

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-8

Introduced by Monty Tapp

AN ORDINANCE FULLY REPEALING SECTION 333.11 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES (TEXTING WHILE DRIVING PROHIBITED) IN ITS ENTIRETY EFFECTIVE APRIL 4, 2023, AND ADOPTING A NEW SECTION 333.11 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES (TEXTING WHILE DRIVING PROHIBITED) EFFECTIVE APRIL 4, 2023 UNDER CHAPTER 333 (OVI; WILLFUL MISCONDUCT; SPEED) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF HURON, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, a new Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.204 (Driving While Texting) becomes effective April 4, 2023;

WHEREAS, the City of Huron desires to repeal existing Section 333.11 of the Codified Ordinances (Texting While Driving Prohibited), effective April 4, 2023, and to adopt a new Section 333.11 of the Codified Ordinances under Chapter 333 (OVI; Willful Misconduct; Speed), effective April 4, 2023, consistent with the new Ohio Revised Code 4511.204;

WHEREAS, the Council hereby determined the changes and amendment set forth within this Ordinance, including Exhibit "B", are in the best interest of the City of Huron and its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO:


SECTION 1. That Section 331.11 (Texting While Driving Prohibited) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Huron, Ohio, which current reads as follows: (refer to Exhibit "A" attached), shall be and hereby is repealed in its entirety, effective April 4, 2023.

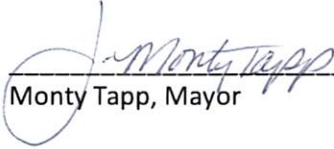
SECTION 2. That a new revised and restated Chapter 331.11 (Existing While Driving Prohibited) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Huron, as attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "B", shall be, and hereby is, adopted and thereafter shall be in full force and effect as of April 4, 2023.

SECTION 3. That it is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the passage of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council and that all deliberations of this Council and any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including O.R.C. §121.22.

SECTION 4. That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and general welfare and it is imperative this Ordinance be effective immediately, **WHEREFORE**, this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and immediately after its adoption.

ATTEST:


Clerk of Council


Monty Tapp, Mayor

ADOPTED:

28 MAR 2023

333.11 TEXTING WHILE DRIVING PROHIBITED.

(a) No person shall drive a motor vehicle on any street, highway, or property open to the public for vehicular traffic while using a handheld electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text-based communication.

(b) Subsection (a) of this section does not apply to any of the following:

(1) A person using a handheld electronic wireless communications device in that manner for emergency purposes, including an emergency contact with a law enforcement agency, hospital or health care provider, fire department, or other similar emergency agency or entity;

(2) A person driving a public safety vehicle who uses a handheld electronic wireless communications device in that manner in the course of the person's duties;

(3) A person using a handheld electronic wireless communications device in that manner whose motor vehicle is in a stationary position and who is outside a lane of travel;

(4) A person reading, selecting, or entering a name or telephone number in a handheld electronic wireless communications device for the purpose of making or receiving a telephone call;

(5) A person receiving wireless messages on a device regarding the operation or navigation of a motor vehicle; safety-related information, including emergency, traffic or weather alerts; or data used primarily by the motor vehicle;

(6) A person receiving wireless messages via radio waves;

(7) A person using a device for navigation purposes;

(8) A person conducting wireless interpersonal communication with a device that does not require manually entering letters, numbers, or symbols or reading text messages, except to activate, deactivate, or initiate the device or a feature or function of the device;

(9) A person operating a commercial truck while using a mobile data terminal that transmits and receives data;

(10) A person using a handheld electronic wireless communications device in conjunction with a voice-operated or hands-free device feature or function of the vehicle.

(c) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, no law enforcement officer shall cause an operator of an automobile being operated on any street or highway to stop the automobile for the sole purpose of determining whether a violation of subsection (a) of this section has been or is being committed or for the sole purpose of issuing a ticket, citation or summons for a violation of that nature or causing the arrest of or commencing a prosecution of a person for a violation of that nature, and no law enforcement officer shall view the interior or visually inspect any automobile being operated on any street or highway for the sole purpose of determining whether a violation of that nature has been or is being committed.

