



MacDowell Law Group, PC Highlights Virginia Traffic Safety Data

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This report, distributed by MacDowell Law Group, PC, examines newly released federal and state data showing Virginia traffic fatalities declined significantly in 2025.

Virginia recorded 833 traffic deaths in 2025, down from 917 in 2024, a 9.2 percent decrease, according to preliminary state-level data released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in April 2026. The statewide fatality rate fell to 0.93 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.

Virginia's decline outpaced the national trend. NHTSA's early estimate for 2025 projected 36,640 traffic deaths nationwide, a 6.7 percent decrease from 39,254 fatalities in 2024. The national fatality rate fell to 1.10 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, the second-lowest rate in the agency's recorded history, behind only the 1.08 rate recorded in 2014. NHTSA reported that 39 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were projected to see fatality decreases in 2025.

Virginia's own Department of Motor Vehicles reported a preliminary count of 747 traffic deaths for 2025 in early January 2026, before final crash reports were fully processed. The higher, more complete NHTSA total reflects the typical upward revision that occurs as additional fatal crash reports are confirmed throughout the year.

Pedestrians and bicyclists accounted for 153 of Virginia's 2025 traffic deaths, including 138 pedestrians and 15 bicyclists, according to Drive Smart Virginia, a nonprofit traffic safety organization citing state DMV data. The organization has also reported fatality rates roughly eight times higher for vehicle occupants who are not wearing a seatbelt.

Fatal crashes during major holiday travel periods have also drawn continued attention from state law enforcement. Virginia State Police reported seven traffic deaths during the 2026 Memorial Day holiday period, down from 13 in 2025, and issued 405 citations for hands-free driving violations over that same weekend.

Virginia's five-year performance targets tell a more mixed story than the single-year decline suggests. In its 2025 Highway Safety Annual Report, the Virginia DMV reported that the state's five-year rolling average of traffic fatalities stood at 914.4, narrowly missing the state's own target of 913.8 set under its 2022-2026 highway safety plan. The same report noted Virginia was on track to meet its serious-injury reduction target, with a five-year average of 7,012 serious injuries against a target of 7,200.

In 2025, the Virginia DMV's Highway Safety Office launched Country Roads, Safely Home, a data-driven strategy addressing crash patterns in rural communities, which officials have said account for a disproportionate share of fatal crashes relative to population, a contrast to the congestion-related patterns more common in the Northern Virginia region MacDowell Law Group serves.

Virginia is one of a small number of states that follow a pure contributory negligence rule in personal injury cases. Under this standard, an injured party found to bear even a small percentage of fault for a crash is generally barred from recovering any damages from other at-fault parties, a stricter standard than the comparative negligence rules used in most other states, including neighboring Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Virginia law also generally allows two years from the date of a crash to file a personal injury claim.

The federal and state crash data referenced in this release were compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. The figures are presented for general public awareness and are subject to revision as final crash data is processed.

MacDowell Law Group, PC represents car accident victims in Fairfax and throughout Northern Virginia and the surrounding Maryland suburbs.

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