



For Immediate Release

New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police

Media Contact:

Jonathan Jaffe

908-789-0700

press@njsacop.org

New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police Announces Goal Zero Halloween Enforcement Initiative on October 31

The Fall Safety Pivot — High-Visibility Operations Focused on Pedestrian Safety by Day and DWI Enforcement by Night

TRENTON – October 28, 2026 – The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) today announced a Goal Zero enforcement initiative scheduled for Saturday, October 31, 2026. The all-day and evening initiative will bring together law enforcement agencies for coordinated high-visibility traffic enforcement focused on protecting pedestrians during daytime hours and combating impaired driving after dark.

Halloween, falling on a Saturday this year, presents a uniquely hazardous environment. It coincides with the conclusion of National Pedestrian Safety Month and bridges two core Goal Zero objectives: pedestrian protection and impaired-driving prevention. High volumes of child pedestrians in costumes by day are followed by adult Halloween parties at night, creating a worst-case scenario for traffic safety with unpredictable, vulnerable road users often obscured by darkness and costumes. Research shows pedestrian fatality risk is 43% higher on Halloween evenings than on comparable nights, with children ages 4–8 facing roughly a 10-fold increase in risk. The danger peaks around 6 p.m.—exactly when trick-or-treating activity rises.

“Halloween on a Saturday is one of the most dangerous nights of the year for New Jersey’s roadways,” said NJSACOP President Kevin Carey. “By day, our neighborhoods fill with children in costumes who can be hard to see, and after dark the risk shifts to impaired drivers leaving parties. Our Goal Zero mission is absolute—zero fatalities. We are calling on everyone to slow down, yield to pedestrians, and make the smart choice to drive sober or not at all. Our officers will be highly visible throughout the day and night to ensure families reach their destinations safely.”

To combat these risks, agencies participating in the October 31 detail will conduct high-visibility enforcement operations throughout the day and evening, with a seamless transition that matches the actual risk curve of the holiday. Police departments across New Jersey are banding together for this campaign, adding officers for extra patrols to ensure our children’s safety by day and remove impaired drivers after dark. Parents will notice marked cars in neighborhoods throughout Halloween—reinforcing community trust and the shared commitment to protecting families.

- **Daytime Enforcement:** Agencies will emphasize pedestrian safety, focusing on speed reduction, neighborhood enforcement, and crosswalk compliance. Officers will

coordinate with local trick-or-treat hours, increase lighting awareness, and actively message drivers to slow down and yield to pedestrians before dusk.

- **Nighttime Enforcement:** Operations will pivot to DWI saturation after dark, targeting bar areas and roadways as adult Halloween events begin, reinforcing the message to drive sober or get pulled over.

National data from 2019 to 2024 underscores the danger of Halloween night (6:00 p.m. October 31 to 5:59 a.m. November 1):

- 176 people were killed in crashes that involved a drunk driver with a BAC of .08 or higher.
- More than half (54%) of people aged 21-34 killed in traffic crashes during this five-year period were in drunk-driving crashes.
- Victims in these drunk-driving crashes included 31 pedestrians and 144 drivers and passengers.

The initiative is part of the broader Goal Zero movement, which seeks to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries through coordinated enforcement and education.

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