaired driving (alcohol and drugs) paid media campaign, and $635,384 for funding of a Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor through the NJ Office of the Attorney General.

F. Section 405(f) Motorcycle Safety

The Section 405(f) Motorcycle Safety Program provides funds to implement programs that will reduce the number of crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving motorcyclists. DHTS awarded one grant, totaling $178,212 under this program.

G. Section 405(h) Non-motorized Safety

The Section 405(h) Non-motorized Safety Program earmarks funds to train law enforcement on state laws applicable to bicycle and pedestrian safety; enforcement mobilizations and campaigns designed to enforce pedestrian and bicycle laws; and public information and awareness programs designed to inform motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists of state laws. DHTS awarded 24 grants, totaling $933,785 under this program.

State Funded Programs

A. Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund

The Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund (DDEF), established under NJSA 39:4-50.8, imposes a $100 surcharge on each drunk driving conviction. Monies in this fund are managed by DHTS and distributed to police agencies to increase enforcement of drunk driving laws. Every law enforcement agency whose officers make arrests leading to DWI convictions and the imposition of the surcharge are entitled to grants representing its proportionate contribution to the fund. Law enforcement agencies, through application to DHTS and approval of the Director, may use DDEF monies for supplemental DWI enforcement patrols and other appropriate tools, equipment, and countermeasures.

During State Fiscal Year 2023, a major effort was continued to enhance the efficiency of agencies expending DDEF monies. As a direct result of this new initiative, DHTS

approved a total of $1,845,890.58 in DDEF expenditures, with only $705,397.93 (38.2%) of that being new funding. These increased efficiencies in planning and encumbering DDEF funds has resulted in an exponential increase in impaired driving prevention activities, all while seeing a 6.9% year-over-year increase in available funding to agencies from DHTS. Additionally, DHTS was able to increase its auditing capacity from 0.82% of agencies in SFY2021, to 36.08% in SFY2022, and 46.86% in SFY2023.   By law and regulation, 100% of the approved DDEF expenditures were used to reduce impaired-driving crashes and fatalities on New Jersey roadways.

B. Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund

The Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund is a repository for monies provided pursuant to subsection c. of N.J.S.A. 39:4-36. Under the statute, a motorist must stop for a pedestrian crossing the roadway at an intersection. Failure to stop may result in a fine not to exceed $200.00. A total of $100.00 of such fine is dedicated to the fund that is used to make grants available to municipalities and counties with pedestrian safety problems. During 2023, eleven pedestrian safety enforcement and education grants were funded in the amount of $238,083.

C. Motorcycle Safety Education Program

The NJ Motor Vehicle Commission administers the state's motorcycle safety education program. The program provides for a course of instruction and training designed to develop and instill the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits necessary for the safe operation of a motorcycle. Beginner and advanced rider training programs, along with three-wheel training, are conducted throughout the state. Training was successfully provided to 8,920 riders during 2023 at private locations by state approved motorcycle safety providers, which was a decrease from 9,886 riders trained in 2022.

D. Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund

The Motor Vehicle Snow and Ice Removal Safety Fund is a separate, non-lapsing, dedicated account. All fines imposed and collected as a result of enforcement of N.J.S.A. 39:4-77.1 shall be deposited into the fund. Monies in the account can be used to offset the costs associated with the establishment of a public awareness campaign and to develop a grant program that private companies can use to purchase, install, and maintain equipment and technology to remove snow and ice from commercial motor vehicles. One grant was awarded in FY2023 to purchase commercial vehicle snow removal equipment. A listing of the 18 snow removal devices funded to date through this program is posted on the DHTS website.

Description of Funded Projects & Activities

Alcohol and Other Drug Countermeasures – Project Summaries

DWI Training/Drug Recognition Expert Program

Standardized training courses were offered to law enforcement personnel in FY2023 relating to the detection, apprehension, processing, and prosecution of DWI offenders. The DWI Detection Standardized Field Sobriety Testing five-day course was delivered to 744 officers while another 200 officers took a four-hour refresher course. The Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training program was conducted, as well, with 64 police officers trained and certified as DRE's and another 12 officers certified as DRE Instructors. Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) courses were held for 387 police officers. The ARIDE program addresses the gap in training between the Standard Field Sobriety Testing and DRE programs by providing officers with general knowledge related to drug impairment and driving. In addition, the DRE Drug Impaired Driving (DID) course was delivered to an additional 400 officers. The ARIDE and DID training does not qualify participants as drug recognition experts, but is intended to make individuals competent in evaluating and documenting suspected abuse and impairment caused by drug use.

New Jersey's DRE program received a major boost in 2023 when the State Supreme Court agreed with an earlier court-appointed special master's ruling that testimony from Drug Recognition Experts can be admitted as reliable evidence in DWI cases. The ruling validated New Jersey's DRE program, in which law enforcement officers are trained to determine whether an individual is under the influence of drugs through a comprehensive evaluation.

A DRE call-out program is in place in much of the state with established policies and procedures for the utilization of DRE's to evaluate and assess motorists who are arrested for driving under the influence of intoxicating drugs and alcohol. The DRE call-out program was operational in twelve counties in FY2023: (Bergen, Atlantic/Cape May, Hudson, Monmouth, Morris/Sussex, Ocean, Somerset/Hunterdon, Middlesex, and Union). The program utilizes qualified DRE personnel, as part of a shared services agreement with local police departments, to assist in identifying

and removing intoxicated drivers from the roadway. The DRE's are available to all agencies in the county on a call-out basis and for support at DWI sobriety checkpoints. Grant funding was also provided to the New Jersey DRE Association to support its efforts to better train and equip New Jersey DRE's.

Alcohol Breath Test System

Under the authority of the Attorney General, the Alcohol/Drug Test Unit within the Division of State Police spearheads the continual process of training and re-certifying police officers throughout the state to operate the approved chemical breath test instrument (Alcotest System). In order to support and maintain the training program, funds were used to purchase the equipment necessary for training and re-certifying police officers as breath test operators. The number of officers (local, county, and state) trained and re-certified in FY2023 on the use of the Alcotest 7110 unit was 4,540 while another 1,071 received training on the new 9510 model, which will continue field validation and statewide rollout in FY2024.

College Programs

Several New Jersey colleges and universities delivered important campus-based educational programs in FY2023 relating to substance abuse and healthy decision making.

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) brought the *Arrive Alive* impaired/distracted driving simulator to campus and conducted numerous educational programs including *Training for Intervention Procedures* (TIPS), which is a two-hour skill based training to prevent intoxication, underage drinking, and drunk driving by enhancing the decision making of college students. In addition, 42 students from colleges throughout the state participated in the annual TCNJ Peer Institute, during which students were trained and equipped to engage in bystander intervention relating to impaired driving and other traffic safety issues.

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Campaigns

From December 2, 2022 – January 1, 2023, the state's law enforcement community teamed up to carry out the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over 2022 Year End Holiday Crackdown*. The goal of this campaign was to mobilize the state's police departments during the critical end-of-year holiday period and to raise public awareness about the dangers of impaired driving through a combination of high visibility enforcement backed by targeted media activities. During this campaign, 98 agencies received overtime grant funds totaling $619,080. The campaign resulted in 574 DWI arrests, 2,898 speeding summonses and 1,664 seat belt summonses.

To help spread the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* message, police departments engaged their communities through the dissemination of press releases, public service announcements and displays on variable message boards.

The *2023 Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Statewide Crackdown*, took place August 18 – September 4, 2023, to coincide with the national enforcement crackdown. For this campaign, $616,770 in overtime grant funding was awarded to 99 agencies. The campaign resulted in 350 DWI arrests, 1,220 speeding summonses and 634 seat belt summonses.

Underage Enforcement

Funds were provided to the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) in FY2023 to implement a series of educational and enforcement programs relating to the illegal sale of alcohol to minors.

During the spring and summer of 2023, 33 licensed ABC establishments were identified for investigation of underage and/or intoxicated patron drinking activity. A total of 158 youthful looking patrons were approached by enforcement personnel and asked to produce identification in order to verify that they were of legal age. Fifty-three persons were arrested for violation of the NJ Alcoholic Beverage Control Act. An additional 10 administrative violations were identified and have been submitted to the ABC Enforcement Bureau for prosecution of these violations.

In addition, ABC investigators implemented a survey of licensed establishments to capture how the establishments check and ascertain fictitious identification, with a goal of seeing what works and what does not work and closing gaps in the process. Also, educational materials from DHTS were distributed by ABC during six large public events between May and September 2023, to educate patrons on the consequences of underage drinking and driving as well as the laws and penalties an individual can be charged with for impaired driving. ABC is also collaborating with DHTS to review data provided by Last Drink Reports received by the ABC to determine establishments that are in need of training and strategies for future undercover operations.

Fifteen municipal police departments in five counties (Atlantic, Cape May, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean) participated in the annual *Cops in Shops Summer Initiative* program. The program funded overtime salaries for police officers to work in an undercover capacity in liquor stores, restaurants and bars in an effort to identify underage individuals who purchase or attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages and adults of legal drinking age who purchase alcoholic beverages for underage persons. 26 arrests were made and 38 separate charges were lodged during the project.

A local underage enforcement grant was provided to the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office to implement undercover operations at locations licensed to serve alcoholic beverages. The purpose of the project was to identify individuals under the legal age attempting to purchase alcohol or providing alcohol to underage patrons

and those utilizing fraudulent identification to purchase alcohol. The Cape May project reported carrying out ten enforcement details during the grant year, resulting in numerous underage patrons being charged. There were also a number of violations issued against liquor establishments and beach concert permit holders relating to improper sale of alcohol to minors.

Toxicology Testing Equipment

To allow for enhanced testing capabilities to detect impairing drugs, the NJ State Police Office of Forensic Science Toxicology Unit was provided grant funding in FY2023 to purchase two state-of-the art drug screening devices (Agilent LC-QTOFs). The instruments will be used to process DUI cases more efficiently and with greater sensitivity, resulting in an increase in case output and productivity and a decrease in turnaround time. In cooperation with the NJ Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC), the testing data will be analyzed to determine trends in specific drug use or poly drug use in impaired driving crashes. Training of the device operators and validation testing of the units is underway with baseline data expected in FY2024.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and The Hero Campaign

The New Jersey Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and The Hero Campaign for Designated Drivers received grant funding in FY2023 to raise important awareness about impaired driving and its consequences. MADD actively collaborated with county coalitions, community-based youth service departments, middle and high schools, and law enforcement officials and agencies, delivered Present Power of You(th) presentations and workshops, and coordinated community-based material distribution events during school forums, locally sponsored events, and conferences throughout New Jersey. The Hero Campaign "wrapped" police vehicles around the state with their message to "Be a Hero. Be a Designated Driver."