(d) Whoever violates subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

(e) A prosecution for a violation of Ohio R.C. 4511.204 does not preclude a prosecution for a violation of a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance based on the same conduct. However, if an offender is convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of Ohio R.C. 4511.204 and is also convicted of or pleads guilty to a violation of a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance based on the same conduct, the two offenses are allied offenses of similar import under Ohio R.C. 2941.25.

(f) As used in this section:

(1) "Electronic wireless communications device" includes any of the following:

- A. A wireless telephone;
- B. A text-messaging device;
- C. A personal digital assistant;
- D. A computer, including a laptop computer and a computer tablet;
- E. Any other substantially similar wireless device that is designed or used to communicate text.

(2) "Voice-operated or hands-free device" means a device that allows the user to vocally compose or send, or to listen to a text-based communication without the use of either hand except to activate, or deactivate a feature or function.

(3) "Write, send or read a text-based communication" means to manually write or send, or read a text-based communication using an electronic wireless communications device, including manually writing or sending, or reading communications referred to as text messages, instant messages, or electronic mail.

(ORC 4511.204)

333.11 TEXTING WHILE DRIVING PROHIBITED.

(A) No person shall operate a motor vehicle, trackless trolley, or streetcar on any street, highway, or property open to the public for vehicular traffic while using, holding, or physically supporting with any part of the person's body an electronic wireless communications device.

(B) Division (A) of this section does not apply to any of the following:

(1) A person using an electronic wireless communications device to make contact, for emergency purposes, with a law enforcement agency, hospital or health care provider, fire department, or other similar emergency agency or entity;

(2) A person driving a public safety vehicle while using an electronic wireless communications device in the course of the person's duties;

(3) A person using an electronic wireless communications device when the person's motor vehicle is in a stationary position and is outside a lane of travel, at a traffic control signal that is currently directing traffic to stop, or parked on a road or highway due to an emergency or road closure;

(4) A person using and holding an electronic wireless communications device directly near the person's ear for the purpose of making, receiving, or conducting a telephone call, provided that the person does not manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

(5) A person receiving wireless messages on an electronic wireless communications device regarding the operation or navigation of a motor vehicle; safety-related information, including emergency, traffic, or weather alerts; or data used primarily by the motor vehicle, provided that the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(6) A person using the speaker phone function of the electronic wireless communications device, provided that the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(7) A person using an electronic wireless communications device for navigation purposes, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:

(a) Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

(b) Hold or support the device with any part of the person's body ;

EXHIBIT "B"

(8) A person using a feature or function of the electronic wireless communications device with a single touch or single swipe, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:

(a) Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

(b) Hold or support the device with any part of the person's body ;

(9) A person operating a commercial truck while using a mobile data terminal that transmits and receives data;

(10) A person operating a utility service vehicle or a vehicle for or on behalf of a utility, if the person is acting in response to an emergency, power outage, or circumstance that affects the health or safety of individuals;

(11) A person using an electronic wireless communications device in conjunction with a voice-operated or hands-free feature or function of the vehicle or of the device without the use of either hand except to activate, deactivate, or initiate the feature or function with a single touch or swipe, provided the person does not hold or support the device with any part of the person's body;

(12) A person using technology that physically or electronically integrates the device into the motor vehicle, provided that the person does not do either of the following during the use:

(a) Manually enter letters, numbers, or symbols into the device;

(b) Hold or support the device with any part of the person's body.

(13) A person storing an electronic wireless communications device in a holster, harness, or article of clothing on the person's body.

(C)(1) On January 31 of each year, the department of public safety shall issue a report to the general assembly that specifies the number of citations issued for violations of this section during the previous calendar year.

(2) If a law enforcement officer issues an offender a ticket, citation, or summons for a violation of division (A) of this section, the officer shall do both of the following:

(a) Report the issuance of the ticket, citation, or summons to the officer's law enforcement agency;

(b) Ensure that such report indicates the offender's race.

EXHIBIT "B"

(D)(1) Whoever violates division (A) of this section is guilty of operating a motor vehicle while using an electronic wireless communication device, an unclassified misdemeanor.

(a) Except as provided in divisions (D)(1)(b), (c), (d), and (2) of this section, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than one hundred fifty dollars.

