

Florida

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 | |
| Florida | 65 | 70 | 55/65 | 55/65 | 55/65 | 65/70 | N |

Speed limit changes do not apply to all roadways. The changes applied only to the interstate highway system and other limited access roadways outside of urban areas with a population of less than 5,000 with at least four lanes and a median strip. The maximum speed in any residential or business district is 30 mph. In both years, the maximum speed limit in these areas may have been reduced to 25 miles per hour (1994) and 20 or 25 miles per hour (2004) if after an investigation it was deemed reasonable. In all other areas the maximum speed limit was 55 miles per hour for both years. The state has no specialized speed limits for trucks.

Speeding-related Data

Florida collects speeding-related crash data using the exceeded safe speed limit and exceeded posted limit data elements. Florida has an aggressive driving statute, but currently does not formally collect aggressive driving data other than a check box on the citation form indicating the officer deemed the infraction an act of aggressive driving as defined in Florida law. Florida statute defines “aggressive careless driving” as committing two or more of the following defined acts simultaneously or in succession: exceeding the posted speed limit; unsafely or improperly changing lanes; following another vehicle too closely; failing to yield right of way; improperly passing; violating traffic control and signal devices.

Proportion Speeding-related Crashes

| Year | Speeding-related Fatalities (Percent Total) | Speeding-related Injuries (Percent Total) |
|------|---|---|
| 2003 | 464 (14.89%) | 5001 (3.60%) |
| 2002 | 498 (15.84%) | 5002 (4.00%) |
| 2001 | 446 (14.80%) | 5132 (3.53%) |

Florida reported the following speeding citation information:

| | 2001 | | 2002 | | 2003 | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Highway Patrol | All Others | Highway Patrol | All Others | Highway Patrol | All Others |
| Exceeded 55 | 78,437 | 50,019 | 37,875 | 33,052 | 4,933 | 3,497 |
| Exceeded 65 | 40,640 | 6,792 | 18,053 | 4,669 | 914 | 124 |
| Exceeded Posted Speed | 205,342 | 666,411 | 330,266 | 755,391 | 388,862 | 766,356 |
| Speed Unsafe for Conditions | 1,667 | 16,124 | 2,568 | 19,752 | 1,543 | 21,027 |
| Total | 326,086 | 739,346 | 388,762 | 812,864 | 396,252 | 791,004 |

Florida analyzed speed data for over representation to create a Highway Safety Matrix each year to rank cities and counties in all traffic safety areas, including speeding. The matrix is based on fatalities and severe injury crashes. While the matrix does provide geographical information on where the most speeding-related crashes occur relative to population, it does not provide for gender, race, ethnic group or other grouping.

Efforts to Reduce Excessive Speeding

Florida targets specific activities and programs toward reducing excessive speed. In the area of training, during fiscal year 2004, the following classes were provided:

- Three Police Traffic Radar Instructor classes – 23 total students
- Three Police Traffic Laser Instructor classes – 20 total students

Because Florida requires that a radar or laser operator be certified through Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the instructor training classes enable officers to become radar and laser instructors, and thus able to certify personnel to conduct radar and laser speeding-related enforcement within their communities.

During fiscal year 2004, Florida also awarded fifty-one grants to state and local agencies for radar and laser speed measuring units, speed-monitoring trailers, message boards and public awareness items. In addition, funding was provided to traffic unit personnel to specifically target the speeder and the aggressive driver. Grant funded agencies are required to collect local data to identify areas with a high incidence of speed violators, as well as other aggressive driving behaviors. Specialized random enforcement operations are conducted in the previously identified areas. All grant-funded officers are provided with radar, laser and video cameras to assist in the prosecution of offenders.

Speeding-related projects constituted approximately 14 percent of the total safety grant funds in 2003, and approximately 16 percent in 2004. The percentage is expected to be about the same in 2005. There are no state funds being used for speeding-related activities.

Florida reported a significant decline in the number of speeding and aggressive driving related fatalities and injuries in the past two years. This is especially true in locations where aggressive enforcement is conducted on a regular basis.

Public Perception

Florida's state highway safety office felt most Florida residents believe police give a 10 mph cushion in enforcing the posted speed limit and issue a ticket at 15 mph over the limit. The exceptions are school and work zones. Additionally, school buses are not permitted to exceed 55 miles per hour at any time.