



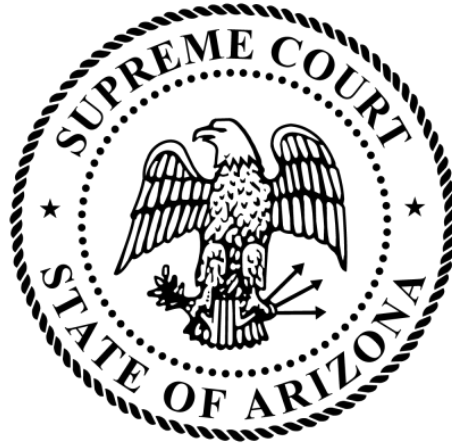
# DEFENSIVE DRIVING IMPACT STUDY

Publication Date: August 15, 2024

ARIZONA  
SUPREME COURT



# Defensive Driving Impact Study



## Research and Statistics Team

Humberto Cisneros, Senior Statistical Analyst  
Richard Rivera, Senior Statistical Analyst  
Heather Chee, Junior Statistical Analyst  
Oscar Sosa, Research and Statistics Intern

**Administrative Office of the Courts  
Arizona Supreme Court**

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## Executive Summary

The *Defensive Driving Impact Study* examined the effectiveness of Arizona's Defensive Driving School Program (DD Program) on traffic re-offense rates. The program is designed to give drivers the knowledge and skills to become a safe and responsible driver. Drivers can enroll in the program in order to have a traffic citation dismissed by the court and to avoid having points added to their driving records. Before 2016, drivers were allowed to take a defensive driving class once every two years. Starting in 2016, drivers were allowed to take a class yearly. Before 2016, about one fifth of civil traffic violations were settled by attending a defensive driving class. After the policy change, about one fourth of the civil traffic infractions were settled by attending a class. Because participants were not randomly assigned into program and control cohorts, a matching algorithm was used to identify a comparison group that closely approximated defensive driving school participants on the following characteristics: urban-rural counties; twelve months of index baseline traffic violations; gender and age. The DD program participants had a lower rate of traffic violations than the comparison group indicating that DD program effectively reduced subsequent traffic violations.

### Key Findings

The following summarizes the key findings from the Defensive Driving Impact Study.

- Overall, the Defensive Driving Program was effective at reducing traffic violation recidivism. Drivers who did not participate in the program had 31.9% more traffic violations within twelve months from their initial qualifying violation, than DD program participants.
- There is a negative relationship between age and traffic re-offense rates. That is, younger individuals are more likely to have another moving violation than older individuals.
- For both cohorts, males committed more subsequent traffic violations than females.
- Regardless of the county where traffic violation occurred, drivers in the comparison group had more traffic violations reoccurrences than DD program participants. Overall, Maricopa County had higher traffic re-offense rates than Pima and rural counties.
- Comparison group drivers who had subsequent violations were more likely to commit a *criminal* traffic infraction than Defensive Driving Program participants.
- No substantial differences were found in the reoccurrence of moving violations between drivers who took classes: in-person versus online, or in English versus Spanish.

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## Defensive Driving Impact Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Defensive Driving Program (DD Program) in reducing subsequent traffic violations. The section below describes the program, eligibility requirements and student enrollment.

### Program Description

Safe driving is essential to ensure road safety for all who travel on Arizona's roads and the DD Program plays a crucial role in promoting this. The DD Program which is overseen by the Administrative Office of the Courts' Certification and Licensing Division, is an educational program designed to give drivers the knowledge and skills to become safe and responsible drivers. DD Program classes typically cover a variety of topics such as traffic laws, accident avoidance, impaired driving and distracted driving. There is a distinction between the DD Program and Traffic Survival School. Traffic Survival School, which is implemented by the Arizona Motor Vehicle Division, is mandated for drivers who have committed specific violations or have accumulated a certain number of points on their driving record. Whereas the DD Program is optional for drivers who typically enroll in a defensive driving class for one of three reasons:

- Diversion – dismissal of an Arizona traffic citation and avoidance of points added to their driving records;
- Court Order – a judge mandates completion of the DD Program; or
- Insurance Discount -- to qualify for reduction of auto insurance premium.

