



## MEDIA ADVISORY

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## For Pedestrian Safety Month, Orange County Deputies and Orlando Police Step Up Crosswalk Enforcement Operations on Sept. 18

*Caution: That pedestrian you fail to stop for may be a police officer*

ORLANDO, Fla. – September is Pedestrian Safety Month and Orlando Police and Orange County Sheriff Deputies are stepping up their crackdown on drivers who fail to yield and stop for people crossing in a crosswalk, as Florida law requires. Starting at 7:30 am on Wednesday, September 18, officers will be at six crosswalks across the county in an effort to raise awareness of the driver yield law and reduce the potential for drivers injuring or killing a person crossing the street.

Included are:

- An enhanced crosswalk, with new sidewalks and a new Rapid Flashing Beacon installed in June to assist kids and adults crossing to school or the LYNX bust stop (Rio Grande Avenue & 40<sup>th</sup> Street)
- A crosswalk where speeding drivers often trap people in the middle of the busy 4-lane road (Apopka-Vineland Rd. north of Lake St.)
- A midblock crossing where a mother and her children were struck by a driver, and the driver never stopped (Pine Hills and El Trio Way)
- A crosswalk reconfiguration to make the Rapid Flashing Beacon more visible for drivers (Edgewater Drive and Shady Lane)
- A crosswalk located on a higher speed road and installed is a Rapid Flashing Beacon used by residents and high schoolers to walk from their apartments to Luther High School (Americana & midblock crossing E. of Texas)

Dubbed **Operation Best Foot Forward**, crosswalk enforcement is part of a greater, comprehensive effort to educate drivers about Florida's driver yield laws and curb the pattern of aggressive behavior towards pedestrians. During the operation, plainclothes deputies and officers cross the street at marked crosswalks, giving drivers ample time to yield as [Florida law requires](#). Drivers who fail to stop may be issued a warning or a citation of \$164 and three points on their license. To date, more than 4,869 warnings and 3,469 citations have been issued to drivers in Orange and Osceola counties during Best Foot Forward crosswalk enforcement operations.

The Greater Orlando Metro Area was ranked #1 most dangerous in the nation for pedestrians, by [Dangerous by Design](#). So far this year, 35 pedestrians have died crossing the street in Orlando and Orange County, according to state reports. That's a trend Best Foot Forward and local law enforcement are working to reverse. Studies show that consistent crosswalk enforcement, combined with grassroots education and low-cost engineering, result in better driver yielding behavior.

Since 2012, when Best Foot Forward was launched in Orange County, the percentage of drivers yielding to people in marked crosswalks has increased from 17% to more than 58% on roads with a speed limit of 35 mph and lower and 1% to 43% on roads 40 mph and higher.

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: Media is invited to *Operation Best Foot Forward* and will have the opportunity to speak to drivers, police officers and pedestrians. Contact Amanda Day at 407-716-8221 (cell). Times and locations below:

### September 18 Operation Best Foot Forward Crosswalk Enforcement Schedule

Crosswalk	Estimated Time	Percent of drivers yielding	Schools & Neighborhoods Nearby
<b>Orlando Police Department</b>			
<a href="#">Edgewater &amp; Shady Lane</a>	7:30-9:00 AM	55% <i>Aug 2014</i>	Princeton ES, Rock Lake ES, Hillcrest ES, Lake Silver ES, College Park MS, Howard MS, Lee MS, Edgewater HS, Sunshine HS
<a href="#">Metrowest &amp; Metrocenter Blvd.</a>	7:30-9:00 AM	49% <i>Feb 2019</i>	Westpointe ES, Metrowest ES, Oakhill ES, Eagle's Nest ES, Metrowest MS, Sunshine HS
<b>Orange County Sheriff's Office</b>			
<a href="#">Rio Grande Ave. &amp; 40<sup>th</sup> St.</a>	9:30-10:30 AM	<i>NEW</i>	Memory MS, Life Skills Charter School, Cataline ES, Luther HS, Pineloch ES, Westminster Academy Charter
<a href="#">Americana Blvd. Midblock East of Texas</a>	9:30-10:30 AM	67% <i>Feb 2019</i>	Palmetto ES, Pineloch ES, Memorial MS, Luther HS
<a href="#">Apopka-Vineland Rd., north of Lake St.</a>	9:30-10:30 AM	9% <i>Jan 2018</i>	Sand Lake ES
<a href="#">N. Pine Hills Road &amp; El Trio Way</a>	9:30-10:30 AM	10% <i>Aug 2014</i>	Rolling Hills ES, Ridgewood Park ES, Meadow Brook MS, Evans HS

#### **Making Progress: Best Foot Forward Program Outcomes in Orange and Osceola Counties from 2012-2019**

- More than 8,000 citations and warnings issued since 2012
- 81 crosswalks enforced by law enforcement
- 40 percent increase – average yielding behavior change at those crosswalks being tracked by Best Foot Forward

#### **About [Best Foot Forward](#) for Pedestrian Safety Program**

The Best Foot Forward for pedestrian safety program is administered by the local non-profit Bike/Walk Central Florida and first launched in Orange County and the City of Orlando in 2012. It expanded to Osceola County, Kissimmee and St. Cloud in 2017 and will be launching in Seminole County in October 2019.

Best Foot Forward was created to reverse the conflict between pedestrians and drivers by focusing on one specific behavior change - getting more drivers to yield for pedestrians at marked crosswalks as [Florida law](#) requires. More than a campaign, Best Foot Forward is a behavior change-based program designed to improve road safety through consistent and persistent education, high-visibility crosswalk enforcement and low-cost engineering at marked crosswalks in close proximity to elementary schools and LYNX bus stops, in urban areas and cross-sections of low and high-speed roads.

### **Best Foot Forward Coalition**

Initiated and administered by Bike/Walk Central Florida, the Best Foot Forward coalition includes: MetroPlan Orlando, City of Orlando and Orlando Police Department, City of Kissimmee and Kissimmee Police Department, City of St. Cloud and St. Cloud Police Department, Orange County Government, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Orange County Public Schools, Osceola County Government, Osceola County Sheriff's Office, Osceola County Public Schools, Lynx, Orlando Health, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Transportation, the University of Miami's WalkSafe program, Winter Park Health Foundation, Orlando's Walk-Ride-Thrive and Orlando Stops.

To learn more, visit [www.iyield4peds.org](http://www.iyield4peds.org).

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