

Pennsylvania

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	
Pennsylvania	55	65	55	65	55	65	N

Speed limits do not apply to all roadways within the state. In each instance of a posted 65 mph limit, an engineering and traffic study is performed to document that the speed limit is appropriate. Pennsylvania does not have a separate speed limit for trucks.

Speeding-related Data

Pennsylvania department of transportation conducts spot speed studies, usually performed manually with a radar gun and tally sheet at specific locations on roadways exhibiting some sort of safety concern. Studies are also conducted for particular projects resulting from requests from municipalities. Speed data is also collected automatically on interstate highways, expressways and other major thoroughfares through automatic traffic data collection devices embedded in the roadway surface. Additionally, the state crash report form contains space to indicate “contributing driver actions” as a crash factor. One of these contributing driver actions is “speeding”. Pennsylvania does not collect speeding citation data, but does collect speeding-related conviction data.

Pennsylvania also collects data about aggressive driving. Aggressive driving is defined by policy as “the combination of actions and behaviors by an individual who operates a motor vehicle with disregard for public safety.” The state also identifies aggressive driving statistically through “contributing driver actions” from the police crash report form:

- Driver fleeing police (police chase)
- Improper/careless turning
- Turning from wrong lane
- Proceeding without clearance after stop
- Making improper entrance to highway
- Running red light
- Failure to respond to other traffic control device
- Making improper exit from highway
- Careless passing or lane change
- Passing in no passing zone
- Running stop sign
- Tailgating
- Making illegal u-turn
- Sudden slowing or stopping
- Speeding
- Driving too fast for conditions

Proportion Speeding-related Crashes

Year	Fatalities (Percent Total)	Major Injuries (Percent Total)	Convictions: Speeding	Convictions: Failure to Head Traffic Control Device
1999	204 (13%)	748 (14%)	261,019	200,931
2000	194 (13%)	703 (14%)	255,955	212,323
2001	256 (17%)	988 (20%)	242,234	230,879
2002	483 (30%)	Data Not Available	232,691	240,805
2003	443 (28%)	Data Not Available	196,222	236,355

Efforts to Reduce Excessive Speeding

Pennsylvania is piloting a new “safety corridor” project where fines for moving violations such as speeding are doubled in certain corridors selected by an engineering study. The pilot program will study the effects of the signs and active, visible enforcement on vehicle speeds and following distances. Pennsylvania also uses speed display boards on roadways with a history of speeding vehicles, as studies have shown that vehicle speeds are reduced in the short term in the vicinity of the speed display board during its deployment.

Pennsylvania includes speeding as a component of Selective Traffic Enforcement Programs (STEP), designed to increase traffic safety and reduce the number of crashes through innovative traffic enforcement operations. STEP targets specific areas with a high incidence of crashes and traffic violations. Enforcement locations and times are selected based upon analysis of traffic volume, crash data, frequency of traffic violations and traffic conditions, as well as geographic and temporal factors. A review of patrol and traffic related data captured from computer-based “Prophecy Program” and the “Automated Incident Memo System” (AIMS) is utilized to target enforcement locations. The objective is to direct appropriate enforcement efforts toward violations that are likely to cause crashes. Speeding-related enforcement programs, such as radar and *Operation State Police Aerial Reconnaissance Enforcement* and targeted enforcement (including aggressive driving) is identified through analysis. The state has adopted several speeding-related enforcement programs designed to detect violators using non-traditional means. Examples are *Operation Chameleon*, a program where troopers pose as disabled motorists in cargo vans and passenger cars. Radar units are operated from within the vehicle, and information is radioed to a marked patrol unit situated within sight of the chameleon vehicle. *Operation Yellow Jacket* is a similar concept, using troopers posing as department of transportation workers.

Pennsylvania estimated federal highway safety funds in the amount of \$450,000 was expended in 2003 and again in 2004 on speeding-related activities, with \$1,100,000 anticipated in 2005. Pennsylvania reported speeding-related and aggressive driving fatalities in 2003 are down from 2002 levels.

Public Perception

Pennsylvania’s state highway safety office felt the motoring public believes police give a cushion in enforcing the posted speed limit. The state noted Pennsylvania law allows for a five mph cushion for police using radar (only the state police can use radar by law), and a 10 mph cushion for police using other speed timing devices where the legal speed limit is less than 55 mph (municipal police.)