

ROAD RAGE

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



Special Road Rage Report Defusing Potential Conflicts

- Take the Test: How do you measure up?
- 5 Tips to defeat road rage.
- Are you in danger?
- It could happen to you: a true member story.



— U.S. LAWSHIELD —
EDUCATION INSTITUTE

What is Road Rage?

Most drivers have been there: a fellow motorist is aggressively changing lanes, tailgating, and generally making the road unsafe for everyone else on the road. This level of selfishness can also include speeding, stopping suddenly, honking the horn excessively, and flashing headlights at the driver in front of them. Hostile drivers can make an already stressful situation much worse.

“Road rage” is an American term that first began appearing in news stories in the late 1980s when a series of aggressive driving accidents and shootings occurred on highways near several major cities. Road rage is the criminal behavior that happens when aggressive driving goes unchecked and begins affecting other motorists.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines road rage as the behavior that occurs when an aggressive driver “commits moving traffic offenses

so as to endanger other persons or property.” NHTSA goes on further to say road rage comes about through aggressive and angry behavior including rude gestures, verbal insults, physical threats, or dangerous driving methods targeted toward other drivers to intimidate. This can include assaults with a motor vehicle or other dangerous weapons by the operator or passenger of one motor vehicle on the operator or passengers of another motor vehicle.

NHTSA published a study which shows that between 2008 and 2016, approximately 1,500 people were killed in automotive crashes that had one alarming common denominator: overly aggressive driving. Road rage fatalities are also up nearly tenfold since 2004. The difference between dealing with an annoyed fellow driver or a fuming and dangerous road rager can come down to slowing down and taking a step back.

1,500

Automotive fatalities between 2008 and 2016 attributed to aggressive driving

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

TAKE THE TEST

How Do You Measure Up?

Have you ever flashed your headlights or honked at a driver you perceived to be driving too slowly?

Have you ever used obscene gestures or rolled your window down to scream at another driver?

Do you change lanes rapidly to get around other cars and travel over the speed limit?

Have you ever sped up rapidly past a slow driver, changed back into the slow driver's lane, and hit your brakes to scare them?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you may be prone to road rage.

78%
of U.S. drivers
surveyed (2,705)

admit having
engaged in road rage
over the last year

Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety 2014

Could You Be Unintentionally Causing Others to Lash Out? Ask yourself these questions:

Do you accidentally drive with your high beams on at all times?

Do you text or scroll social media while driving?

Do you change lanes suddenly without checking your blind spots?

Do you accidentally leave your turn signal on for miles at a time?

Do you put on makeup, fix your hair, or eat entire meals while driving?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, you may be provoking road rage in others.

5 TIPS: #1 – DO NOT ESCALATE THE CONFRONTATION

Anger and frustration could land you in prison or worse...

If you find yourself honking at and flipping off a fellow motorist, and that person responds to your angry reaction, you should slow down and collect your thoughts. Snap decisions can have long-term consequences for you and your family.

In a survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, nearly 9 out of 10 respondents said they believed that aggressive drivers were a “somewhat” or “very serious” threat to their personal safety. This study also revealed that nearly 8 million drivers had actually exited their car to confront another driver or even bumped or rammed another car on purpose. The Foundation found that many drivers admitted having let their anger and frustration get the best of them at least once in the past year, engaging in behaviors such as yelling, honking, gesturing at, or purposely tailgating another driver. These actions were attributed to up to 56% of fatal crashes.

WARNING SIGNS

Slow down and try to avoid a fellow motorist who is:

- Driving aggressively
- Making threats
- Approaching your vehicle
- Holding a weapon

Reasons for Road Rage:

Other drivers may become dangerous because of:

- Life stress
- Heavy traffic
- Perceived poor driving



The bottom line: do not engage the other driver in any sort of contact that could lead to an escalation of the situation.

5 TIPS: #2 – DO NOT RESPOND TO INSULTS OR THREATS

Do not respond to verbal threats.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety recommends giving angry drivers room and space, avoiding eye contact, and calling the authorities if the situation escalates to a physical confrontation.