(b) If, within two years of the violation, the offender has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one prior violation of this section or a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than two hundred fifty dollars.

(c) If, within two years of the violation, the offender has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to two or more prior violations of this section or a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance, the court shall impose upon the offender a fine of not more than five hundred dollars. The court also may impose a suspension of the offender's driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary instruction permit, probationary license, or nonresident operating privilege for ninety days.

(d) Notwithstanding divisions (D)(1)(a) to (c) of this section, if the offender was operating the motor vehicle at the time of the violation in a construction zone where a sign was posted in accordance with section 4511.98 of the Revised Code, the court, in addition to all other penalties provided by law, shall impose upon the offender a fine of two times the amount imposed for the violation under division (D)(1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section, as applicable.

(2) In lieu of payment of the fine of one hundred fifty dollars under division (D)(1)(a) of this section and the assessment of points under division (D)(4) of this section, the offender instead may elect to attend the distracted driving safety course, as described in section 4511.991 of the Revised Code. If the offender attends and successfully completes the course, the offender shall be issued written evidence that the offender successfully completed the course. The offender shall not be required to pay the fine and shall not have the points assessed against that offender's driver's license if the offender submits the written evidence to the court.

(3) The court may impose any other penalty authorized under sections 2929.21 to 2929.28 of the Revised Code. However, the court shall not impose a fine or a suspension not otherwise specified in division (D)(1) of this section. The court also shall not impose a jail term or community residential sanction.

(4) Except as provided in division (D)(2) of this section, points shall be assessed for a violation of division (A) of this section in accordance with section 4510.036 of the Revised Code.

(5) The offense established under this section is a strict liability offense and section 2901.20 of the Revised Code does not apply. The designation of this offense as a strict liability offense shall not be construed to imply that any other offense, for which there is no specified degree of culpability, is not a strict liability offense.

(E) This section shall not be construed as invalidating, preempting, or superseding a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance that prescribes penalties for violations of that ordinance that are greater than the penalties prescribed in this section for violations of this section.

(F) A prosecution for an offense in violation of this section does not preclude a prosecution for an offense in violation of a substantially equivalent municipal ordinance based on the same conduct. However, the two offenses are allied offenses of similar import under section 2941.25 of the Revised Code.

(G)(1) A law enforcement officer does not have probable cause and shall not stop the operator of a motor vehicle for purposes of enforcing this section unless the officer visually observes the operator using, holding, or physically supporting with any part of the person's body the electronic wireless communications device.

(2) A law enforcement officer who stops the operator of a motor vehicle, trackless trolley, or streetcar for a violation of division (A) of this section shall inform the operator that the operator may decline a search of the operator's electronic wireless communications device. The officer shall not do any of the following:

(a) Access the device without a warrant, unless the operator voluntarily and unequivocally gives consent for the officer to access the device;

(b) Confiscate the device while awaiting the issuance of a warrant to access the device;

(c) Obtain consent from the operator to access the device through coercion or any other improper means. Any consent by the operator to access the device shall be voluntary and unequivocal before the officer may access the device without a warrant.

(H) As used in this section:

(1) "Electronic wireless communications device" includes any of the following:

EXHIBIT "B"

- (a) A wireless telephone;**
- (b) A text-messaging device;**
- (c) A personal digital assistant;**
- (d) A computer, including a laptop computer and a computer tablet;**
- (e) Any device capable of displaying a video, movie, broadcast television image, or visual image;**
- (f) Any other substantially similar wireless device that is designed or used to communicate text, initiate or receive communication, or exchange information or data.**

An "electronic wireless communications device" does not include a two-way radio transmitter or receiver used by a person who is licensed by the federal communications commission to participate in the amateur radio service.

(2) "Voice-operated or hands-free feature or function" means a feature or function that allows a person to use an electronic wireless communications device without the use of either hand, except to activate, deactivate, or initiate the feature or function with a single touch or single swipe.

(3) "Utility" means an entity specified in division (A), (C), (D), (E), or (G) of section 4905.03 of the Revised Code.

(4) "Utility service vehicle" means a vehicle owned or operated by a utility.

(ORC 4511.204)