

## CLANCY & DIAZ, LLP

PERSONAL INJURY ATTORNEYS

# Survey shows 1 in 4 teens are scared of driving

About a quarter of unlicensed teenagers are too afraid to drive, according to a recent survey by The Zebra, an insurance comparison site.

The new report reveals approximately 40% of teens believe driving is scary overall, and 23% of unlicensed teens say they've decided not to drive because they're too afraid.

The survey found the following groups of teenagers think driving is frightening:

- 33.3% of boys
- 46.3% of girls
- 16.9% of unlicensed boys
- 25.7% of unlicensed girls
- 51.4% of urban teens
- 35.3% of suburban teens
- 35.1% of rural teens

### Good reason to worry?

It's been shown that teenagers are the most dangerous drivers on the road, as teen drivers are about three times more likely to be involved in a fatal car accident than their older counterparts.

While driver inexperience contributes to some teen crashes, the majority of car accidents caused by teens can be chalked up to distracted driving. Statistics show teen drivers are the most likely age group to become

distracted by a cellphone while driving, with the biggest culprit being texting while driving.

Other forms of cellphone distraction that contribute to teen crashes include checking social media and other apps, playing mobile video games, taking selfies and/or video while driving, browsing the web, and looking at directions.

### What parents can do to help

According to The Zebra report, parental attitudes toward teen driving may be rubbing off on the younger generation. Just about 25% of adults consider driving scary while 58% said they are frightened by the thought of their teenage children getting behind the wheel of a car.

To overcome the fear of driving, both parents and teens can:

- Take part in driver education programs.
- Learn and discuss the rules of the road, especially those that place restrictions on teen driving.
- Talk about the dangers of risky driving behavior, such as texting while driving, drunk driving, and speeding.
- Review what it means to be a safe driver, such as wearing a seatbelt and being aware of your surroundings.

- Select a bigger, heavier vehicle to drive that offers more protection in the event of a car accident.

While teens have good reason to feel nervous about driving, those fears should not prevent them from actually getting behind the wheel of a car. As long as they obey the rules of the road and avoid driving recklessly, teen drivers can be just as responsible as other drivers.

If you or someone you love has been injured in a car accident caused by a teen driver, contact our law firm in Walnut Creek to learn about your legal rights and options.



# Heading in the wrong direction with wrong-way crashes

Among the leading causes of head-on collisions are wrong-way drivers. Tragically, wrong-way crashes are on the rise.

According to a new report by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, wrong-way crashes on divided highways caused an average of 500 fatalities per year from 2015-2018 - up about 34% from the 375 deaths per year during the period of 2010-2014.

Older drivers and those who drive without passengers are typically more in danger of causing a wrong-way crash, but experts agree drunk drivers are by far the single most significant factor in the majority of wrong-way driving crashes.

The National Transportation Safety Board and AAA offer these recommendations to help prevent wrong-way crashes by impaired drivers:

- Have highly visible enforcement operations.
- Conduct DUI checkpoints.
- Install alcohol ignition interlock devices, a tool that will not allow a vehicle to start until the driver gives a satisfactory breath sample.

Along with those who drive under the influence of alcohol, drivers older

than 70 are also at a higher risk of becoming a wrong-way driver. Driver refresher courses, more visible signs and signals, infrastructure improvements, and legislation to help identify physically or cognitively at-risk drivers are all steps analysts believe will help combat the problem.

## What you can do to avoid becoming a wrong-way driver

First and foremost, never drink and drive. Driving sober is by far the most important thing you can do to protect yourself from causing a wrong-way crash.

Other measures you can take include:

- Don't drive after using marijuana, certain medications, and any other substances that will cause you to be impaired.
- If you're tired or fatigued, don't get behind the wheel. Just like drunk driving, fatigued driving has an adverse effect on your judgment, reaction time, and overall ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- Drive with a passenger, when possible. Although this isn't something you can do all the time, research has shown a staggering 87% of wrong-way drivers didn't have any passengers. Riding with

someone else in the car means that person can speak up and alert you if you're about to go the wrong way on a divided highway or road.

Should you be injured or a loved one killed in a crash with a wrong-way driver, contact the legal team at Clancy & Diaz. Our attorneys can aggressively advocate for your best interests and fight for the compensation you deserve.





# How does a contingency fee work?

If you hire an attorney on an hourly basis, you would typically be expected to pay hundreds of dollars upfront or get put on a monthly payment plan.

At Clancy & Diaz, our attorneys operate on a contingency fee basis. That means the fee that we receive for our services is a fixed percentage of the amount of money we recover for a client. A contingency fee bridges the gap between you and the insurance company. It allows you to get a highly skilled personal injury lawyer on your side without any upfront legal costs.