DEALING WITH AN AGGRESSIVE DRIVER

- 1 Be courteous
- 2 Control your anger
- 3 Don't take traffic problems personally
- 4 Avoid making eye contact with an aggressive driver
- 5 Don't make obscene gestures
- 6 Don't tailgate
- 7 Use your horn sparingly
- 8 Don't block the passing lane
- 9 Don't block the right turn lane

66%
of traffic
deaths

can be linked to
aggressive driving

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

If you find yourself confronted by an angry driver, and the situation has deteriorated into a shouting match with the other person, you should stop before any threats are made. It is important to remember the law does not allow you to respond to mere words with force. Unless the other driver has the immediate ability to carry out the threat, the law does NOT justify the use of force or deadly force. The law also does not protect someone who provokes another person into a physical confrontation. If the angry driver exits the car and runs toward you with a weapon in his hand, and you respond with force, you would have a strong defense to prosecution by the State. If you were to use force against verbal threats alone, you may not be able to claim self-defense and could face serious criminal charges and possibly incarceration.

5 TIPS: #3 – CALL 911 IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE

Call 911.

Should the situation escalate to the point where you feel unsafe because of another motorist's actions, get to a safe place and call 911.

When you find yourself in a situation that becomes heated, and the other driver will not break away from the encounter, you should call 911, identify yourself, report you are the victim of a road rage incident, and that you are being threatened. You should give the 911 operator a description of the other driver, their vehicle and location, and if they displayed a weapon. DO NOT describe your actions. Finally, hang up the phone and drive to a safe location.

We have seen many situations where one person believes the encounter is over and drives away only to be stopped down the road by the police because the true road rager called 911 and made a false report that they were threatened by a gun. If you happen to have a gun in your vehicle at the

37%
of road rage
linked traffic
deaths

were attributed to
the use of firearms

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

time of the police stop, and it turns up after a search by the officers, you will most likely be taking a ride downtown and facing criminal charges. The police officer reporting to the scene is operating under the assumption that a person was being threatened by a gun, and a gun was found in your vehicle.

Do not assume that the other driver or even an independent witness will not call 911 to report the incident. This assumption can land you in hot water. Be the first one to dial 911 to report the situation, or you may regret it.

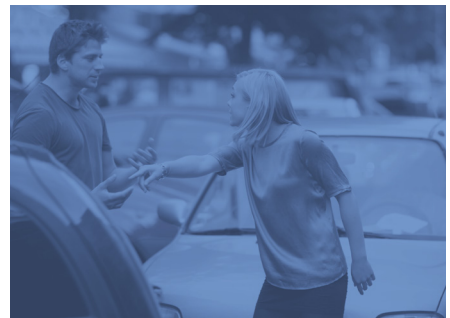
PICTURE THIS



Traffic and life help to build tension between yourself and other motorists.



With tensions raised and tempers short, a horn sounds and it doesn't sit well.



The motorist slams on her brakes and gets out of her vehicle to threaten you.

5 TIPS: #4 – DO NOT CONFRONT THE OTHER DRIVER

Do not get out of your vehicle to confront the other driver.

A face-to-face confrontation with an angry motorist could lead to a deadly consequence.



What should you do if the situation gets out of hand?

BONUS TIP

Don't respond to aggressive drivers with aggression.

If a road rager gets out of their vehicle and heads toward you, pull over to a safe place out of the way of traffic, call 911, and head to the nearest police or fire station, if possible. If you cannot move away safely, remain in your vehicle. Do NOT engage the other driver outside of your vehicle to discuss your differences.

As a matter of standard procedure, the police will often be dispatched to any 911 call regarding potential

road rage. It is highly likely if the police pull someone over under these circumstances and the driver does in fact have a legal firearm in their possession after an exchange of “roadway pleasantries” with a fellow motorist, the firearm owner will very often be arrested with little or no evidence of wrongdoing.