### Defensive Driver School Eligibility Requirements

The eligibility requirements for the Driving Defensive Program are specified in [A.R.S. §28-3392](#) and [A.R.S. §28-3393](#). Police officers issuing a civil traffic citation must inform eligible drivers about the option to attend a certified defensive driving school. The criteria for diversion and schools are described below.

**Eligibility for Diversion.** Drivers with a non-commercial driver's license are eligible for diversion of one moving violation if they: (a) have not attended defensive driving school for a previously-cited traffic ticket within twelve months of the current traffic violation (b) have not committed a traffic violation that resulted in serious physical injury or fatality (c) were cited for an eligible moving violation listed in Appendix A, (d) have completed a defensive driving class at least seven days before the scheduled court appearance and (e) have taken a class from a list of certified driving schools.

Since September 1, 2019, drivers with a commercial driver's license who are driving a vehicle not being used for a commercial purpose have been eligible to get their violations dismissed. However, a person operating a commercial motor vehicle that requires a commercial driver's license is ineligible for the program.

**Eligible Schools.** The Administrative Office of the Courts maintains a list of defensive driving schools that are certified by a regulatory board. These schools must comply with numerous requirements, including court automation and reporting. A school may be audited for compliance at the Certification and Licensing Division or the regulatory board's discretion.

## DD Program Enrollment

Before 2016, drivers were allowed to take a defensive driving class once every two years. Since then, drivers were allowed to take a class yearly. Moving violations eligible for the diversion benefit are included in the Title 28's civil traffic offenses delineated in Appendix A.

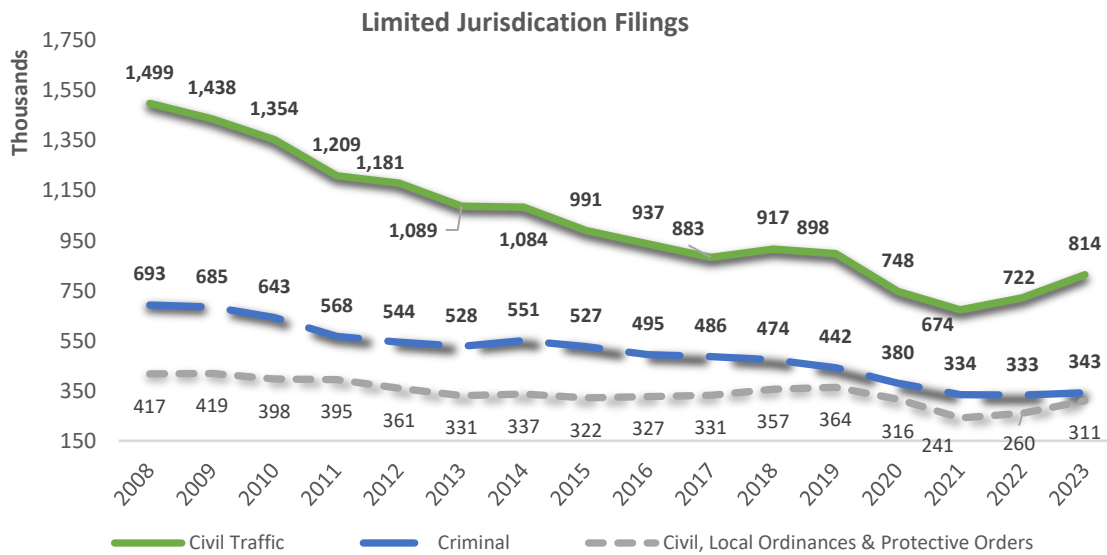
**Civil Traffic.** Civil traffic violations are non-criminal infractions such as: exceeding the posted speed limit, running a red light or failing to yield the right-of-way to another vehicle. The DD Program benefits the drivers and communities in helping reduce the risk of these traffic offenses. Among the 1.4 million charges that were filed into the limited jurisdiction courts during fiscal year 2020, 51.8% were for civil traffic citations (see Table 1). About 62.1% of these civil traffic citations were filed into municipal courts.