## How are contingency fees determined?

If you hire a lawyer on a contingency fee basis, you only have to pay attorney fees if and when the lawyer secures compensation on your behalf and your case is resolved. Fees are a pre-determined percentage of your financial award, thus the amount your attorney receives in fees is contingent upon the amount of compensation the attorney obtains on your behalf. If your case can't be resolved, your attorney doesn't receive any fees.

Contingency fee agreements are generally to the benefit of the client because the client can get professional legal help without paying anything in advance or out-of-pocket.

## What are the pros of a contingency fee agreement?

Generally speaking, there's little risk and potentially much to gain when you agree to hire a lawyer on contingency. Some of the benefits of a contingency fee arrangement include:

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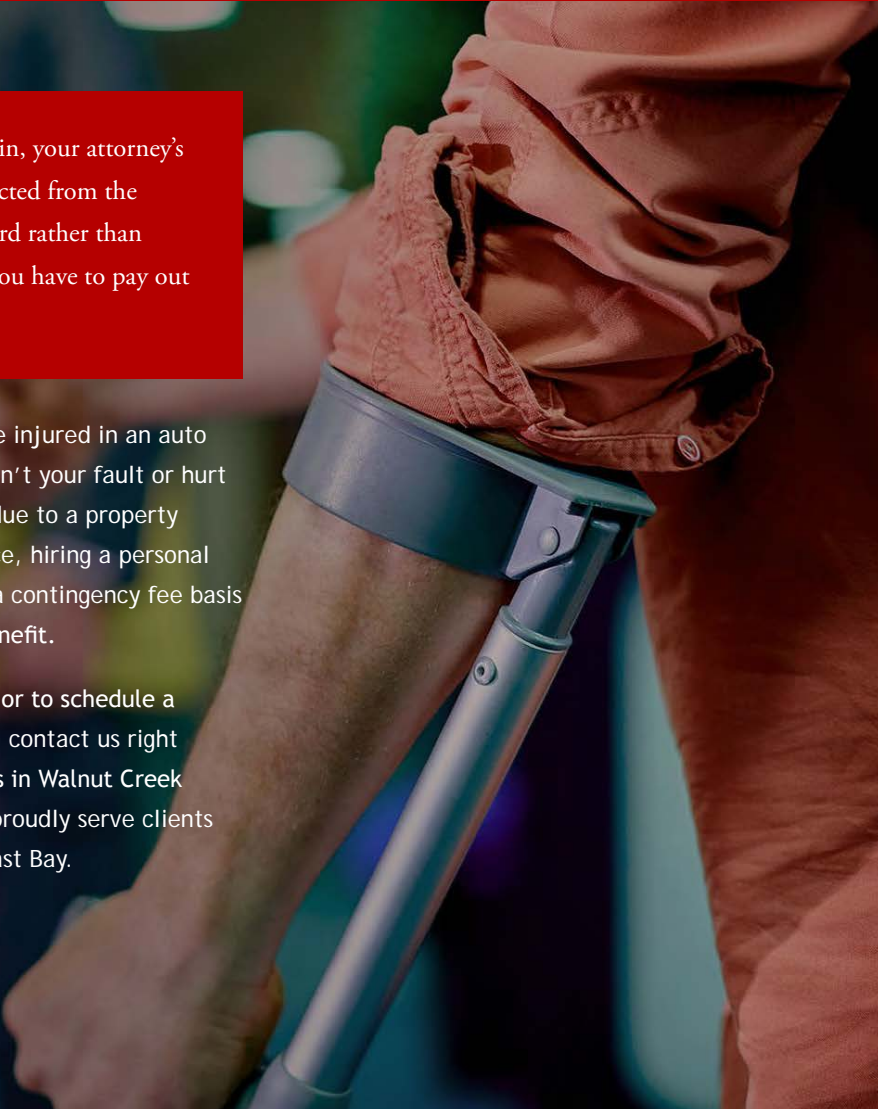
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- It costs you nothing upfront to get access to the court system. The amount of money you have to spend on legal help has no bearing on the outcome of your case, thus your case is ultimately decided on its merit.
- There are no hourly fees, so you can consult with your attorney without being charged. If your attorney wins, you win.
- Your goals are aligned with your attorney, and you can have peace of mind knowing your lawyer will do everything in his or her power to get you the best possible outcome.

- When you win, your attorney's fees are deducted from the financial award rather than being a bill you have to pay out of pocket.



Whether you were injured in an auto accident that wasn't your fault or hurt in a slip and fall due to a property owner's negligence, hiring a personal injury lawyer on a contingency fee basis can be to your benefit.

To find out more, or to schedule a free consultation, contact us right away. With offices in Walnut Creek and Antioch, we proudly serve clients throughout the East Bay.