Partnership with Substance Abuse Treatment Community

HTS was invited by the Partnership for a Drug Free New Jersey and the New Jersey Coordinator for Addiction Response & Enforcement Strategies (NJCARES) to give a presentation on its impaired driving programs as part of an ongoing series of educational webinars. The presentation, on April 27, 2023, was viewed by more than 1,100 substance abuse counselors and clinicians from around the state. HTS discussed the current state of impaired driving in New Jersey and the need for new, innovative programs to address the problem of drugged driving. The primary message delivered was that HTS is looking to engage with the treatment community to focus on traffic safety and prevent impaired-driving crashes.

Occupant Protection – Project Summaries

Click It or Ticket

The *Click It or Ticket* seat belt enforcement mobilization for FY2023 began on May 22 and ran through June 4. The mobilization utilized high visibility seat belt checkpoints and saturation patrols, in combination with local and national publicity efforts, to reiterate the life-saving value of seat belts.

Grant funding totaling $798,350 was awarded to 134 police agencies. These agencies issued 6,989 seat belt summonses, 2,320 speeding summonses, and made 232 DWI arrests. To highlight the campaign, traffic safety officials from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware gathered for a kickoff event on May 11, 2023 at Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia.

Seat Belt Survey

The annual statewide seat belt survey, conducted for DHTS by the New Jersey Institute of Technology, found that the vast majority of New Jersey motorists continue to buckle up. The 2023 front-seat belt usage rate is 92.93%. That is a slight decrease of .04% from the last survey result of 92.97 in 2022. The driver and front-seat passenger usage rates were 93.32% and 91.16% respectively. These rates represent an increase in the driver's usage rate of .37% and a decrease in the passenger usage rate of 1.86 %.

Among the counties included in the survey, Monmouth, Cumberland and Middlesex saw the largest increases in belt use (14.73%, 11.41%, and 8.16%) while Ocean and Salem both had steep declines based on the survey results (12.82% and 10.15%, respectively).

Child Passenger Safety

New Jersey's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program continued its work in FY2023 to reduce traffic injury and fatality rates through coordinated enforcement and education programs regarding the proper use of child restraints in motor vehicles. Twelve agencies (three local police departments, six county police departments, one non-profit agency, one state agency, and NJ State Police) received grant funding for CPS activities that included technician training, re-training and program delivery at the local level.

The theme of New Jersey's CPS program is *100%, Everyone, Every Ride*. The DHTS website, www.njsaferoads.com, contains a wealth of Child Passenger Safety related material, including a list of county coordinators, who can help the public locate technicians, assist technicians with re-certification needs and provide information on child passenger safety programs in their respective counties. The public was able to contact county coordinators directly and arrange for child safety seat program presentations or receive information and guidance on proper installation techniques. The program was brought to the public in the form of many Child Passenger Safety educational events held at the community level throughout the year, including a dedicated program for military families at Joint Base (McGuire-Dix) in Lakehurst on May 4, 2023. Another highlight was National Child Passenger Safety Week from September 17-23, 2023. During the week, DHTS sponsored child restraint check/educational events throughout the state.

DHTS continued its coordination and funding for the state's CPS training efforts and also supported the national child passenger safety certification program which

provides a standardized certification to those that are successfully trained. Nineteen child passenger safety courses were held in 2023, that trained 271 new technicians. In addition, NJ State Police conducted three certification courses for its 39 of its personnel. Currently, there are 1,193 individuals trained as certified technicians in the state working in public safety, health and injury prevention programs. Forty-three of the technicians are certified as CPS instructors. New Jersey recertification rate for its technicians in 2023 was 61%, well above the national average of 55%.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Project Summaries

Pedestrian Enforcement and Education

Increasing the safety of pedestrians in New Jersey is a challenge. More than 190 pedestrians were killed on New Jersey's roadways in 2023, making up 28% of the total motor vehicle fatalities in the state for the year. In FY2023, the Division's primary pedestrian safety countermeasure involved working with the Federal Highway Administration, New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority to expand and strengthen the *Street Smart NJ Campaign*. The *Street Smart NJ Campaign* uses a combination of community-wide grass roots education and awareness backed by strong law enforcement measures to reduce pedestrian injury crashes.

Thirty-seven agencies received grants from the State Pedestrian Safety, Enforcement and Education Fund and Federal Sections 402 and 405(h) Non-Motorized Fund. The grant funds were used to pay for overtime police enforcement that targeted high pedestrian crash locations and provided *Street Smart NJ Campaign* education materials for delivery to high-risk segments of the population.

The *Street Smart Campaign* continually expands into new communities, emphasizing a data driven approach to raise awareness for both pedestrians and motorists, while enforcing laws and changing behaviors. More than 200 communities have participated in the program, many with the support of DHTS funding. The campaign uses several slogans to remind individuals of the major rules for pedestrian safety: obey the speed limit; stop for pedestrians; use crosswalks; and heads up, phones down. The campaign uses outdoor advertising, radio public service announcements, internet advertising and outreach materials including street signs, posters and tip cards.

Among the many communities to undertake a significant *Street Smart NJ* program in 2023 was the City of Orange. The police department there worked with city and county officials, the EZ Ride TMA, and the school district to educate students, employees, and residents about safe driving and walking practices and to enforce driver and pedestrian-related laws. NJTPA and EZ Ride developed a brief online survey, which was translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole.

The survey included questions about driving and walking conditions in the city of Orange, driver and pedestrian behavior, and knowledge of traffic laws. EZ Ride also partnered with the city of Orange Public School District to carry out bike and pedestrian safety presentations during the school year. Outdoor signs, posters, tip cards, and other educational materials were distributed throughout the community. In addition, 13 stores on or in the proximity of Main Street supported the campaign by displaying *Street Smart NJ* posters in their storefront windows.

Crossing Guard Program

New Jersey has approximately 6,800 school crossing guards. The New Jersey crossing guard training and resource program is funded jointly by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and DHTS, and operates under the auspices of the *New Jersey Safe Routes to Schools* program. The New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center Crossing Guard website: www.njcrossingguards.org includes resource manuals, a new training video produced in 2023, and other useful tools.

With the support of DHTS grant funding, representatives of the Voorhees Transportation Center conducted two virtual crossing guard supervisor classes on May 31 and August 3, 2023. In all, 188 individuals took part in these trainings, representing all parts of the state. In addition, in-person crossing guard trainings were conducted in two underserved communities: Passaic on August 25 and Trenton on August 30, 2023. There were130 crossing guards who received training at these two sessions.

Bicycle Safety

The New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, with the support of grant funding from DHTS, continued its comprehensive public awareness campaign on the state's "Safe Passing Law." The law aims to prevent the near misses, injuries and deaths that often

occur when motorists pass cyclists, pedestrians, scooters, people in wheelchairs, or other vulnerable road users unsafely. It provides many benefits including increasing the space given by careful drivers therefore enhancing the comfort level and safety of other road users. The 4-foot distance also protects falling cyclists from colliding with passing vehicles. An active website is in place that contains information on the law, downloadable materials and resources, a social media toolkit, and other useful links. Materials were printed and shared with partner agencies including bicycle shops and clubs and a digital media advertising campaign was carried out on Facebook, Instagram, and Google.

Bicycle safety programming for riders of all ages was delivered at the local level by the eight Transportation Management Associations in New Jersey. Bicycle rodeos were conducted to teach young riders important safety lessons about cycling and proper helmet usage. Bike to Work and Bike to School programs were promoted throughout the state and many virtual and in-person educational programs were conducted targeting a variety of age groups. Major goals of these efforts included fostering bike friendly communities and an equitable transportation network, while also promoting the benefits of regular physical activity.

The Township of Montclair also received grant funding for its ongoing enforcement and educational program that promotes bicycle safety in the community and addresses violations by motorists who do not yield for bicyclists.

Community Traffic Safety Programs/Public Participation and Engagement – Project Summaries

Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSP)

The community-based traffic safety projects funded each year by the Division play a critical role in engaging with local residents and delivering essential safety programming. In FY2023, these Community Traffic Safety Programs utilized local leadership, resources, and institutional knowledge to offer programs targeted to specific local needs in key emphasis areas including: pedestrian, bicycle and child passenger safety; aggressive, impaired, distracted, and teen driving; seat belt use, and older drivers. The following counties were part of CTSP funded programs in 2023: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Morris, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren.

In addition to county-based operations, DHTS also partnered with a number of regional and statewide non-profit organizations that provided traffic safety outreach, engagement, and education with community groups, corporate employers and students. Examples of activities conducted in FY2023 included:

The North Jersey Foundation for Safety (AAA Clubs of New Jersey) conducted older driver safety presentations and Car Fit sessions both in person and virtually, and certified new Car Fit Technicians and event coordinators across the state. A safe driving awareness program *"Slow Down/Move Over"* was sponsored at all rest stops on the New

Jersey Turnpike, Garden State Parkway, and Atlantic City Expressway as well as on buses and billboards throughout the state. Teen drivers received important impaired driving related information through the course *Shifting Gears: The Blunt Truth on Marijuana and Driving.* Law enforcement officers received pedestrian and bicycle safety training in the form of the courses *Cops in Crosswalks* and *Title 39: A Bike's Eye View*.

New Jersey's eight Transportation Management Associations (Avenues in Motion, Hudson TMA, RideWise, Keep Middlesex Moving, goHunterdon, Greater Mercer TMA, Cross County Connection, and EZRide) used DHTS funding to present a wide variety of bicycle, pedestrian and driver safety public outreach initiatives in FY2023 at the local level. The TMA's are a strong supporter of the *Street Smart NJ* pedestrian safety campaign, offering support and technical assistance to communities engaged in this important program. Traffic safety messaging is released throughout the year by the TMA's, to coincide with major national campaigns as well as local initiatives. The TMA's are also among the lead agencies in the state for public participation and engagement activities.

The agencies put a heavy focus on educating school children, especially in the areas of walking safely and safe cycling. Walk to School events were hosted as were many bicycle safety events.

Mature drivers received training and Road Safety Audits were conducted.

Plainfield Public Schools join state campaign to keep students safe as they walk, bike to school

Photo Credit: Plainfield Public Schools

Safe Kids New Jersey (SKNJ) conducted an array of *Children In and Around Cars* safety education programs to targeted areas of need. Together with its statewide network of coalitions, 31,044 community members were reached. Through its child safety seat inspection stations, SKNJ checked 4,756 car seats, reaching 10,800 parents/caregivers and 4,706 children. A total of 951 car seats and 3,302 bike helmets were provided to families in need. Targeted outreach programs accompanied by extensive social media included International Walk to School Day, National Child Passenger Safety Week, Project Prom Night, Safety Town, and Never Leave Your Child Alone (Heatstroke Prevention).

The Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) continued to raise awareness about traffic safety through workshops, web-based training, social media outreach, participation in coalition meetings, and regional, statewide, and national conferences to strengthen the connections within communities. BIANJ offered workshops for all ages, including a workshop on Meaningful Participation and Engagement in partnership with NHTSA where over 75 people in various fields attended. BIANJ conducted 371 workshops and safety events, reaching 10,173 individuals, with more than 20 workshops in Spanish. To build new partnerships, 61 meetings were with new partners, in addition to 82 workshops, and 25 community events.

This year, BIANJ expanded community outreach into targeted cities with high crash rates and underserved populations. BIANJ's meaningful public engagement efforts focused primarily in Camden City. BIANJ, along with community partners, developed relationships to reach the targeted population, which resulted in 113 workshops in settings that reach children, parents, and adults of all ages. BIANJ has laid the foundation to model this outreach in other targeted cities, such as Newark and Trenton.

BIANJ partnered with a marketing firm to develop a pedestrian safety campaign and expand its online presence using carefully vetted social media influencers with large and diverse followings. The influencers effectively conveyed BIANJ's safety messages to a broader audience, which resulted in 1,000 new users on the *Jersey Drives* website. BIANJ also launched a *JerseyDrives* TikTok account and gained 1,001 likes, 78 followers, 57 comments, and 367 link clicks, and Facebook saw a 32.8% increase in engagement through the influencers.

BIANJ developed and piloted the College Roads and Safety Habits (CRASH) peer-to-peer program to reach the college-aged population, modeled after the success of the U

Got Brains Champion Schools Program. In its first year, the CRASH Project worked with four universities/colleges and reached approximately 3,500 students statewide. CRASH was recognized at the National Association of Women Safety Leaders Conference in August. Plans are underway to expand this program in FY2024.

In its 13th year, the U Got Brains Champion Schools Program worked with 54 high schools in 18 counties and has reached almost one million students since its inception. This peer-to-peer program gives teens an opportunity to develop unique campaigns to address teen driving safety. Program evaluation demonstrated the positive impact of the U Got Brains Champion Schools Program on teen driving behaviors. Most notably, the percentage of students who reported never using their phone while driving increased from 47% before the program to 80% after the program, an improvement of 70%.

To increase awareness and enforcement of Title 39 laws, BIANJ conducted regional training workshops, with the assistance of a consultant, to enhance officers' understanding of the cycling and motorist interaction laws, including a segment on the new Safe Passing law (39:4-92.4). There were seven trainings conducted, which were attended by 65 police officers, across seven counties.

Kean University, through its Statewide Comprehensive Traffic Safety Project, took the lead in hosting 11 Basic and seven Advanced Crash Investigation Training Courses as well as three Math Review classes (21 courses in total) with 631 police officer attendees successfully completing the classes, an increase of 95 students from 2022. Kean also continued its sponsorship of the Traffic Safety Specialist program, which is a statewide, uniform, and consistent recognition of police officers who have attained notable levels of experience, education, training a proficiency in highway safety and traffic enforcement methods and procedures. There were 36 police officers recognized in FY2023 as having completed either Level I or Level II of this program. Progress was also made during the year on several new initiatives including a special project for DHTS to investigate DWI prosecution and adjudication rates around the state.

Public Participation and Engagement

DHTS prioritized community engagement activities throughout FY2023. The Division's efforts took many forms, including training of its staff members and grantees, the dissemination of guidance documents and reporting forms to its partner agencies, discussions within the Department of Law and Public Safety to identify community engagement opportunities, as well as actual engagement activities carried out at the local level with new partners.

At the outset of the FY2023 federal project year, DHTS instructed its core community based grantees to undertake community engagement with new partners, based on data, and to document and report on these efforts. As a result, many successful initiatives took place.

The Atlantic County CTSP project directed targeted efforts to the underserved community of Atlantic City. The National Faith and Law Enforcement Day Community Walk attracted participants including police chaplains, law enforcement officers and many different faith-based organizations. The walk was a forum for residents to come together to display peace, unity and respect for all beliefs and backgrounds as well to voice concerns about public safety and learn about access to available programs and services. Residents were pleased to have their voices heard, and to have officials take the time to participate and make themselves available for discussion.

The EZ Ride TMA partnered with the City of Passaic to install a temporary street art project to improve safety at one high risk intersection in the city. High visibility striped crosswalks and an intersection mural were painted to slow drivers and alert them to the presence of crossing pedestrians. EZ Ride set up a tent at the intersection to engage with the community and collect input on the mural project and other traffic safety concerns.

The Avenues in Motion TMA provided bilingual outreach to the Town of Dover community about the Chestnut Street Art

project, expected to be one of the largest of its kind in the State of New Jersey. In person engagement was conducted and feedback gathered about the street mural project and pedestrian safety in the community in general.

HTS actively engaged in direct community outreach throughout 2023. Director Rizol held a meeting with The Coalition for a Safe Community, a network comprising faith-based/religious leaders, law enforcement, and community leaders in Cape May, Atlantic, and Salem Counties. Originating as a gun "safe surrender" program in Atlantic County over a decade ago, the coalition has successfully expanded its mission to promote overall community safety through diverse programming. These

initiatives include, but are not limited to, summer photography sessions, community walks, and virtual forums with law enforcement leaders.

Director Rizol used the opportunity to present the Highway Strategic Plan and emphasized the necessity of community engagement mandated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). He introduced USDOT's Safe System Approach and underscored the significance of educational programs and enforcement initiatives.

The coalition's chairman shared information about the annual Teen Summit, inviting Director Rizol to speak on highway safety in 2024. This summit involves every high school in Atlantic County. The chairman has also been invited to attend the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (HTSPAC) to amplify the coalition's voice reflecting the needs of southeastern New Jersey communities.

DHTS also met with the Lakewood Coalition, a community group organized by the Lakewood Police Department. This coalition aims to unite community and religious leaders with law enforcement, providing residents with a platform to voice their concerns.

Director Rizol addressed the attendees on traffic safety in Lakewood, presenting statistics on pedestrian fatalities, seatbelt use compliance, and the risks associated with cell phone usage while driving. He discussed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and the Safe System Approach, emphasizing the need for community involvement in developing effective traffic safety plans.

An interaction during this meeting exemplifies the community oriented approach employed by DHTS. A coalition member raised concerns about increased speeding and efforts to enforce speed limits. This sparked a dialogue between attendees, leading to a constructive exchange of ideas about the problem. DHTS used the opportunity to discuss the potential for funding new projects to address the problem and ensured that contact information for the division was made available to all parties.

DHTS looks forward to many more successful and informative engagement opportunities during the upcoming FY2024-2026 Highway Safety Plan period.

Police Traffic Services and Training – Project Summaries

Comprehensive Law Enforcement Programs

Sustained enforcement activity by law enforcement in key program areas such as speed, occupant protection/seat belts, distracted driving, and impaired driving was a central focus of DHTS grant funding efforts in FY2023. Crash ranking lists were developed in these four areas and sustained enforcement grant funding was offered, and in most cases accepted, by police agencies in these high crash counties and communities. There were 70 sustained enforcement grants funded in total in FY2023, utilizing Section 402 and 405 funds.

The Essex County Sheriff's Department received a sustained enforcement grant focusing on seat belt usage and speeding. During the grant year, the agency reported issuing more than 850 summonses for seat belt or child restraint violations, more than 700 summonses for speeding, and another 85 for reckless driving. At the local level, the Piscataway Police Department undertook a comprehensive speed reduction campaign on township roads with the support of DHTS funding. The agency conducted 200 targeted speed enforcement details during the grant year and issued more than 1,200 summonses for speeding on local roads posted at 25 mph. The enforcement activities were backed up by safe driving educational presentations to high school students as well as a lawn sign distribution program in which lawn sides with safe driving messages were printed and distributed to residents on demand, creating an innovative opportunity for police to interact and engage with members of the public on the important issue of residential speeding.

Both radar and laser speed detection devices have traditionally been effective tools used by State Troopers assigned to patrol highways and rural roadways. During FY2023, grant funds were used to purchase 60 laser units to replace aging devices, and were deployed to station areas where they will get the most use. NJSP radar and laser teams conducted 1,128 hours of saturation enforcement during the year, resulting in 1,348 traffic stops and 845 speeding tickets.

Distracted Driving Crackdown

New Jersey was one of eight states that qualified to receive distracted driving incentive grant funds in FY2023. These funds enabled the state to undertake a major public awareness campaign relating to driver distraction (as detailed in the Paid Media area of this report) as well as fund a significant enforcement effort in support of the national *UDrive. UText. UPay.* distracted driving crackdown.

The 2023 *UDrive. UText. UPay.* distracted driving crackdown took place April 1-30, 2023. $1.2 million in grant funding was awarded to 157 state, county, and local police agencies. During the campaign, these grant funded agencies issued 7,130 summonses for hand held use of a cell phone while driving. An additional 4,001 summonses were issued for careless driving.

Driver Distraction Survey

Rowan University continued its groundbreaking research for DHTS in FY2023 on the issue of driver distraction, which previously found that rates of distraction among New Jersey drivers approach 25% along certain high-volume roadways. In FY2023 further study was performed to see what correlations exist between driver distraction and speeding, crashes in general, weather conditions and right lane vs. other lane drivers. Data collectors drove through 22 major NJ highway corridors with video recorders mounted on the exterior of the vehicle. The video data, captured through the side windows of vehicles on these roadways, was analyzed to detect driving behaviors using a deep learning algorithm. Static cameras were utilized, as well, at fixed locations. Among the findings:

- Cell Phone use is the most prominent type of distraction.

- An increase in speed limits significantly increases distractions, while an increase in the number of lanes significantly decreases the distraction events.

- The following roadways have higher rates of distracted driving crashes: Route 22, Route 1, Route 9, and Route 130.

- Truck drivers are less distracted than other motor vehicle drivers.

- Right lane drivers are generally more distracted than drivers in faster lanes.

- During Distracted Driving Awareness Month (April) a significant decrease in hand held cell phone usage was noted among drivers.

- Significant increases in levels of distraction were observed during times of higher temperature.

The results obtained from this study will assist state and local agencies in promoting awareness and reducing distracted driving in New Jersey.

