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## COVID LOCKDOWN LED TO RISE IN PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS

BY ROSEN & OHR, P.A. | PERSONAL INJURY

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Most would assume that the pandemic lockdown beginning in 2020 would have led to fewer pedestrian accident injuries and fatalities since there were fewer vehicles on the roads. However, the number of U.S. pedestrian fatalities actually rose in the first half of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019, according to a report from the [Governors Highway Safety Association](#).

Many of these crashes were due to driver negligence. Drivers have a responsibility to operate their vehicles with the utmost care and caution when pedestrians are nearby. When they drive carelessly or recklessly and fail to see a pedestrian in a crosswalk or near traffic, it is invariably the pedestrian who will pay the price.

If you were injured in a crash, the Hollywood, Florida, pedestrian accident lawyers at [Rosen & Ohr, P.A.](#), can help you pursue the fair compensation you need to recover. [Contact us](#) to learn more about your legal options in a free consultation.

## Trends in Pedestrian Accidents

Walking down the street or crossing the road shouldn't be a dangerous undertaking. Unfortunately, pedestrians are vulnerable to serious injuries and even death when they are hit by vehicles driven by careless or reckless drivers.

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In 2019, the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#) recorded 6,205 pedestrian deaths, just a 2.7% decrease in the number of fatalities from 2018. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), in 2017, there were 5,977 pedestrian deaths from car crashes, as well as an estimated 137,000 pedestrians treated for nonfatal crash-related injuries.

More recently, research suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the number of pedestrians injured or killed in car collisions. Unfortunately, the trend was not a positive one.

In the first six months of 2020, the number of U.S. pedestrian fatalities was, at 2,957, actually slightly higher than the number of pedestrian fatalities in the first six months of 2019. That is according to the [Governors Highway Safety Association \(GHSA\)](#) report based on data from the NHTSA. This statistic is surprising due to the fact that there were far fewer cars on the roads due to stay-at-home orders.

Similarly, the rate of pedestrian fatalities per 1 billion miles of vehicle travel rose 20 percent when you compare the first six months of 2020 to the same period in 2019. The pedestrian fatality rate was 1.8 in 2019, and it rose to 2.2 in 2020.

In Florida, pedestrians are especially vulnerable. Across the U.S., Florida ranked as the third most dangerous state for pedestrians, behind only California and Texas. There were 332 pedestrian deaths in Florida from January to June 2020, as compared to 121 in North Carolina, the state that ranked fourth after Florida. There were seven states that had more than 100 pedestrian deaths. The remaining 43 states had less than 100, and Vermont had just one pedestrian death.

# How Pedestrian Accidents Happen

The findings from the GHSA showed many pedestrian deaths actually happened away from intersections, in the dark, and on local roads. With the rising number of SUVs and light trucks on the road, the number of pedestrian deaths involving these vehicles also rose.

With a lower number of vehicles on the road and less congestion as a result of the pandemic, traffic tended to move at a higher rate of speed. Speed is a [primary risk factor for car accidents](#) with pedestrians. Other key risk factors include:

- Distracted driving, such as texting while driving or adjusting the controls on the stereo or navigation system

- Driving while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or medications

- Fatigued driving, which can affect judgment, vision, and reflexes

- Reckless or careless driving, such as speeding, tailgating, running a red light or stop sign, or failing to yield the right of way

- Inexperienced driving, which may result in a driver failing to look for pedestrians

## Pedestrian Injuries

The injuries suffered in a pedestrian accident can be devastating.

Some of the most common injuries include:

- Traumatic brain injuries (ranging from concussions to severe TBIs)

- Back and neck injuries

Spinal cord injuries (including paralysis)

Internal organ injuries

Amputations

Lacerations and bruises

Facial and dental injuries

Broken bones

## Pedestrian Accident FAQs

Our pedestrian accident lawyers in Hollywood, Florida, will take the time to listen to your story and discuss the details of your claim.

Here are some common questions we receive regarding car accidents with pedestrians.

### Who qualifies as a pedestrian?

A pedestrian is a person who is “afoot” and traveling without the assistance of a motorized vehicle. This includes individuals in wheelchairs, even if they are using motorized wheelchairs. Skaters and skateboarders in a crosswalk or driveway are also considered pedestrians.

### When do pedestrians have the right-of-way?

In Florida, it is the driver’s responsibility to do everything possible to avoid a collision with a pedestrian. In most cases, pedestrians crossing at crosswalks have the right of way. When a driver is turning, the driver must stop for pedestrians and not cause a pedestrian to make a special effort to avoid a collision. Motorists must also stop and yield to pedestrians at:

Intersections with traffic controls when the signal indicates the pedestrian may cross

Intersections with stop signs

Intersections with crosswalks

Marked mid-block crossings

Driveways

Alleyways

Private roads

Pedestrians should not suddenly leave the curb or walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close that it's unable to stop or yield.

## How common are pedestrian accidents?

According to the [CDC](#), there is a pedestrian accident death every 88 minutes in the U.S. The rate of U.S. pedestrian accident fatalities rose in 2020, and, unfortunately, the number of pedestrian accident deaths in Florida is higher than in other regions in the U.S.

## How can you prevent pedestrian accidents?

Both drivers and pedestrians can take steps to prevent an accident. Drivers should look for and remain aware of nearby pedestrians at all times. They should also avoid using alcohol or medications that may impact their ability to drive. Pedestrians should wear reflective clothing at night and use only one earbud if they are listening to music while walking.

Whether you are a pedestrian or the driver of a motor vehicle, it is crucial you stay aware of your surroundings and don't become

distracted.

## Who is at fault for a pedestrian accident?

According to Florida statutes, [drivers of motor vehicles](#) have an increased responsibility to avoid collisions with pedestrians. They must “exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian or any person propelling a human-powered vehicle and give warning when necessary.” The pedestrian accident lawyers from Rosen & Ohr, P.A., can help determine if you have a claim against a negligent driver.

## Contact Our Hollywood, FL, Pedestrian Accident Lawyers Today

If you were injured in a pedestrian-car accident in Hollywood, Florida, don't hesitate to discuss the details of your case with a qualified and caring personal injury attorney. We are dedicated to providing exceptional legal representation and always focus on our clients' needs first. [Contact us](#) at Rosen & Ohr, P.A., for a free consultation.

### Rosen & Ohr, P.A.

Rosen & Ohr, P.A. is a personal injury law firm representing injured clients in [Fort Lauderdale](#), [Hollywood](#), and throughout South Florida.

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