If you have a firearm with you in your vehicle, always keep your cool. There are criminal complaints filed every day in this country based on incidents of people overreacting, calling 911, and conveying false allegations. But these allegations can only be disproven after a full police investigation, lots of grief, and involvement in the criminal justice system for all parties involved.

5 TIPS: #5 – YOUR LAST RESORT: DEADLY FORCE

If all else fails, at what point is deadly force justified?

If you are confronted with an inescapable situation with a road rager and you reasonably believe deadly force is immediately necessary to prevent them from attacking you with deadly force, you will likely be justified.



Knowing the law before you act can mean the difference between a jail cell and the comfort of your own home.

Suppose you have done everything in your power to avoid a confrontation—you ignored the other driver and you drove away from the situation, but he followed you and forced you to stop. He exits his vehicle and approaches you unarmed while you remain within your car. Is deadly force justified in this scenario?

Probably not. It would be difficult to verbalize an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death. Verbal threats alone without the present ability or

means to carry them out are not enough to justify using deadly force.

However, suppose he DID have a weapon in his hand. This would be a different story. Based upon his aggressive and threatening behavior toward you, you may be justified in using deadly force against what you reasonably believe to be deadly force being exerted upon you. This may be especially true if the other driver attempts to unlawfully and forcibly enter your vehicle.



“Words alone do not justify your use of force. Your use of force has to be reasonable, immediately necessary, and it also needs to be proportional to the amount of force that is being displayed against you.”

Emily Taylor
Independent Program Attorney

ARE YOU IN DANGER?

Keep in mind...

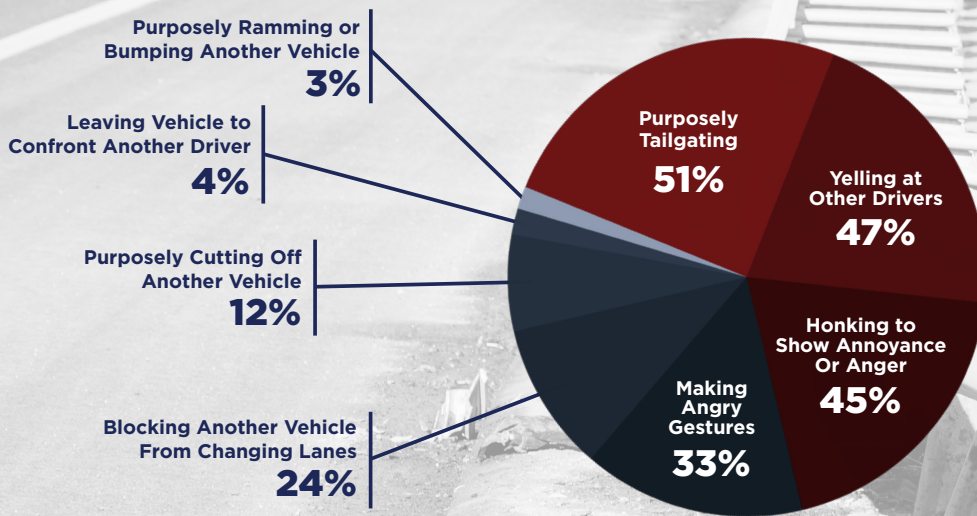
Every state has different laws. If you are travelling between states, please familiarize yourself with each state's laws. If you accidentally break a firearms law, it could be very expensive.

The laws of the various states will differ on how you may legally respond in these types of situations. Make certain you know and understand what is permitted in the state you are located. Don't just assume your actions will be automatically justified. It may come down to whether or not a jury deems what you did to be reasonable under the circumstances.

If you ever find yourself in a situation where you had to use your weapon to defend yourself, make certain you have a plan in place to deal with the legal aftermath. A renowned Legal Defense for Self Defense U.S. LawShield® membership gives you access to a 24/7/365 Attorney-Answered Emergency Hotline, providing you with immediate legal assistance and guidance at the crucial time when you need it most.

Millions of drivers are armed in their vehicles. The American Automobile Association (AAA) reports that more than 4,000 aggressive driving incidents involved weapons, including firearms and knives in 2017.