Crash Investigation Training

The Crash Investigation Training program funded by DHTS offered a robust schedule of courses in FY2023. The Basic Crash Investigation course was offered ten times at various police academies around the state and was successfully completed by 374 police officers. Seven sessions of Advanced Crash Investigation were held, with 199 attendees successfully completing the course. Nine specialty courses were conducted on topics including traffic crash reconstruction, pedestrian/bicycle and motorcycle crash investigation, commercial vehicle crash investigation, Applied Physics and Event Data Recorder (EDR) Use for Crash Reconstruction. These courses were successfully completed by 233 attendees.

Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor

Three Deputy Attorneys General ("DAG") in the Department of Law and Public Safety worked as Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutors (TSRP's) at various times during FY2023. The TSRP's conducted and attended trainings, sat on several committees, attended traffic safety-related workshops, provided assistance to prosecutors and law enforcement officers on various inquiries, represented the state in traffic safety-related court matters, and provided assistance to prosecutors in preparing briefs and appearing before the New Jersey Supreme Court. The TSRP's conducted several training programs including Prosecutor Alcotest Training, Radar Instructor Refresher course, Basic Motor Vehicle Course for DCJ Investigators, and Basic DRE Course legal aspects.

A significant amount of time was spent in FY2023 with legal challenges to the implementation and rollout of the Alcotest 9510, New Jersey's new evidential breath testing instrument. The TSRPs responded to several motions, including challenges to the reliability of the instrument and a defense motion to stay the rollout of the instrument, and filed a motion on behalf of the State to limit the scope of the hearing.   Two of the TSRPs are part of the litigation team and, as such, attended case management conferences with the court-appointed Special Master and met with experts to discuss the 9510 and NJ's evidential breath testing program.

The TSRP's are an important part of New Jersey's traffic safety program and regularly participate and provide updates on their activities at HTSPAC, NHTSA Region II, and Regional Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL)/Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL) meetings.

Fatal Crash Unit

The New Jersey State Police Fatal Accident Investigation Unit (FAIU) performed many functions related to the investigation of fatal and serious injury motor vehicle crashes and the collection of statistical data related to fatal crashes. Unit personnel investigated serious and fatal crashes that occurred in the patrol areas of the State Police and responded to requests for technical assistance with on-scene investigations and/or post collision investigation from county prosecutors' offices and municipal police departments. The FAIU also reviews, reinvestigates, or reconstructs every fatal crash that occurs in the state in order to ensure accurate FARS reporting, which is critical to DHTS program and planning efforts. Unit personnel relied on their advanced training and technical expertise as well as specialized equipment and support, funded in part by DHTS again in FY2023, in order to effectively and efficiently perform these vital functions.

New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association

The New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association was founded in 1974 and remains one of the nation's only dedicated statewide organizations devoted to the work of police traffic officers. The organization has proven an invaluable partner to DHTS and DHTS again awarded grant funding to the Association in FY2023. The NJPTOA reports on all contemporary traffic safety issues including the NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety's campaigns and priorities, traffic related case law, new and emerging technology, training updates and anticipated future issues. The NJPTOA offers and provides access to training events based on the state's needs. The NJPTOA utilizes a web site, monthly meetings and newsletter as well as mass emails to keep its membership informed on critical issues facing the traffic safety community.

Law Enforcement Liaison

FY2023 was another active year for New Jersey's Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL), funded through a grant from DHTS to the NJ State Association of Chiefs of Police. Work of the LEL included: providing assistance to DHTS staff in the promotion of law enforcement grants during the seat belt, impaired driving and distracted driving mobilizations, promoting the division's traffic safety initiatives at monthly meetings of the State Association of Chiefs of Police and at monthly and quarterly meetings of the Traffic Officers Association, sharing news on traffic safety topics and initiatives with municipal Chiefs of Police via regular email blasts, assisting DHTS leadership with ongoing projects and special events as needed, and actively being involved in the implementation of the 2020 NJ Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Comprehensive Police Training

Rutgers University provided a variety of training programs to the law enforcement community of the state in FY2023 through its Comprehensive Police Training Grant from DHTS. The *Data-Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety* course, first debuted

in FY2021, was offered in one session in FY2023. The course was developed with the goal of helping potential DHTS grantees create and submit stronger, data-driven project applications. The three day course trains participants to utilize the Crash Analysis Tool (CAT) in a computer lab or virtual classroom by first developing queries for a specific town to identify crash prone locations and factors. Those queries are saved and exported to form the justification for a DHTS grant proposal.
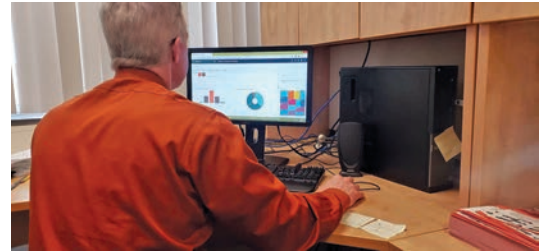
Attendees also received grant writing training to develop a grant proposal related to their data points, utilizing the DHTS SAGE e-grant system. NHTSA's proven countermeasures are discussed, and agencies are assisted in selecting the proper strategies to implement, as well as how to measure the impact of their intervention(s). During the session held in FY2023, 16 officers were trained representing 11 different police agencies.

The course *Drone Certification and Crash Reconstruction Workshop* focused on the use of unmanned aircraft (drones) in crash investigation. During two five-day workshop held in April and June of 2023, 43 certified NJ Crash Reconstructionists were trained to receive FAA licenses to operate a drone to assist in reconstructing crash scenes. Other areas of training included NJTR-1 Crash Reports (described in the Traffic Records area of this Annual Report), and Work Zone Safety (described in the Other Vulnerable Road Users area of this Annual Report).

As part of the FY2024 planning process, DHTS hosted a mandatory meeting for its partner agencies and grantees in March 2023. Nearly 250 new and potential DHTS grantees attended the virtual session. Information was presented on the FY2024 grant process, priorities and expectations. Presentations were also given by federal and state partners relating to important issues such as the National Roadway Safety Strategy, equity and community engagement in our programs, and current challenges and opportunities that exist within the traffic safety law enforcement community.
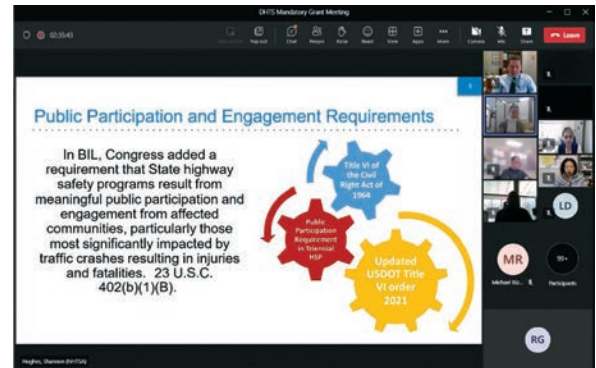
Traffic Records – Project Summaries

An efficient traffic records system is critical to New Jersey's highway safety program. Projects that were funded and/or supported in FY2023 by DHTS were designed to expand statewide-integrated data collection and transmission systems to improve the timeliness, completeness, accessibility, accuracy, and linkage of safety information. The ultimate goal is data that will allow for analysis of all traffic crashes for use in policy and program development.

New Jersey Safety and Health Outcomes Center for Integrated Data

This exciting project, which got underway in FY2023, involves researchers at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia linking new and existing New Jersey traffic safety and health outcome data sets to provide critical injury and safety related information to stakeholders through a publicly accessible website and interactive online dashboard. The data will go far beyond just crash data and examine demographic and community characteristics of drivers, passengers, and pedestrians to promote transportation equity for all.
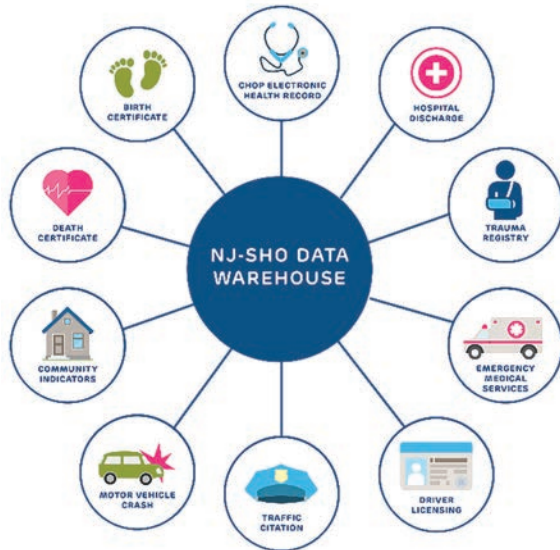
This customized approach provides DHTS the opportunity to generate tailored safety programming by identifying the communities that are the most negatively impacted by motor vehicle crashes through a more holistic approach. The dashboard will allow users to create customizable Safety Profiles that highlight high-priority traffic safety and injury-focused outcomes through a suite of high-quality data visualizations that track progress on key metrics. The development of the NJ-SHO Data Dashboard will create a new and unique way of analyzing traffic safety data through a community-oriented lens.

The data warehouse currently includes (1) driver licensing histories, (2) traffic-related citations and suspensions, (3) police-reported motor vehicle crashes, (4) birth certificates, (5) death certificates, (6) hospital discharges (ED, inpatient, and outpatient), (7) electronic health records for all NJ patients of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) network, (8) census tract-level community indicators (using geocoded residential addresses), (9) trauma registry records (to be integrated in 2025), and (10) emergency medical services (EMS) data (to be integrated in 2024).

In addition to the ongoing data integration efforts, FY2023 highlights of this project included expanding the list of stakeholders to more than 1,700 potential partners, working with software vendors to finalize designs for the publicly accessible website and interactive data dashboard, and developing training plans to ultimately teach the data dashboard and its many attributes to potential new users.

NJTR-1 Training

The NJTR-1 crash report form is completed by law enforcement for any incident resulting in injury, death or damage in excess of $500. Proper completion of the report by officers in the field is critical to obtaining valid crash data. During FY2023, twelve refresher workshops were held (7 in person and 5 virtually). A total of 509 state, county, and municipal police officers and safety personnel from 123 agencies were trained in how to properly complete the crash form. Technical assistance was provided to another 150+ officers.

Statewide Traffic Records Coordination and Analysis

The Statewide Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (STRCC) is responsible for the critical job of integrating and exchanging traffic records data between federal, state and local traffic-related agencies and organizations in an effort to reduce fatalities, crashes and injuries. STRCC agency representatives include those involved in highway safety, highway infrastructure, law enforcement and adjudication, public health, injury control and motor vehicle and driver licensing. The committee provides a forum for the discussion of highway safety data and traffic records issues, represents the interests of the agencies and organizations within the traffic records system and develops and carries out a traffic records strategic plan. Several meetings of the committee were held during FY2023. STRCC work was instrumental in contributing to the successful data integration and enhancement efforts highlighted throughout this program area.

