

Questions & Answers



THE SITUATION

Q. How does Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford MSA rank in pedestrian deaths compared to other major metropolitan areas?

A. Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford ranked was ranked the number one most dangerous metro area in the nation for pedestrians, according to Smart Growth America's 2019 Dangerous by Design report (<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>). The top six most dangerous metro areas in the report are all in Florida. Even as traffic deaths of people in cars have decreased, pedestrian fatalities have increased from 2008 to 2017, the report shows.

Q. How many people are injured or killed in Central Florida? Seminole County?

A. Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford MSA recorded 656 pedestrian fatalities over a ten-year period from 2008-2017. In 2017, Seminole, Orange and Osceola counties reported a total of 882 crashes including 84 fatalities. Seminole County alone reported 116 crashes and 11 fatalities that year.

BEST FOOT FORWARD PROGRAM IN SEMINOLE COUNTY

Q. Why Best Foot Forward?

A. On average, three people are injured every day in pedestrian/driver crashes and at least one is killed each week in Metro Orlando. The failure of drivers to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks is a common contributing factor cited in crash reports.

Best Foot Forward is a grassroots pedestrian safety program, operating in Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties, that seeks to reverse this trend by improving driver yielding behavior and courtesy to pedestrians crossing the road. More than a campaign, the program combines persistent education, low-cost engineering applications and sustained high-visibility enforcement of [Florida's driver yield law](#). FLA. STAT. 316.130(b)

Q. Who is part of the Best Foot Forward coalition?

A. Best Foot Forward is a 38-member coalition involving county and city governments, local law enforcement agencies, public school districts, transportation agencies, transit authority, health departments, hospitals and non-profits working systematically to improve the safety of our streets.

Launched in 2012 in Orange County and City of Orlando by Bike/Walk Central Florida, under the leadership Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs, Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings, MetroPlan Orlando Executive Director Harry Barley and former Orange County Mayor Linda Chapin. In 2017, the program expanded to Osceola County, and now in 2019, Best Foot Forward launches into Seminole County and six new jurisdictions.

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Seminole County partners include: Seminole County Government, the Cities of Casselberry, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford and Winter Springs, Seminole County Public Schools, Seminole County School Crossing Guards, LYNX and local law enforcement including the Seminole County Sheriff's Office and the Police Departments of Casselberry, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford and Winter Springs.

Osceola County partners include: the Osceola County Government, the City of Kissimmee, The City of St. Cloud, Osceola County School District, Florida Department of Health in Osceola and law enforcement including the Osceola County Sheriff's Office and the Police Departments of Kissimmee and St. Cloud.

Orange County partners include: Orange County Government, the City of Orlando, Orange County Public Schools, Orlando Health, Winter Park Health Foundation, Orange County Walk-Ride-Thrive, Orlando Stops, as well as law enforcement from the Orange County Sheriff's Office and Orlando Police Department.

Region-wide partners include MetroPlan Orlando, the Florida Department of Transportation, LYNX, and University of Miami's WalkSafe.

Q. Why is Seminole County launching the Best Foot Forward program?

A. As Seminole County's population continues to grow, the leadership in the county and its cities is not satisfied with the consistently high rate of vehicle/pedestrian crashes. Those statistics have contributed to the ranking of number one most deadly area for pedestrians in the nation. The county and a number of city governments are taking steps to reverse this deadly trend, and the Best Foot Forward initiative tackles a critical piece of the problem by convincing drivers to yield to people in crosswalks.

Q. When does Best Foot Forward start in Seminole County?

A. The Best Foot Forward program officially launches at 11 a.m., October 2, 2019, in the Seminole County Commission Chambers. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office and Police Departments from Casselberry, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, Sanford and Winter Springs will initially issue warnings to drivers who fail to yield to people in crosswalks, and after a warning period, ticketing will begin. Community outreach and education is ongoing.

Q. What's the plan?

A. It all starts and ends with saving lives. To accomplish this, Best Foot Forward starts with *educating* drivers and pedestrians about Florida right-of-way laws and the specific behaviors that promote safety for all roadway users.

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Cities, counties, and transportation partners recommend *engineering* strategies to increase driver yielding behavior such as pedestrian crossing signs and rapid flashing beacons.

Operation Best Foot Forward, the multi-jurisdictional, high-visibility *enforcement* action, is scheduled three times a year at specific crosswalk locations to crack down on drivers for failing to comply with Florida's driver yield law.

Q. How are you educating the public about pedestrian safety?

A. The Best Foot Forward campaign targets both pedestrians and drivers. Under the pedestrian category, the focus is on working adults, the elderly and children. Working adults are walking to bus stops and crossing busy streets to travel to work. As for the elderly and children, they are vulnerable because they have difficulty estimating the speed and distance of oncoming cars, especially at night.

Best Foot Forward works in conjunction with local public and private schools, assisted living facilities, businesses, homeowners' associations, clubs and LYNX to educate these groups. Here, local law enforcement and safety advocates can speak to seniors, working adults and children about special considerations when walking.

To target drivers, law enforcement will stop drivers who fail to yield for pedestrians at crosswalks. Media events will be coordinated to film enforcement operations to promote a broader awareness, and public officials will be available to discuss the progress of the campaign and its impact on pedestrian safety. Communication tools such as social media, videos, public service announcements, speaking engagements and community events, will keep pedestrian safety top of mind for Central Floridians.

Q. How are the sheriff's office and local police departments involved?

A. Local enforcement is the best deterrent and most potent way to educate drivers about their responsibilities. Law enforcement will conduct a series of enforcement waves throughout the year. The enforcement will begin with a wave of warnings in Seminole County to raise driver awareness of their responsibilities under Florida law and alert them to the consequences.

Q. What are the current traffic laws for pedestrians and drivers?

A. For traffic rules for drivers and pedestrian rights and responsibilities, go to <http://www.iyield4peds.org/>

Q. What is the fine for violating pedestrian yield laws in the state of Florida?

A. In Seminole County, the penalty for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk is \$166 and three (3) points on your driver's license.

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Q. What are your objectives?

The short-term goals are to increase driver yield rates by 60 percent on roads posted 35 mph and lower, and a 10 percent increase on driver yield rates year over year on roads posted 40 mph and higher. The long-term goal is to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Q. How will you measure the success of the Best Foot Forward campaign?

A. Probe data will be collected at the pre-selected crosswalks measuring the percentage of drivers yielding, before, during and after enforcement and community education initiatives.

Q. Who manages the Best Foot Forward program?

A. Bike/Walk Central Florida administers and manages the Best Foot Forward program on behalf of all coalition partners.

Q. Tell me about Bike/Walk Central Florida.

A. Bike/Walk Central Florida was formed in 2010 as a local chapter of the Florida Bicycle Association, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. The organization's goals are to:

- Reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries by engaging and educating road users, leaders and law enforcement
- Foster civility and respect among pedestrians and operators of vehicles – both motorized and human-powered
- Promote “complete” streets designed for all users
- Encourage biking and walking for fun, fitness and transportation
- IMPACT through Engineering, Education & Enforcement