ROAD RAGE ON DISPLAY*



Source: AAA Foundation's Traffic Safety Culture Index, 2014

* The sum of percentages is greater than total drivers as more than one factor may be present for the same driver. A sample of 2,705 U.S. licensed drivers age 16 and older who had reported having driven at least once in the past 30 days (time of survey), weighted to reflect the U.S. population.

EDUCATION IS YOUR NUMBER ONE DEFENSE

Know what you can do to avoid and survive road rage.

With this publication, you now have the tools to properly react to hot-headed motorists and the many challenges you can be confronted with.

TOPICS LEARNED

Do not escalate the confrontation

Try not to let another's actions get the best of you.

Do not respond to insults or threats

Unless the aggressor has the ability to cause you harm, mere words cannot excuse deadly force.

CALL 911 if you feel unsafe

Only describe the driver, vehicle, location, and whether they have a weapon.

Do not confront the other driver

Stay within the safety of your vehicle. Your last resort is deadly force. Know the laws to prevent your arrest.

“We receive many calls every week regarding bogus allegations of gun displays by our members in traffic. It’s important to remember to stay calm, leave the area, and call the U.S. LawShield hotline before making a statement to the police.”

Edwin Walker

Independent Program Attorney

Come and join us for a live seminar so you can learn more about how to protect yourself and have all of your questions answered.

Receive real-life knowledge and guidance from law enforcement professionals trained to handle life-threatening situations. Then, learn from experienced U.S. LawShield Independent Program Attorneys as they explain how to navigate the legal aftermath of an incident.

LESSONS LEARNED IN THE CLASSROOM



EMPOWER YOU WITH THE SKILLS TO SURVIVE THE DRIVE

It Could Happen To You:

A True U.S. LawShield Member Story

On October 5th, 2017, Joyce was traveling in her truck when she saw another car run a stop sign. To avoid an accident, Joyce was forced to slam on her brakes. Shaken and frustrated by the near collision, she changed lanes, pulled up next to the other car, rolled down her window, and yelled: "Did you not even see me?" In response, the other driver began shouting profanities at Joyce.

Thinking that the interaction was over, Joyce continued down the road, and the other driver tore in front of her, slammed on her brakes, and blocked Joyce's path. At this time, the irate driver exited her car and aggressively approached Joyce's vehicle. Joyce, not knowing whether the woman was going to attack her or her vehicle, removed her pistol (still in its holster) from her purse and placed it on her lap. With the irate woman quickly approaching, coming within 15-feet of her, Joyce quickly shifted her truck into reverse and began backing up. After Joyce created some distance between herself and the woman, she began traveling a short distance away. While waiting at a red-light, Joyce saw the same woman had followed her and was now taking a picture of her truck from behind. In response, Joyce placed her handgun back in her open purse sitting in the front passenger seat, exited her vehicle, took a photograph of the woman and her car, and immediately returned to her truck. In fear that the woman would approach her again (this time from behind) Joyce drove away from the woman.

About a week later, Joyce received a phone call from a police detective. She told the detective exactly what happened to her that day on the road. During this conversation, the detective informed Joyce the woman who was involved in the road rage incident claimed Joyce had fired her handgun at her. Joyce told the detective three times that she would submit her firearm to testing to prove she had not shot her weapon. Joyce also told the detective that she took a photograph of the woman who was chasing her, and she texted the photograph to the detective. The detective was polite and told her that he would speak to the judge and call her back in a few days. The detective never called Joyce back. A S.W.A.T. team raided her house on November 27, 2017 and placed her in custody for Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon.

Joyce was eventually able to bond out of jail and received a court date with the Grand Jury months later. She was finally No Billed by the Grand Jury thanks to her lawful actions, her willingness to testify, and the work of the Independent Program Attorneys of U.S. LawShield. Joyce's nightmare was finally over.

If you find yourself in Joyce's shoes, don't forget to call 911 when it is safe and report you were the victim of a crime. As this true story shows, even following the law can land you in jail for a felony.

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