

Conducting a Distracted Driving Observation Survey

Before Conducting a Survey:

- Determine the date you will conduct the survey. If possible, conduct a pre-check and post-check to show the impact of your distracted driving awareness campaign. You can decide whether you want the survey to be a surprise or whether you want to notify people that it will be occurring on that date.
- Gather your volunteers and have them pair up. Working in pairs is not only safe but it makes the job easier!
- Determine a safe location(s) to observe driver behavior. Keep in mind it is best to conduct the survey where traffic is slowed down, where volunteers can stand a safe distance from traffic, and where traffic goes in the direction that passes closest to the observer (making it easier to spot distracted driving).
- Determine how you will record distracted driving data— there are phone apps available for conducting surveys, or you can always use paper forms (see example).
- Determine whether you will record ALL drivers (tallying both undistracted and distracted drivers) or focus only on recording distracted drivers.
- Determine how long you will gather data (e.g., from 7:25 a.m. until 7:45 a.m.).

During/After the Survey:

- NOTE: Wear high visibility clothing or a safety vest. If at any time you feel the situation is unsafe, stop observing.
- At the pre-determined start time, begin gathering data.
- If the driver is distracted, record the distraction (e.g. eating/drinking, cell phone use, talking to passengers, personal grooming, reaching for an item, etc.).
- Don't stop the flow of traffic and try to keep interactions with drivers/passengers to a minimum.
- At the pre-determined stop time, gather up all of the data from everyone recording it and total it up. Find out what the most common distractions were! If you recorded both undistracted and distracted drivers, you can calculate the percent of distracted drivers by taking the total number of distracted drivers divided by the total number of both distracted and undistracted drivers recorded. Share the results with your school and/or community!

