



MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY PATROL PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 5, 2023**

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THE 2023 INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY TRAVEL ENFORCEMENT PERIOD CONCLUDED

Jackson, Miss -The Mississippi Highway Patrol (MHP) concluded the 2023 Independence Day Holiday Travel Period Tuesday, July 4th, at midnight. The enforcement period began on Monday, July 3rd, at 6:00 a.m.

The Mississippi Highway Patrol issued a total of 4,458 citations, made 49 arrests for impaired driving, and cited 508 motorists for occupant restraint violations. MHP also investigated 76 crashes resulting in 30 injuries, with four fatal crashes and four death. The fatal crashes occurred in Chickasaw, Panola, Marion and Itawamba Counties.

FATAL CRASH, CHICKASAW COUNTY, 7/3/2023

On July 3, 2023, at approximately 8:07 p.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal crash on Highway 15 in Chickasaw County.

A 2018 motorcycle driven by 50- year-old Christopher D Mooneyham of Houston, MS, traveled south on Highway 15 when the vehicle collided with a 2013 Chevrolet Sonic traveling north driven by 48-year-old Jesse E Rogers, attempting to turn left onto CR 405. Christopher Mooneyham received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead at the scene. This crash remains under investigation by the Mississippi Highway Patrol.

FATAL CRASH, PANOLA COUNTY, 7/3/2023

On Monday, July 3, 2023, at approximately 3:56 p.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal crash on Highway 315 in Panola County.

A 2020 Nissan Murano driven by 63-year-old Verda Taylor of Sardis, MS, traveled north on US Highway 6 when it collided with a 2016 Peterbilt driven by 55-year-old Charles L. Johnson of Enid, MS, traveling south on Highway 315. Verda Taylor received fatal injuries from the crash. Charles L. Johnson received moderate injuries from the crash and was transported to a local hospital. This crash remains under investigation by the Mississippi Highway Patrol.

FATAL CRASH, MARION COUNTY, 7/3/2023

On Monday, July 3, 2023, at approximately 7:00 p.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal crash on Highway 35 in Marion County.

A 1996 Oldsmobile Cutlass driven by 61-year-old Jerry Raynes of Carson, MS, traveled south on Highway 35 when it collided with a 2009 Toyota Camry driven by 20-year-old Joeana Rego of Columbia, MS, traveling south on Highway 35. Jerry Raynes received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead on the scene. This crash remains under investigation by the Mississippi Highway Patrol.

FATAL CRASH, ITAWAMBA COUNTY, 7/4/2023

On July 04, 2023, at approximately 11:01 a.m., the Mississippi Highway Patrol responded to a fatal crash on Highway 371 in Itawamba County.

A 2005 Toyota Corolla driven by 67-year-old Vernon Williams of Memphis, TN, traveled south on Highway 371 when the vehicle left the roadway, overturning several times. Vernon Williams received fatal injuries from the crash and was pronounced dead at North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo. This crash remains under investigation by the Mississippi Highway Patrol.

Independence Day Holiday Travel Enforcement Period Statistics (Overview)

2023 Independence Day Holiday Enforcement Totals (2 Days)

Citations – 4,458
Seatbelt and Child Restraint – 508
DUI's – 49
Crashes – 76
Fatal Crashes – 4
Fatalities – 4
Motorist Assist – 42

2022 Independence Day Holiday Enforcement Totals (5 Days)

Citations – 7,999
Seatbelt and Child Restraint – 860
DUI's – 168
Crashes – 224
Fatal Crashes – 1
Fatalities – 1
Motorist Assist – 141