**Table 1.** *Frequency and Percent Distribution of Case Types Filed into Limited Jurisdiction Courts during Fiscal Year 2020*

Case Type	Justice Courts		Municipal Courts		Total	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Civil Traffic	283,179	43.2%	464,340	58.9%	747,519	51.8%
Criminal	150,171	22.9%	230,170	29.2%	380,341	26.3%
Civil, Local Ordinances & Protective Orders	222,702	33.9%	93,623	11.9%	316,325	21.9%
Total Filings	656,052	100%	788,133	100%	1,444,185	100%

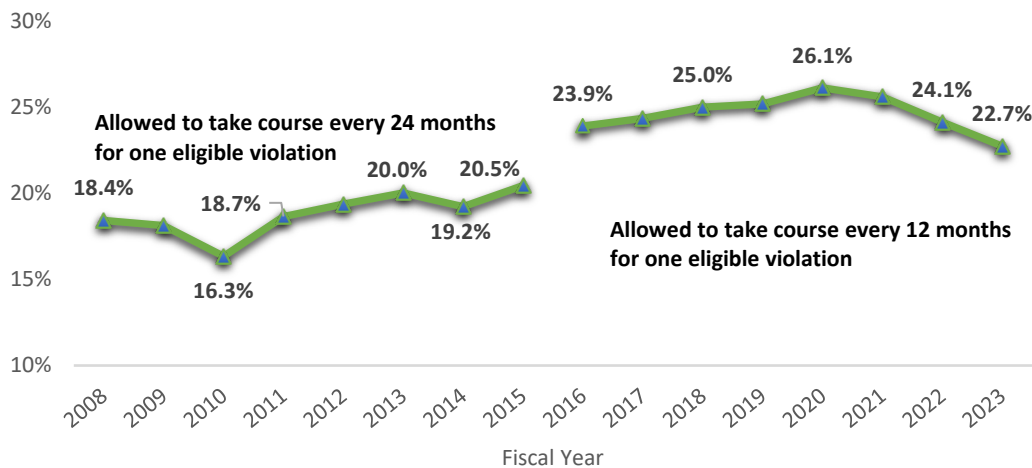
Civil traffic filings have declined for the past decade (see Figure 1). Civil traffic filings declined 45.7% from 2008 to 2023. From 2016 to 2023, civil traffic filings declined 13.1%.

**Figure 1. Limited Jurisdiction Filings by Fiscal Year**



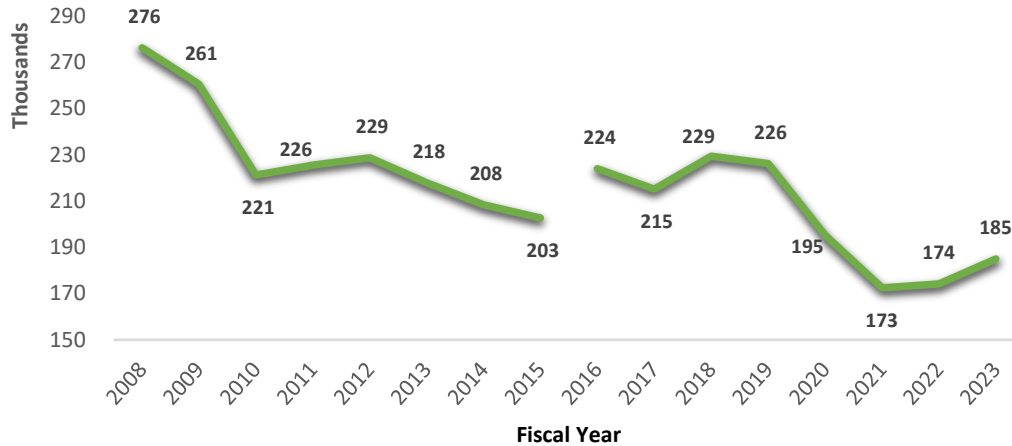
**Ratio of DD Students to Civil Traffic.** Before 2016, about one fifth of civil traffic violations were settled by attending a defensive driving class (see Figure 2). After drivers were allowed to take courses every 12 months, approximately one fourth of the traffic charges were settled by completing a defense driving class.

