



For Immediate Release

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Operation Best Foot Forward Begins February 11 to Make Crossing the Street Safer for Students and School Crossing Guards

ORLANDO, FLA. – In recognition of School Crossing Guard Appreciation Day on February 7, the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety program will be kicking off its quarterly pedestrian safety enforcement *Operation Best Foot Forward* - a two-week campaign across Central Florida that aims to reduce pedestrian injuries and deaths through awareness about Florida’s driver yield laws, which provide pedestrians the right-of-way at crosswalks.

From February 11 to February 21, 2025, this high-visibility operation will span seven Central Florida counties: Brevard, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Flagler, and Volusia. The initiative, aligned with FDOT’s Target Zero campaign and MetroPlan Orlando’s Vision Zero Action Plan, aims to reduce traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities to zero. During the operation, plainclothes officers will cross streets at marked crosswalks, allowing drivers adequate time to slow down and stop. Those who fail to comply with Florida law will face a minimum \$164 citation and three points on their driver’s license. Most crosswalks chosen for enforcement are within one mile of a school where students walk.

The State of Florida is ranked third in the country for children’s pedestrian deaths involving motor vehicle crashes. According to data collected by the Best Foot Forward program in 2024, drivers in Central Florida are yielding to pedestrians at school crossings only 45% of the time. Additionally, the [American Academy of Pediatrics released a report](#) in July 2023 that said that “child pedestrian mortality rates have shown an increase of 11% since 2013, driven by increases among 10- to 14-year-olds and 15- to 19-year-olds.”

Operation Best Foot Forward is part of a broader coalition effort to improve road safety in Central Florida. Studies show that combining enforcement, education, and engineering over a sustained period of time increases driver compliance to pedestrian right-of-way laws, fostering a culture of respect and accountability among drivers. Crosswalks selected for this operation include:

<u>Crosswalk Location</u>	<u>Enforcement Agency</u>	<u>Driver Yield Rate</u>	<u>Nearby School</u>
Palmetto St. & S. Washington Ave.	Titusville Police Dept.	9%	Mims Elementary School
SE 28th St. & SE 52nd Ave.	Marion County Sheriff’s Office	15%	Maplewood Elementary School
N. Dean Rd. & Timber Oaks Ct.	Orange County Sheriff’s Office	14%	Union Park Elementary School



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SR 100 & Bulldog Dr.	Flagler County Sheriff's Office	-	Flagler Palm Coast High School
S. Atlantic Ave. midblock S. of Bahama Dr.	New Smyrna Beach Police Department	32%	Coronado Beach Elementary School
S. Pine Ave. & SW 2nd St.	Ocala Police Department	10%	Eighth Street Elementary School, Osceola Middle School
Tallahassee Blvd. & Myakka St.	Osceola County Sheriff's Office	47%	Knights Point K-8 School
Emerson Dr. at Pineapple Cove Academy	Palm Bay Police Department	46%	Lockmar Elementary School
Lake Dr. & Park Dr.	Casselberry Police Department	34%	Sterling Park Elementary School
Markham Rd & Lake Markham Rd	Seminole County Sheriff's Office	26%	Heathrow Elementary School, Markham Woods Middle School

Operation Best Foot Forward's Impact on Crosswalk Safety

In 2024, Operation Best Foot Forward produced positive results in improving pedestrian safety:

- 18% increase in drivers yielding to people crossing the street at 11 crosswalks through low-cost engineering improvements and enforcement efforts
- 23 crosswalks improved their driver yield rates from enforcement efforts alone, increasing the average driver compliance by 11%

For a complete schedule of the intersection locations including time and day as well as an interactive map, visit: <https://www.iyield4peds.org/operationbff/>

About the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety Program

The Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety (BFF) program is administered by the local non-profit Bike/Walk Central Florida (BWCF). BFF was created to minimize 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 countermeasures at marked crosswalks. Best Foot Forward operates in nine Central Florida counties and is the largest pedestrian-focused grassroots coalition in the nation, working with more than 100 local and regional partners. Since launching in 2012, the percentage of drivers yielding to people in marked crosswalks has increased from



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17% to nearly 50% on roads with a speed limit of 35 mph and lower and 2% to 45% on roads 40 mph and higher. To learn more, visit iyield4peds.org.

About Bike/Walk Central Florida:

Bike Walk Central Florida (BWCF) is a regional advocacy organization for bicyclists and pedestrians. Since 2010, the organization has worked on behalf of local pedestrians and bicyclists to advocate for safe and convenient places for people to bike and walk, regardless of where they live or where they need to go. Focusing on their four pillars of policy, perception, practice, and sustainability, BWCF works tirelessly to advocate for policies, programs and infrastructure that is fair and accessible to all.

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