Electronic Patient Care Reporting and EMS Data Repository

The Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) continued its ongoing program to improve the quantity and timeliness of electronic patient care reporting (ePCR) for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the EMS Data Repository. Prior to the ePCR program, all patient data was collected individually by multiple organizations either manually or through unlinked desktops and servers. With the ePCR program, patient and circumstantial data is collected through tablet personal computer devices by both Advanced and Basic Life Support providers who are the first responders to emergency incidents. As the data fields within the ePCR are completed, the information is transferred via Wi-Fi/cellular, in near real-time, to the receiving hospital so all relative data to the patient and their injuries are available to treating clinicians. The data is also transferred and stored in the repository in such a way that it is accessible by multiple state and federal agencies.

The EMS Data Repository continues to see significant growth in the quality of data being submitted by EMS providers through the ePCR. The total number of records transmitted to the data bridge increased in 2023 by 2.2% from 1,786,936 in 2022 to 1,826,445. The average number of days for the data to be entered (timeliness) improved by 4.9% from 2.03 days to 1.93. For completeness, the overall number of agencies non-compliant with ePCR (not submitting data) remained at just one in 2023.

Electronic Data Transfer

The New Jersey Department of Transportation deployed the state's first integrated and all-inclusive crash reporting system in FY2021, which electronically accepts crash reports from police departments into the state system. This application was developed and maintained by Lexis Nexis on behalf of the New Jersey DOT to serve as a portal into the State of New Jersey's repository for traffic crash reports. The program, known as NJ Crash, provides a revolutionary new approach for law enforcement agencies to create and submit crash reports.

As of the end of FY2023, 188 police agencies (approximately 34% of the state's total agencies) are submitting their crash reports electronically through NJ Crash, with another 60 in the development phase and expected to come on board soon.

A major catalyst in the effort was the signing into law in March 2023 of legislation requiring all police departments in New Jersey to begin implementing the NJ Crash electronic crash reporting application either through their third-party RMS/CAD venders or through NJ Crash directly. The legislation took effect immediately as a result of Assembly Bill #4935, which added this requirement to Title 39:4-131. (See page 50)

Crash Analysis Tool (Numetric)

The Crash Analysis Tool (CAT) is used by DHTS to make data driven decisions for traffic safety programmatic and grant funding priorities. The system is also used by other public and private agencies and traffic safety professionals to help identify and assess the most cost-effective ways to improve safety on the state's roadways. The Crash Analysis Tool is a critical program that is used in all aspects of the Division's traffic safety efforts.

In FY2023, there were 743 unique users in the system, with 92 accounts retired and 133 new users added in the last year. The user base consists of law enforcement agencies, local governments, and partnering stakeholders including NJDOT. Three Crash Analysis Tool workshops were held in FY2023, in addition to the Data Driven Countermeasures for Traffic Safety Courses hosted by Rutgers University. Recent updates to the CAT include the Network Screening and Sliding Window Applications. Similar to Crash Query, filters can be applied to the entire network using dynamic charts or graphs or typing an attribute into a query bar. The application contains a powerful text-to-search feature to run custom roadway network screening requests. The Network Screening Application also allows the user to query for specific Behavioral Countermeasures that could be deployed throughout New Jersey's roadway network. The application will generate the top-ranking roadway segments pertaining to NHTSA funded enforcement areas such as impaired driving, pedestrian safety and seat belt use and where the highest volumes and rates are taking place. The system also allows users to identify and target specific traffic safety issues in disadvantaged communities that can be drilled-down by several filterable categories. This enables DHTS to pin-point the locations that would benefit most from strategic safety enforcement and education.

New to the CAT in FY2023 was the launch of the Crash Tree Application. The Crash Tree Application allows users to generate a crash tree diagram as part of a systemic safety analysis process to help identify and select areas where crash types most frequently occur.

Plans for FY2024 include further enhancements of the data elements filterable and exportable in the Network Screening Application, and developing an intersection

ranking list application that will enable users to target the worst intersections in their communities or along specific roadways.

Traffic Engineering Interns

The Warren County Engineer's Office again received grant funding to retain the services of two engineering students to collect traffic crash data and assist in performing safety studies at high crash locations. Under the supervision of the Assistant County Engineer, the students gathered crash data, created a computerized crash database, and performed field investigations as needed. The *2022 Warren County Traffic Crash Data and Road Safety Assessment Report* was produced and contains the top crash locations involving county roadways, based on 2022 data, with recommendations for improvements. The *2023 Traffic Study Locations Report,* which was also produced, provides crash data and analysis of roadway locations which have previously undergone improvements or been identified through this program.

Other Vulnerable Road Users - Project Summaries

Younger Drivers

An exciting grant funded partnership was carried out in FY2023 with the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, the governing body for high school sports in New Jersey. A paid and social media campaign was carried out to deliver traffic safety messages to young drivers and their parents through NJSIAA's year-round calendar of athletic tournaments and events and its 435 member high schools. The campaign included banners and print ads, public address announcements at major events, social media posts, and innovative tools to reach and engage young drivers, parents, teachers, and school administrators.

Older Drivers

The Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University received funding again in FY2023 to broaden its older driver safety training curriculum and resources housed on a web based Older Driver Traffic Safety Resource Center. The Resource Center maturedriversnj.org is now the focal point for New Jersey's mature driver safety program. It contains safety materials, links, and educational programming that can be accessed and utilized by New Jersey safety partners in a coordinated approach to this important issue.

In FY2023, a Train the Trainer presentation was developed, piloted, and released. The program, which can be found on the resource center website, can be used by

community members who are in a position to inform and instruct mature drivers about driving safer longer, driving limitations, driving retirement, and transportation alternatives.

Motorcycle Safety

The Brain Injury Alliance of NJ (BIANJ) expanded its motorcycle safety programs by engaging nearly 300,000 riders and the public through a multi-pronged approach of community events, media and partnerships. BIANJ expanded its pledge programs to incentivize motorcyclists and motorists to be safer on the road, including a new initiative working with high school and college students. This program was promoted in high schools, colleges, and at community events. This year, almost 3,000 people pledged to Share the Road with motorcycles. BIANJ received 334 pledges from motorcyclists, offering incentives of up to $250 for safety gear or rider training courses through a private sponsor.

BIANJ worked with a marketing firm to broaden the reach of motorcycle safety messaging by using targeted ads on social media for Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, and attending events such as motorcycle runs, bike nights, sporting events and fairs, with an emphasis in high crash areas. In total, 18 events reached approximately 12,000 people.

Digital media placement increased traffic to the Share the Road (STR) page and social media sites. The *JerseyDrives* website, updated quarterly, educates the public about sharing the road with weekly safety messages on social media. Motorcycle riders were urged to use good judgment, wear proper gear, and become lifelong learners. BIANJ worked with motorcycle clubs, rider training centers, and community partners to help spread these messages.

BIANJ engaged with the public through 409 safety events, including 20 in Spanish, reaching 31,565 people across 21 counties. Additionally, 109 workshops were conducted in driver education classrooms across the state. Lastly, BIANJ presented an overview of its Motorcycle Safety Campaign at the National Association of Women Safety Leaders Conference in August.

The Motorcycle Coalition, hosted by BIANJ, now has 43 members, representing motorcycle enthusiasts, rider training site owners, law enforcement, health care professionals, community safety partners, and motorcycle coaches. BIANJ focused on diversifying the coalition's membership through outreach and was successful in bringing new members to the coalition. BIANJ continues to oversee the statewide Quality Assurance Program, which has ensured that every rider training center meets

national standards set by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. In FY2023, Motorcycle Quality Assurance (QA) Specialists successfully visited all training sites twice, conducting 38 QA visits across 18 locations.

Work Zone Safety

Through the Rutgers University Comprehensive Police Training Grant, work zone safety training and education was provided throughout FY2023 to law enforcement officers, municipal traffic engineers, and public works personnel.

The annual statewide Work Zone Safety Conference was held on April 6, 2023. The event promoted work zone safety awareness on local and state roadways for a multi-disciplinary audience of construction, engineering, public safety, maintenance and operations personnel. The conference agenda included a presentation by the New Jersey DOT on the updated 2023 Work Zone Safety Set-Up Guide. Other topics covered included an addiction specialist discussing opioid addiction in the workplace and how employers should address this health and safety issue, and presentations addressing some of the root causes of fatalities in work zones. There were 254 people who attended the conference.

In addition, one virtual and one in-person *Work Zone Safety Train-the-Trainer for Police* workshops were conducted, resulting in 50 officers being trained and two virtual *Work Zone Safety Awareness for Police* workshops were held, resulting in 62 officers being trained.

Paid/Earned Media and Public Information- Project Summaries

Impaired Driving (Alcohol, Drugs, Prescription Medication)

DHTS carried out a comprehensive paid media campaign in FY2023 relating to the deadly consequences of impaired driving. The campaign ran on social channels including Facebook, Snapchat, and TikTok, as well as static billboards, paid search,

radio, and streaming audio. In total, more than 130 million impressions were generated, with Snapchat being identified as a key platform for reaching young drivers. The ads stimulated 33,000 page views to the DHTS website.

Traffic and Weather Report Safety Messaging

Traffic safety messages were generated throughout FY2023 including digital display ads, digital streaming audio ads, and sponsorship announcements on eight New Jersey radio stations, in both English and Spanish.

The ongoing campaign targeted a wide range of messaging to supplement and reinforce national and state programs, adhering to timelines outlined by NHTSA and DHTS. As an example, between July 1-15, 2023, a digital display ad campaign relating to heatstroke prevention was placed across the open web as well as on NJ101.5's radio station website, generating more than 698,328 impressions. The

targeted digital display ads were aimed at reaching active, licensed drivers across New Jersey, and included mobile ads delivered to drivers who had recently driven on New Jersey roadways, among other tactics. These digital tactics were supported by over the air radio commercials on eight New Jersey radio stations in English and Spanish, as well as via streaming audio.

Other messages were run throughout the year on topics including speeding, motorcycle safety, seat belts, child passenger safety, graduated driver licensing, pedestrian safety, keep right, as well as impaired and distracted driving.

Distracted Driving

A major public information campaign relating to the critical issue of driver distraction was undertaken from April 3 - September 10, 2023 to augment New Jersey's strong distracted driving enforcement program.