**Figure 2. Ratio of Defensive Driving Participants to Civil Traffic Filings**



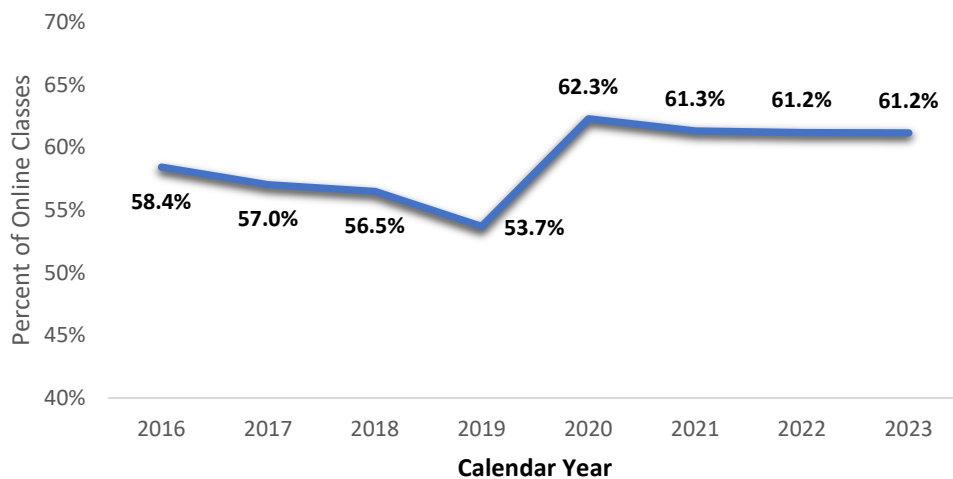
**Student Enrollment.** The number of students who enrolled in the DD Program declined 33.1% from 2008 to 2023 (see Figure 3). From fiscal year 2016 to 2023, enrollment decreased 17.4%.

**Figure 3.** *Number of Driving Defensive Course Students by Fiscal Year*



**Classroom Type.** Drivers can take a defensive driving class either in person or online. Figure 4 summarizes the proportion of enrollment in online courses. There has been a sizable increase in online enrollment since 2019, during the onset of COVID pandemic. In 2019, 53.7% of students enrolled in online classes. Online enrollment went up to 62.3% in 2020, and has remained above 60% through 2023.

**Figure 4.** *Defensive Driving Online Classes by Fiscal Year*



## Method

In this section, the study’s data sources, as well as the inclusion and matching criteria are described. Additionally, sample cohort characteristics of both the DD Program and the comparison group are reported.

