

The Illinois Text Messaging Ban

According to the new law:

“A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a roadway while using an electronic communication device to compose, send or read an electronic message.”

The law defines an electronic message as:

“Electronic message” includes, but is not limited to electronic mail, a text message, an instant message, or a command or request to access an Internet site.”

ON JANUARY 1, 2010, IT WILL BE ILLEGAL (in the State of Illinois) to

- Send or read a text message while your car is in traffic, unless fully stopped due to a blocked roadway (such as a train crossing). A stop sign or stop light does NOT waive this restriction. You must place the car in park or neutral gear, or pull over to the side of the road and stop.
- Send or read an email message while your car is in traffic, unless fully stopped due to a blocked roadway (such as a train crossing). A stop sign or stop light does NOT waive this restriction. You must place the car in park or neutral gear or pull over to the side of the road and stop.
- Use a cell phone in a SCHOOL or CONSTRUCTION zone without the use of a hands-free device. In other words, you cannot HOLD the cell phone while using it. You must use a device (such as a Bluetooth headset or ear bud) which allows you to keep both hands on the wheel. To use such a device you must have a compatible phone and must purchase and install the hands-free device itself. Contact your cellular provider for specific information about products and services available for your cell phone.

Fines for violation of these laws will start at \$75.00, with higher fines expected for the most serious infractions. Obviously, no fine can ever compensate for injuries or loss of life.

The law does NOT apply to use of a navigation device, such as a GPS system. You can get more information on [Illinois Driving Laws](#).