The "Memorial" themed campaign reminded the public that they should put down the phone and keep their eyes on the road in order to keep themselves and others safe. Program elements ran on social media channels

including Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and YouTube. Out of home elements were also employed including static billboards, digital billboards, and radio.

The campaign in total generated nearly 148 million impressions and drove 127,000 visitors to the dedicated program website, where more information was available.

Social Media

During FY2023, the division continued its robust social media presence with a goal of promoting safety on the roads and increasing awareness of the state's traffic safety initiatives in real time. Twitter, Facebook, Facebook Stories and Instagram Stories were utilized to engage and inform the public about the division's campaigns and programs. The division's social media pages are as follows:

Facebook - @NewJerseyDivisionofHighwayTrafficSafety
Twitter - @NJTrafficSafety
Instagram- @NJTrafficSafety

The division's social media channels were integral in pushing out safety messaging to the public in FY2023. With impaired driving and speeding more prevalent in recent years, the division emphasized "Drive Sober," "Slow Down" and "Click It Or Ticket" messaging for added safety awareness on these issues.

Social media partnerships with other state and federal traffic safety partners, such as the New Jersey State Police, New Jersey Department of Transportation, AAA, Brain Injury Alliance and NHTSA have allowed consistent and cohesive messages to be distributed for maximum reach and effect.

Cannabis and Driving

An impaired driving campaign to educate motorists on the dangers of driving under the influence of cannabis was carried out by DHTS, in partnership with the AAA Clubs of New Jersey, NJ Cannabis Regulatory Commission, and the NJ Cannabis Trade Association. Educational fliers, in both English and Spanish, were distributed to cannabis dispensaries throughout the state and are being provided to consumers at each point of sale.

Projects Not Implemented

The following projects included in the FY2023 Highway Safety Plan were not implemented:

Program Area: Alcohol and Other Drugs
Countermeasure Strategy: Law Enforcement Training

The New Jersey Prevention Network coordinates an annual addiction conference that, in normal years, is attended by 800 to 1,000 professionals. These professionals include individuals working predominantly in substance abuse prevention agencies, schools, law enforcement and health care. Funds will again be used to create a highway traffic safety track for the annual conference that will focus on reducing traffic fatalities by reducing drug and alcohol use. Providing this specialized track allows professionals from a wide range of professions to gain new information on alcohol and drugs and how they relate to and impact driver safety.

This project was funded for multiple years and in recent years it became difficult to identify beneficial topics to present to this audience. In addition, the post project reports and analytics provided by the grantee indicated that the project was not particularly impactful in relation to the grant funds being expended. The decision was made not to fund this project in FY2023.

Program Area: Alcohol and Other Drugs
Countermeasure Strategy: Youth Programs

Stockton University will sponsor alcohol/drug education workshops and awareness programs on campus through its "Stay Safe and Graduate" program, emphasizing the risks associated with alcohol/drug abuse and driving. Special campus events and training sessions will be offered utilizing impaired driving simulators and goggles as well as on-line training resources. In addition, peer educators from the university will present alcohol and drunk driving awareness programs to local high school students on the consequences of intoxicated driving, peer pressure and decision-making.

This project was also funded for many years. Unfortunately, project activity and utilization of approved funding dropped in recent years. This, coupled with turnover in project leadership at the University resulted in the decision of DHTS not to continue this grant in FY2023.

Program Area: Public Information and Paid Media
Countermeasure Strategy: Public Outreach

In FY2023, DHTS will complete and analyze the results of a statewide traffic safety attitudes and awareness survey, renewed after a hiatus of several years. A professional polling institute will conduct an attitudes and awareness survey to gage the current level of awareness of New Jersey motorists of traffic safety issues in the state and to see what are the main traffic safety concerns being felt by the motoring public.

DHTS looked at several options in FY2023 to hire a statewide vendor to conduct this survey, however state bidding/contract regulations proved prohibitive in the short term. As an alternative, DHTS was able to carry out a simpler, web-based traffic safety survey in 2023. Though less scientific, these survey results were still informative and are detailed in FY2024-2026 HSP.

Evidence-Based Traffic Safety Enforcement Program

Conducting evidence-based enforcement requires three main components. It begins with an analysis of relevant data to form problem identification. The second phase is deployment of proven countermeasures targeted at the problems identified during the analysis. Lastly, evidence-based enforcement relies on continuous follow-up and necessary adjustments to the plan. Correctly identifying roadways, jurisdictions, and their law enforcement agencies to participate in enforcement initiatives requires a data-driven process and careful resource analysis. Selected police departments must have enforceable roadways with the best opportunity to effectively reduce crashes, injuries, and ultimately, deaths. Funding levels should be based, when possible, on a jurisdiction's proportion of the overall contribution or piece of the problem within each safety focus area, with final award amounts determined by also evaluating past performance, ability to participate, and internal contributions to serve as matching efforts.

At both the state and local level, the Numetric Crash Analysis Tool is used to analyze crash data. This multi-layered support program is made available to law enforcement personnel and other decision makers to help identify and assess the most cost-effective ways to improve safety on the state's roadways through a data driven approach. The system provides a suite of applications that aid in the breakdown of over four million crash records into digestible information for analysis, performance measuring and reporting.

DHTS uses three primary sources of data for its evidence-based enforcement program: the New Jersey Crash Records system maintained by the DOT, Bureau of Safety Programs, the FARS, maintained by the Division of State Police, and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) citation data. All reportable crashes in the state are submitted to DOT for entry into the statewide crash records system. The data contained in the New Jersey Crash Records System allows for the analysis of crashes within specific categories defined by person (i.e., age and gender), location (i.e. roadway type and geographic location) and vehicle characteristics (i.e. mechanical conditions), and the interactions of various components (i.e. time of day, day of week, driver actions, etc.).

Beginning in 2023, DHTS received statewide motor vehicle citation data from the AOC on a monthly basis. This data includes all moving violations issued by New Jersey law enforcement agencies during the prior month. DHTS uses this new data source as a means to evaluate the general enforcement activity within DHTS program areas. Trend analysis of citation, crash and fatal data is conducted for the four NHTSA sponsored annual mobilization campaigns. The analysis aims to identify

locations throughout New Jersey where enforcement is having a positive impact on traffic safety, as well as the areas that necessitate a refreshed strategy.
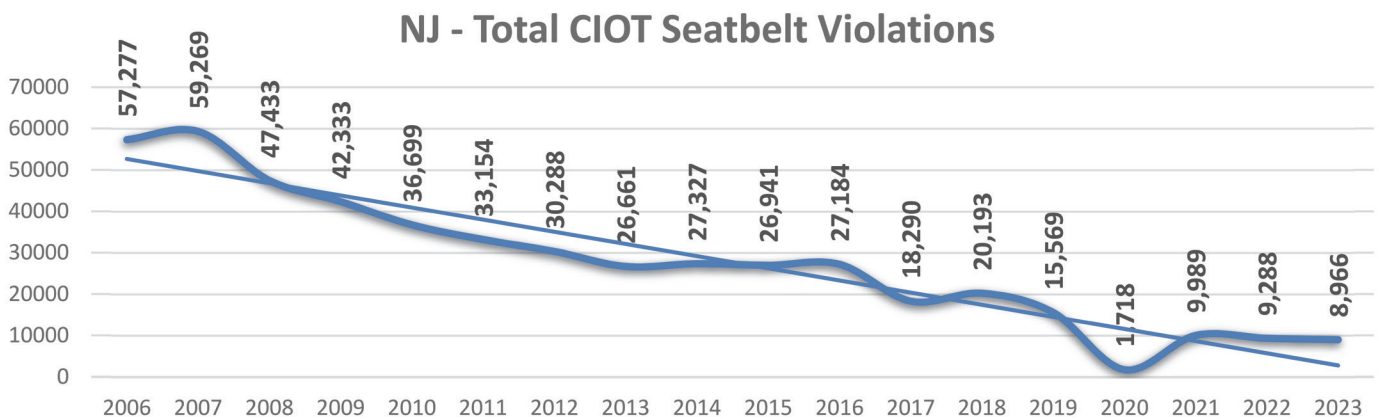
Utilizing these various resources, New Jersey's FY2024-2026 HSP funding allocations are evidence-based as municipalities and safety agencies are identified and encouraged to participate in grant-funded activities. An example of the mobilization trend analysis is seen below.

Project Description: New Jersey Police Agency Summons Data – Click It or Ticket Mobilization Campaign

Seatbelt-related summonses (including child restraints) issued during the annual Click It or Ticket (CIOT) mobilization campaign (grant funded + regular patrol) have been steadily declining since 2006. 2023 saw the lowest ever volume of seatbelt violations issued during the campaign period (excluding 2020/Covid-19).

- 2023 total citations were 3.5% lower than 2022 (1-Year)
- 2023 total citations were 42% lower than 2019 (5-Years)
- 2023 total citations were 67% lower than 2014 (10-Years)
- 2023 total citations were 80% lower than 2009 (15-Years)

There was an average of 690 violations issued per day during the 2023 CIOT campaign period, down from 714 in 2022 and 64 (lowest) in 2020. On average in NJ, 178 seatbelt-related violations are issued per day (2019-2022). For three of the last four years (2019-2022), there was a higher seatbelt violation per day rate during the CIOT campaign than the annual daily average. Over the last four years (2019-2022), seatbelt violations issued during the CIOT campaign made up an average of 11% of all moving violations issued each day, compared to four percent of all daily moving violations during the rest of the year.

