



**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CELLPHONE ILLEGAL TO HOLD WHILE DRIVING IN VIRGINIA, STARTING 1/1/21**

PURCELLVILLE, Va., December 21, 2020 - Due to a new traffic law, Virginia Code § 46.2-818.2, going into effect on January 1, 2021, it will be unlawful for any person to hold a handheld personal communications device (e.g. cellphone) while driving. However, there are exceptions to the law, such as drivers who are parked, or stopped, reporting an emergency, or driving an emergency vehicle. It will be considered a primary offense, meaning police can pull you over if they see you on your phone, while driving a motor vehicle in the state of Virginia. Penalties for violating this law include \$125 for a first offense, and \$250 for a second offense. Breaking the law in a highway work zone is punishable by a mandatory \$250 fine.

The exact text of Virginia Code § 46.2-818.2 reads:

§ 46.2-818.2. (Effective January 1, 2021) Use of handheld personal communications devices in certain motor vehicles; exceptions; penalty.

A. It is unlawful for any person, while driving a moving motor vehicle on the highways in the Commonwealth, to hold a handheld personal communications device.

B. The provisions of this section shall not apply to:

1. The operator of any emergency vehicle while he is engaged in the performance of his official duties;
2. An operator who is lawfully parked or stopped;
3. Any person using a handheld personal communications device to report an emergency;
4. The use of an amateur or a citizens band radio; or
5. The operator of any Department of Transportation vehicle or vehicle operated pursuant to the Department of Transportation safety service patrol program or pursuant to a contract with the Department of Transportation for, or that includes, traffic incident management services as defined in subsection B of § [46.2-920.1](#) during the performance of traffic incident management services.

C. A violation of this section is a traffic infraction punishable, for a first offense, by a fine of \$125 and, for a second or subsequent offense, by a fine of \$250. If a violation of this section occurs in a highway work zone, it shall be punishable by a mandatory fine of \$250.

For the entire code, please visit

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter8/section46.2-818.2/>

The Purcellville Police Department would like to remind drivers to help keep our roads safe, by keeping your hands off your cellphones.

**The Town of Purcellville, Virginia**

“Purcellville-your small Town, where history and progress intersect and people prosper,” is an award-winning town of over 10,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 12<sup>th</sup> year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, which has been converted to a multi-use trail from Alexandria, VA to Purcellville, the Town has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiquing, equestrian activities, farmer’s markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at [www.purcellvilleva.gov](http://www.purcellvilleva.gov).

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