

# CAR ACCIDENTS IN NEVADA PRE VS POST-COVID



## COVID VERSUS NON-COVID TRAFFIC: FATALITIES REMAIN TOO HIGH

During the pandemic, there were approximately 30,000 fewer vehicles on roadways in Nevada per day. This is a significant decrease in traffic and does little to take into consideration the massive drop in tourist traffic, rideshare usage, and other outside traffic. While the reduction in traffic was a direct result of COVID19 lockdowns and closures, what many did not foresee coming was the dramatic increase in fatal and serious accidents which occurred during the time when most people were not leaving their homes.



## PANDEMIC TRAFFIC MEANT LESS CAUTION FOR DRIVERS

Unfortunately, what appears to have happened is more drivers threw caution to the wind and engaged in more risky behavior on our roadways. According to a report issued by News4, while some areas of Nevada saw decreases of as much 49 percent during the pandemic, fatal accidents increased over the prior year. More accidents occurred resulting in injury and death, which resulted in Nevada getting red marks for lack of safety.



There were some contributing factors to the increase in accidents, in fact, the Nevada Office of Traffic Safety speculates the three primary forces behind the increased fatalities and accidents include:

- LACK OF SEAT BELT USAGE**  
Nevada does have seat belt laws although drivers may not be stopped for this violation alone. Drivers must have already been stopped before a driver may be cited for lack of safety devices.
- SPEED**  
Speed has always been a factor in roadway accidents. During the pandemic, more people than ever were speeding on our roadways, and some believe this was a result of fewer cars being on our roadways.
- IMPAIRED DRIVING**  
With more people at home, one would think impaired driving would have seen a downward trend, but as it turned out, this was one of the top three causes of accidents during the pandemic.

## RETURNING TO NORMAL TRAFFIC PATTERNS

During 2020, Nevada saw an increase in overall fatalities on our roadways. However, now that traffic is returning to normal levels, this should be cause for concern. Not only are we seeing an influx in tourism, according to travel statistics compiled based on incoming flights at Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority, but we can expect to see this result in more cars being on our roadways, which is likely to cause an increase in accidents.



Unfortunately, there has already been a **surge in fatalities on our roadways**. Currently, the death toll has risen to 114, a 30 percent increase over last year. One could think this is an unfair comparison since most of us were in our homes during this time period last year, but the fact remains, last year's death toll was higher than prior years. Unfortunately, the top three causes of accidents still remain lack of proper safety restraints, speeding, and impaired driving.

## VICTIMS OF ROADWAY COLLISIONS NEED ANSWERS

While we hope traffic accidents level off and begin a downward trend, victims of collisions and family members who have lost loved ones as a result of negligent behavior on our roadways need help and they need answers. They also need to know what rights they have and when they should speak with an attorney for guidance. Victims and surviving family members often have questions and they need to have someone who will guide them through their legal options.



## NEGLIGENT DRIVERS AND THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

Negligence while operating a motor vehicle which results in death leaves families emotionally devastated. Oftentimes, these families will also suffer financially. Not only are they coping with the loss of a loved one, but they are also potentially losing income, they are paying unexpected costs associated with a funeral and burial. The surviving family members may be entitled to file a wrongful death lawsuit when their family member was lost in a fatal accident on Las Vegas roadways.

There is no amount of money which can ever compensate a family who loses someone to a negligent driver. However, the heirs, or personal representative is entitled to file a claim which entitles them to potential damages including pain and suffering, loss of support, and other claims. When you speak with an attorney, you can find out more about these options and help your family recover financially from your loss.

## BAD BEHAVIOR RESULTING IN SERIOUS INJURIES

Drivers who speed on Nevada roadways are a hazard to everyone. Unfortunately, with increased traffic, this trend is likely to worsen in the upcoming weeks and months. Many drivers forget that on unposted roads and in other areas, speed limits are as low as 15 - 25 miles per hour per Nevada's transportation laws. While collisions at these speeds can still happen, typically they will not result in serious injury. However, if you are traveling at 20 miles per hour and someone else is traveling at 60 on the same roadway, the injuries you sustain could be significant.



Impaired driving is also one of the top 10 contributors to accidents on Nevada roadways. One can anticipate since there was little to no decrease in these roadway accidents during the pandemic, we are likely to see more collisions related to this behavior. Impaired drivers make other bad decisions such as driving too fast, ignoring traffic signals, and are likely to engage in other reckless behavior. Pedestrians, motorcyclists, and those who are riding bikes are also at risk from drivers who are operating under the influence.

One collision on our roadways which results in death or injury is too many. Unfortunately, the trajectory we are currently on means there is little chance of moving in the direction of no accidents. Accidents are preventable: in nearly all cases, the bad decisions of other drivers are responsible for the majority of injuries and deaths on the roadway.

Whether you suffered a serious injury on Nevada roadways, or your family suffered a loss because of someone's bad decision, you have certain rights and legal options open to you. These legal options do not last forever, only two years from the date of an accident, or two years from the date you lost a loved one. The time to speak with an attorney who can help you understand your options is today — the sooner you get started, the better. Contact a personal injury lawyer today and find out what recourse you have following a collision — remember, in a post-COVID world, more people will be on our roadways, so be safe out there.