NJ - Total CIOT Seatbelt Violations

Year	Violations
2006	57,277
2007	59,269
2008	47,433
2009	42,333
2010	36,699
2011	33,154
2012	30,288
2013	26,661
2014	27,327
2015	26,941
2016	27,184
2017	18,290
2018	20,193
2019	15,569
2020	1,718
2021	9,989
2022	9,288
2023	8,966

Total CIOT Violations per day
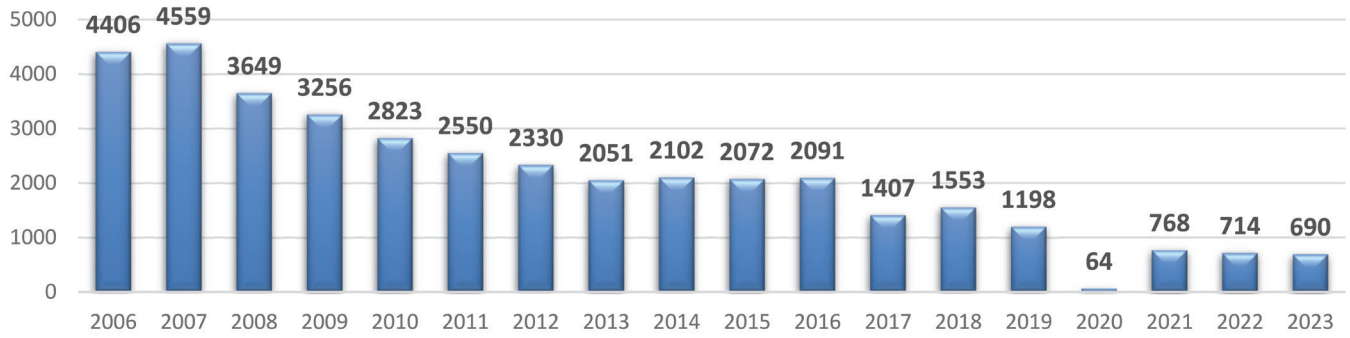
CIOT Campaign Seatbelt Violations Per Day vs Annual Seatbelt Violations Per Day


- CIOT Violations per day
- Seatbelt Violations per day Annual
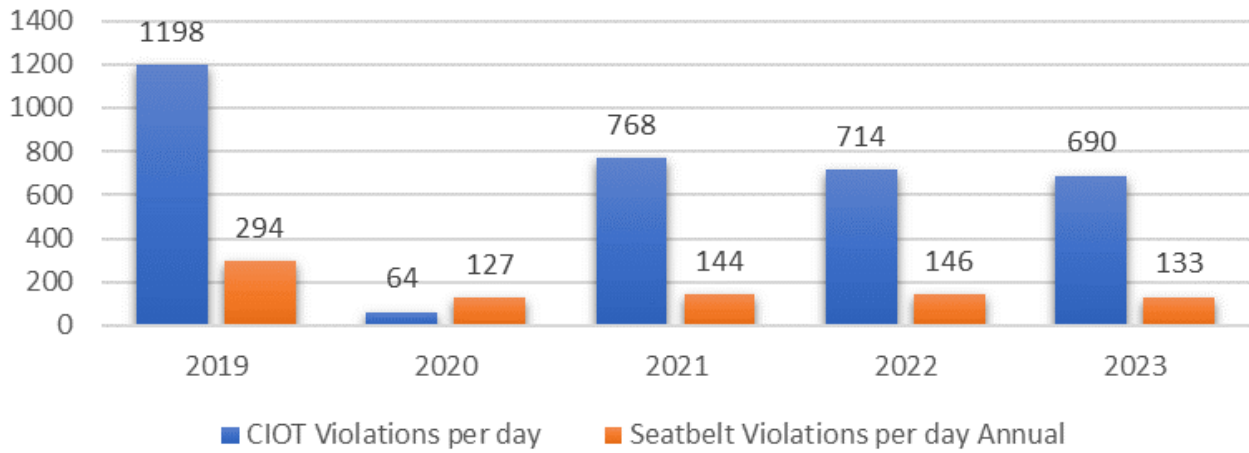
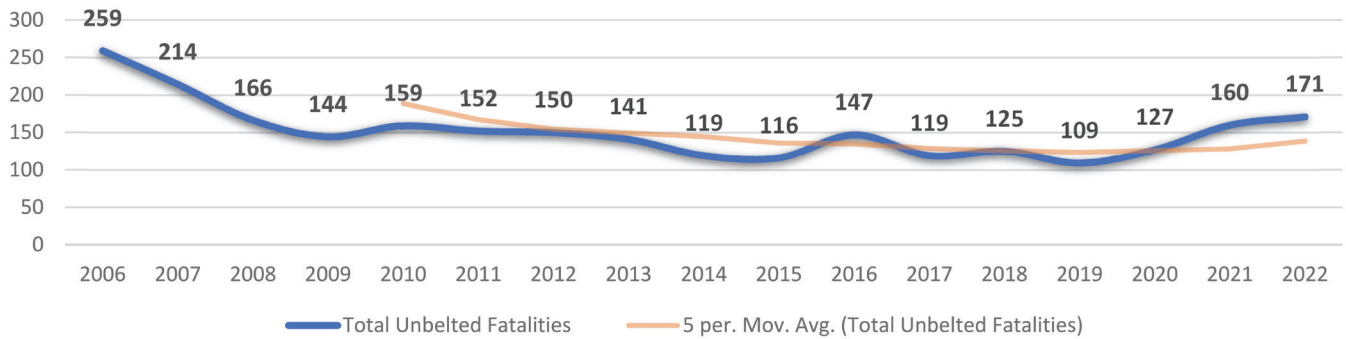## CIOT Seatbelt Violations % of total Campaign Violations vs Annual Seatbelt Violations % of Total Violations

- Seatbelt Violations During CIOT Campaign
- Seatbelt Annual Violations
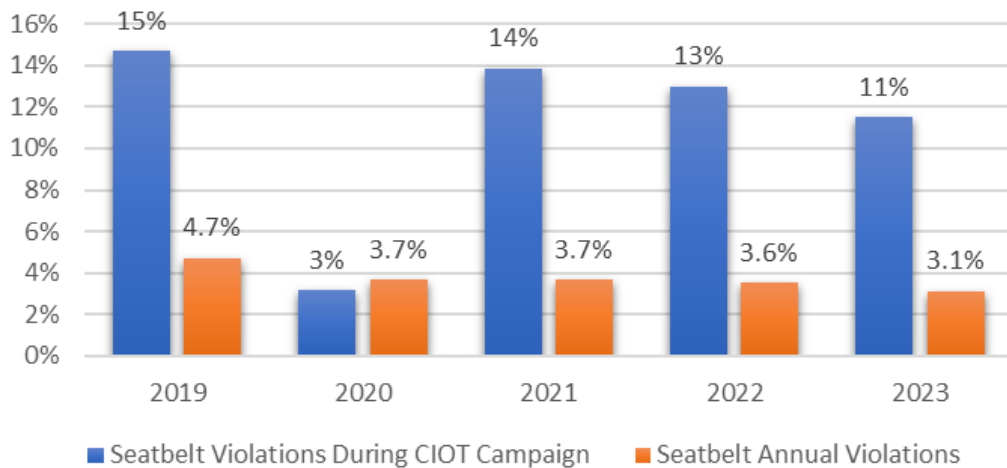
Front seat occupant seatbelt usage declined slightly in 2023 from 2022; however the usage rate remained above the state's goal of having a usage rate of no less than .920. Despite New Jersey having a high front seat occupant seatbelt usage rate, the number of occupants fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes increased again in 2022 to 171. This equates to 43 percent of all motor vehicle occupant fatalities being unrestrained at the time of the crash. The 2022 the crash records are about 50% complete at the time of this report. The most recent data New Jersey has that measures the occupant restraint use is 2021, where the state experienced a third consecutive increase in unbelted occupant injuries. New Jersey saw an 18% increase in unbelted injuries from 2019 to 2020, a four percent increase from 2020 to 2021, and a near 14% increase in 2022 from 2021.

Front Seat Occupant Seatbelt Usage Rate
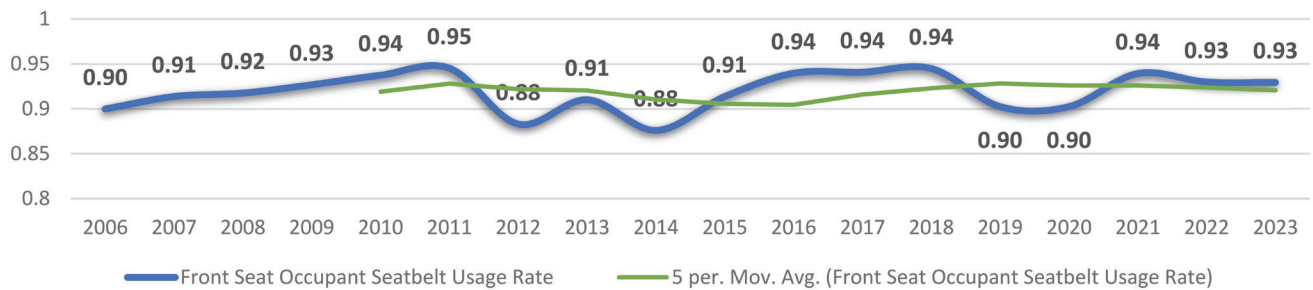
## Total Unbelted Fatalities Annual

## Total Unbelted Injuries Annual
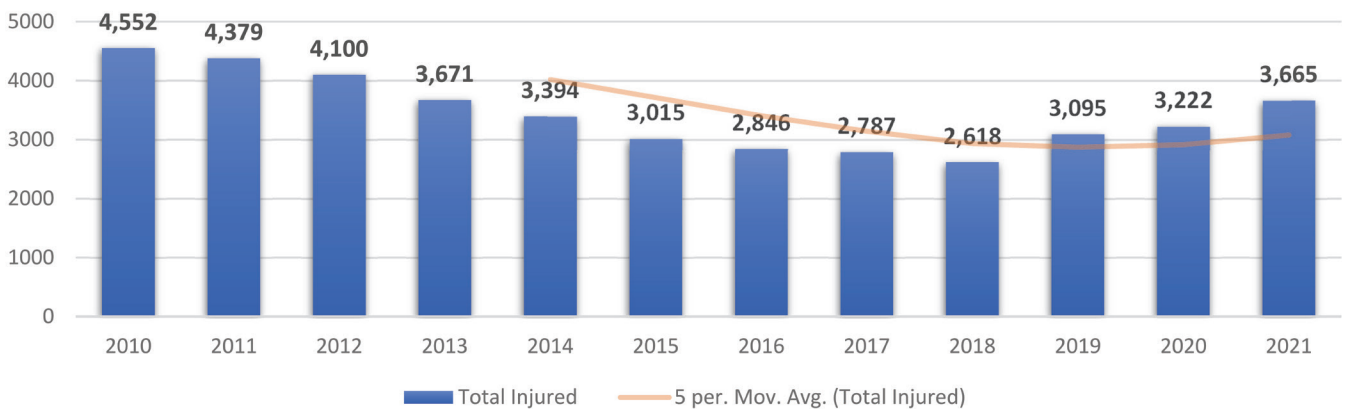
The New Jersey State Police patrols large portions of New Jersey's roadway system, and is an active participant in the Click It or Ticket campaign. In the 2023 CIOT campaign, the NJSP issued 2,194 seatbelt violations during the 13-day campaign window. This equates to 25% of the total seatbelt summonses issued statewide or 169 seatbelt violations per day, up from 153 per day in 2021.

