

# Iowa

## Speed Limits: 1994 and 2004

State	Limited Access Rural Interstates		Limited Access Urban Interstates		Other Limited Access Roads		Truck Speed (Y or N)
	1994	2004	1994	2004	1994	2004	
Iowa	65	70	55	70	55	65	N

Iowa reported that speed limits apply to all roadways, except that limits for Rural Four-Lane Expressways were increased to 70 mph. The state has no separate speed limit for trucks.

## Speeding-related Data

Iowa collects speeding-related crash data from two elements on the state's motor vehicle crash report form: driving too fast for conditions and exceeding posted limits. Iowa collects speeding-related citation data, but only from citations issued by the state patrol. Aggressive driving is not defined in state statutes. No data is collected about aggressive driving.

## Proportion Speeding-related Crashes

Year	Speeding-related Fatal Crashes	Speeding-related Injury Crashes	State Police Speeding Tickets
2003	12%	8%	102,145
2002	12%	8%	113,755
2001	12%	8%	95,882

Iowa reported the percentages of both fatal and injury crashes has remained relatively unchanged in recent years. The state is not able to breakout speed data to identify over-representation by any specific geographic area, race, ethnic group, gender, age or other grouping.

## Efforts to Reduce Excessive Speeding

**Educational** – Two main activities in this area include 1) public education and information programs, including speeding, serious moving violations, occupant restraint and impaired driving; and 2) fourteen safety education officers employed full time by the state patrol who conduct thousands of public education activities each year, with speeding and speeding violations being an integral and important part of this effort.

**Engineering** – Iowa fully considers operator speed in the design of new roads, establishing speed limits on existing roads and in road resurfacing and restoration (3R) projects. All 3R projects now involve safety audits prior to renovation, including evaluation of speed-related signing and other issues.

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Enforcement – Speeding-related enforcement is a universal part of all enforcement contracts, including those where impaired driving or occupant protection compliance are a primary focus. Speeding citations and warnings are the most prevalent violations cited by enforcement officers in each major enforcement program. In addition to overtime enforcement support, the state highway safety office provided speeding-related enforcement equipment, including radars and laser speed detectors to over 100 law enforcement agencies statewide in recent years. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2004 alone, over 77,000 speed citations and warnings resulted from highway safety funded initiatives, as shown below:

Program	Speeding Citations & Warnings
402-Alcohol	4,465
402-Occupant Protection	12,631
402-Police Traffic Services	17,000
410-Alcohol Incentive	14,100
157-STEP	29,153
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>77,349</b>

Speeding-related enforcement actions were more than twice as numerous as the next leading category of violations (77,349 speeding-related enforcement actions versus 37,918 occupant protection enforcement actions.)

Funding levels specifically related to speeding-related programs must be estimated. The estimated percentage of Iowa's federal highway safety dollars committed to speeding is 27 percent. This figure has remained consistent for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2003, 2004 and 2005. State funding levels are relatively small and are used to support personnel expenses. For STEP, Iowa estimated that 35 percent of the federal and state funds are used for speeding-related activities. This level has been consistent for FFY 2003, 2004 and 2005.

Iowa reported a substantial safety benefit from speeding enforcement programs, complemented by strong public information and education efforts. In 2002, Iowa reached a 57-year low in the number of traffic deaths of 405 persons. While fatalities rebounded in 2003 to the 2000-2001 levels of 443 deaths, 2004 saw another record low with 387 deaths. This is the first time traffic fatalities were below 400 since 1945. A preliminary estimate of 1.19 fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) for 2004 represents an all-time low for the state and a figure well below the 2003 national rate of 1.48 per 100 million VMT.

## Public Perception

Iowa's state highway safety office felt the motoring public believes police generally give a cushion in enforcing the posted speed limit because it is realistically impossible, both physically and from a public policy standpoint, to have a zero tolerance policy towards operators' speed. The state reported that many, but certainly not all, motorists assume a tolerance of 5 mph under most driving circumstances.