



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
Community/Media Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

Re: Back to School Traffic Safety

Date: August 28, 2020

The first week of school consistently produces increased pedestrian traffic, as well as vehicular traffic, on the Hernando County roadways. **Drivers should be mindful of the following:**

- Many students will be walking and/or riding bicycles to school along the sidewalks and county roadways
- Parents should ensure that children who ride bicycles wear properly fitting helmets
- Expect heavy traffic back-ups in school zones
- Parents should have children ride school buses when bus routes are available – alleviating unnecessary traffic in school zones
- Motorists should avoid school zones if at all possible
- Be patient and drive carefully
- The first few weeks of school are always extra busy so leave plenty of time to travel
- When a school bus stops and the red lights are flashing – traffic approaching from **either direction** is required to stop
- Reduce or eliminate any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings
- Put down the phone
- Do not text and drive
- If you have any type of emergency or get into an accident, call 9-1-1 immediately
 - o tell the operator the location of the emergency
 - o answer all of the questions appropriately
 - o emergency vehicles are dispatched immediately – answering the dispatcher's questions does not delay the response.

“Even in normal school years, the first week of school can be stressful for every commuter,” said Hernando County Sheriff Al Nienhuis. “This year will be like none other in recent

history. We all need to be both patient and vigilant as our youngest citizens make their way to school. Please be especially careful of distracted children walking and riding bicycles.”

The Office of Sheriff:

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.