NJSP - Total CIOT Seatbelt Violations
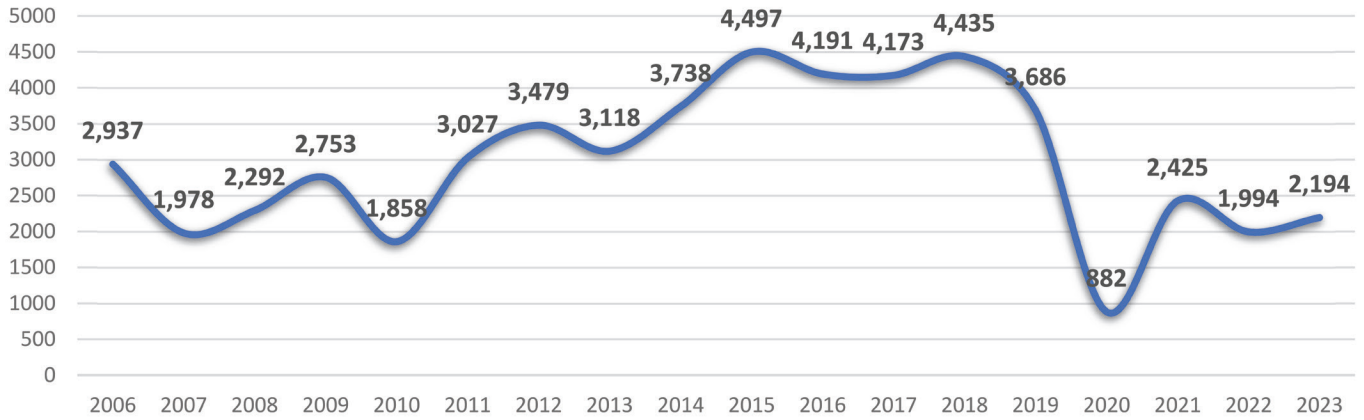
NJ - Total CIOT Seatbelt Violations by DHTS Region

Region 1 - South NJ   Region 2 - Central NJ   Region 3 - North NJ
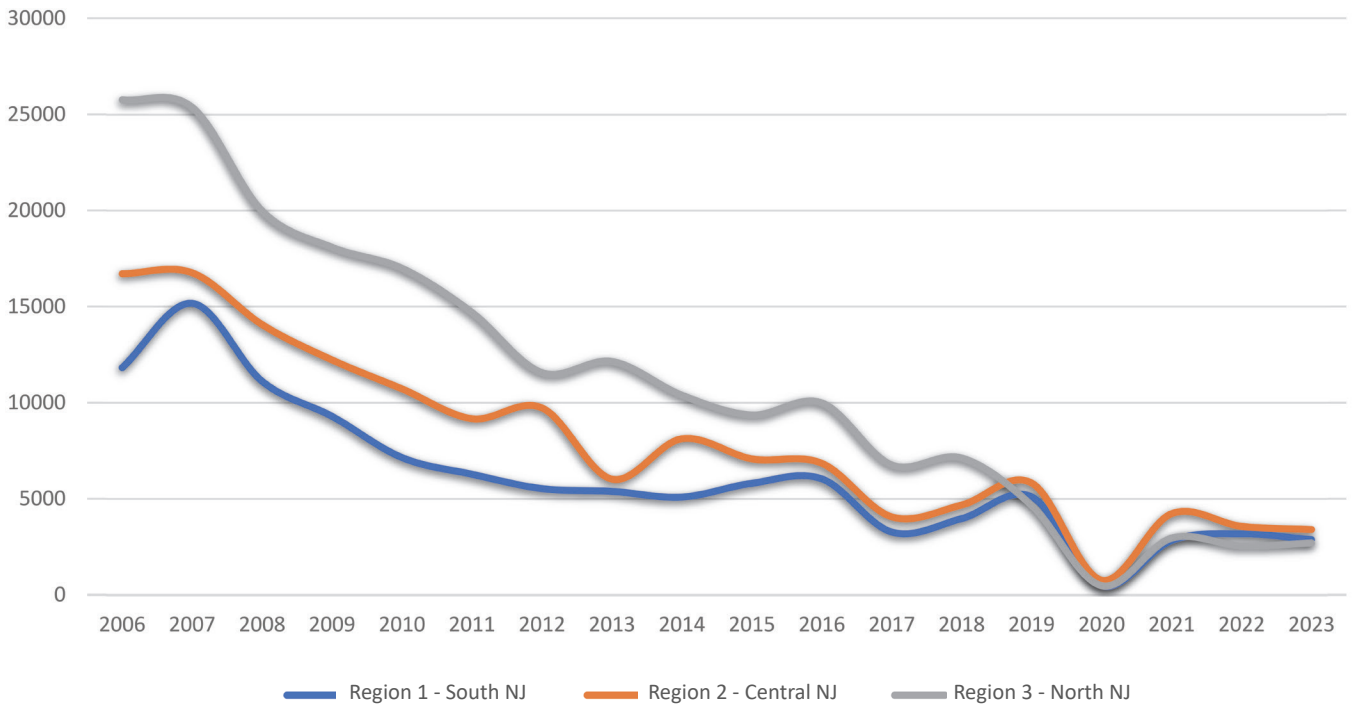
Below is an example of the analysis completed at the county level throughout the state.
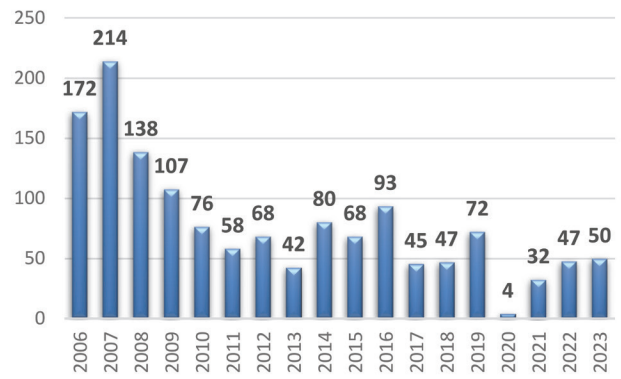
ATLANTIC COUNTY

Atlantic County accounted for seven percent of all Seatbelt Violations issued during the CIOT Mobilization Campaign in 2023, while making up three percent of total unbelted fatalities occurring the previous year. Atlantic County issued a total of 645 seat belt violations during the 2023 CIOT Campaign which resulted in 50 tickets issued per day.
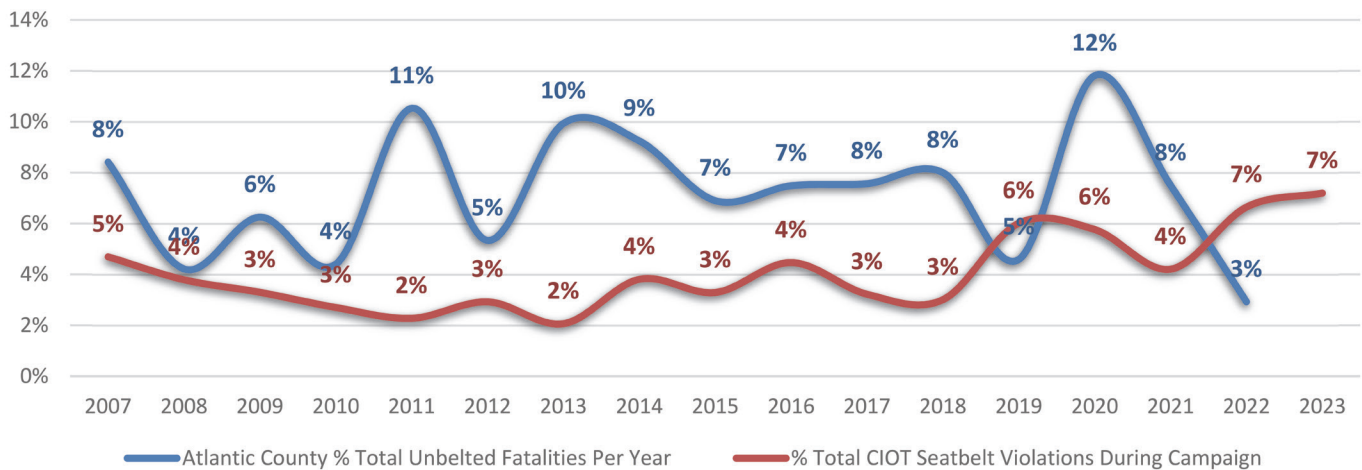

Atlantic County CIOT Seatbelt Violations
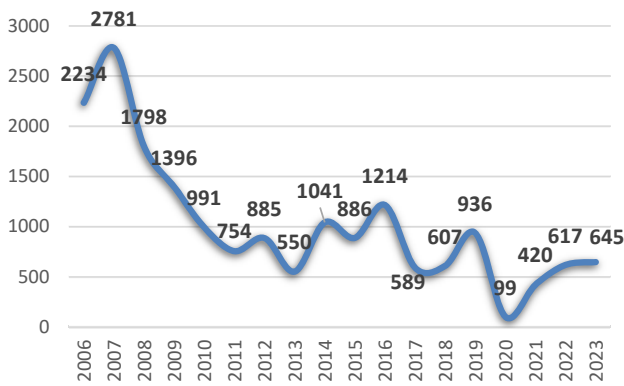
Atlantic County CIOT Seatbelt Violations Per Day

Atlantic County - % of Total Unrestrained Fatalities vs % of Total CIOT Seatbelt Violations

RECENT LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS

The following highway safety legislation was approved or enacted during calendar year 2023.

P.L. 2023, c.55

AN ACT requiring electronic transmission of crash reports and amending R.S.39:4-131.

   BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. R.S.39:4-131 is amended to read as follows:

Accident reports; availability.

   39:4-131. The Department of Transportation shall prepare and supply to police departments and other suitable agencies, forms for accident reports calling for sufficiently detailed information with reference to a motor vehicle accident, including the cause, the conditions then existing, the persons and vehicles involved, the compliance with P.L.1984, c.179 (C.39:3-76.2e et seq.) by the operators and passengers of the vehicles involved in the accident, whether the operator of the vehicle was using a cellular telephone when the accident occurred, and such other information as the Commissioner of Transportation may require.

   Every law enforcement officer who investigates a vehicle accident of which report must be made as required in this Title, or who otherwise prepares a written or an electronic report as a result of an accident or thereafter by interviewing the participants or witnesses, <u>shall electronically transmit a report of such accident to the department, on forms furnished by it and in the electronic format prescribed by the department, within five days after the law enforcement officer's investigation of the accident.</u>

   The New Jersey Department of Transportation shall adopt, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations to require law enforcement officers to electronically transmit crash reports required to be prepared pursuant to this section.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved May 8, 2023.