

Approved October 2017

## *Distracted and Impaired Driving*

Revised with current title  
October 2017

Revised titled “Addressing  
the Public Safety Dangers  
Associated with Impaired  
or Distracted Driving”  
October 2011

Approved titled “Legal  
Sanctions and  
Rehabilitation for Driving  
Under the Influence”  
January 2004, replacing  
“Alcohol Abuse and Motor  
Vehicle Safety” approved  
April 2003 and “Legal  
Sanctions for Drunk  
Driving” approved June  
2003

In recognition of the significant public safety dangers associated with drivers who are impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs, as well as by those who engage in distracted driving<sup>1</sup>, the American College of Emergency Physicians:

- Encourages public education about the dangers of impaired, intoxicated, and distracted driving.
- Discourages the use of handheld electronic mobile devices while driving motorized vehicles or maneuvering other vehicles.
- Recognizes that pedestrians may also be distracted by the use of handheld electronic mobile devices.
- Encourages research to quantify the magnitude and severity of injuries to distracted pedestrians and drivers using electronic mobile devices and encourages research involving prevention of these injuries.
- Support measures that enhance the safety of both the offender and the general public and legal sanctions for persons convicted of driving while impaired, intoxicated, or distracted.
- Supports innovative technologies that discourage and reduce driver distraction and impairment.
- Recognizes that drowsy driving is potentially another form of impaired driving and encourages continued research into its consequences and increasing public awareness of its dangers.
- Advocates toxicological screening of drivers by law enforcement officials in crashes involving fatality or serious injury.
- Advocates for education efforts regarding the hazards of binge drinking and other substance abuse, as these activities are often associated with impaired driving.
- Opposes legislation providing permissive or mandatory reporting of the results of patient toxicological screening which conflict with the appropriate role of physicians in the physician-patient relationship.
- Opposes legislation that relieves insurance companies of financial responsibility of otherwise insured losses incurred by beneficiaries who suffer the losses due to the actions of those distracted, intoxicated, or impaired while driving.

<sup>1</sup> Distracted driving is defined in accordance with the definition provided at [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov), a web site developed for the U.S. Department of

Transportation, which states that “distracted driving is any non-driving activity a person engages in while operating a motor vehicle. Such activities have the potential to distract the person from the primary task of driving and increase the risk of crashing.” Driving includes but is not limited to automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, bicycles, skateboards, and watercraft.