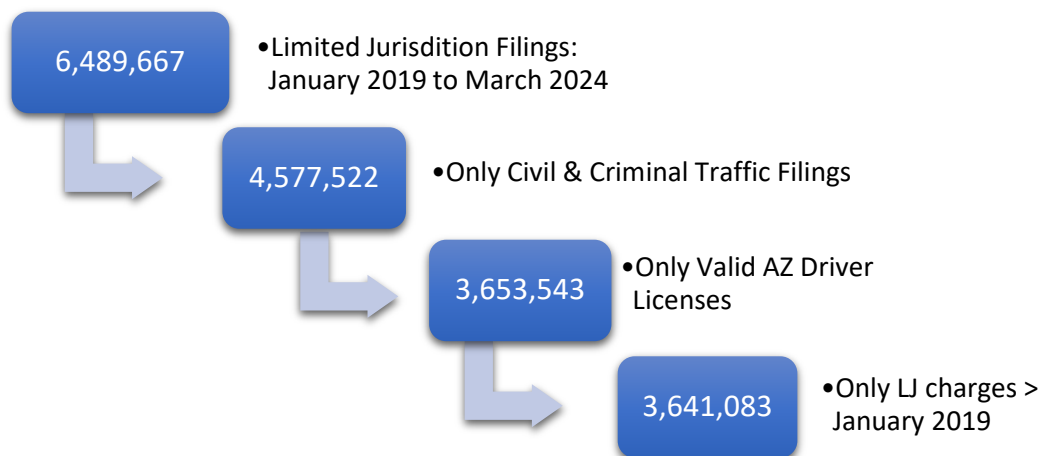
### Data Source

The data used for this study were extracted from two sources: Defensive driving and court case management databases. The defensive driving database provided details about the drivers who participated in the program, such as: driver’s license numbers, class completion data, class format (in-person vs. online), and language of instruction (English vs. Spanish). The court case management Databases, which are utilized by justice and municipal courts, provided information about the drivers including: driver’s license numbers, birth years , gender, and traffic violations.

### Data Selection Process for Study Sample

The data used from the court case management database was substantial, encompassing a staggering 6.5 million records from limited jurisdiction courts. Detailed in Figure 5, the extensive dataset was then limited to only civil and criminal traffic filings between January 1, 2019, and March 31, 2024. An essential selection criterion was the inclusion of an Arizona driver’s license with a valid driver’s license number. Additionally, with 2020 as the baseline year, it was necessary to examine traffic violations from the preceding year. Accordingly, the scope of the data was narrowed to include charges filed from January 2019 onwards, ensuring a focus on relevant traffic incidents.

**Figure 5. Data Selection Process**



## **DD Program Sample Inclusion Criteria**

This study was limited to individuals flagged with the disposition code of attending a defensive driving class. From among this group of drivers, 158,191 were identified as incurring traffic violations during the baseline year 2020. Twenty five percent ( $n=39,653$  individuals) were excluded from the study for one of the following reasons: a) possession of out-of-state driver's license or had an invalid driver's license number; b) prior civil traffic citations; c) violation was associated with a criminal traffic offense; and d) indeterminable age or gender.

Subsequent traffic violations were confined to Arizona, ensuring only persons with a valid Arizona Driver's license were considered. Because prior traffic violations are associated with an increased likelihood of future traffic violations (recidivism), drivers with previous traffic violations were excluded from the sample. This study's focus was limited to drivers who have been cited for civil traffic violations eligible for the DD Program as listed in Appendix A, thereby excluding drivers who have been cited for criminal traffic offenses from the study sample.

Some records did not include a driver's gender or age. Leveraging the first names of individuals with a known gender, gender was deduced from those sharing the same names. Individuals whose gender could not be determined were removed from the study. Age was based on birth year, and instances where age could not be established were also omitted. Approximately five percent ( $n=7,818$  of the individuals) were not matched between the defensive driving database and the court case management database extract. After these considerations, the study's cohort for the Defensive Driving Program was composed of 110,720 individuals.

## **Matching of Comparison Group**

Because participants were not randomly assigned into DD Program and control groups, selection bias was reduced in this observational study by establishing a comparison group that closely mirrored the DD Program group in terms of the timeframe and location for eligible civil traffic infractions as well as two demographic variables. That is, SAS (Statistical Analytic Software) was used to implement a matching algorithm to identify a comparison group of individuals that closely approximated the characteristics observed among those who attended the DD Program. The matching criteria consisted of the following: (a) two metropolitan counties (Maricopa and Pima) and a collective of rural counties, (b) twelve months of civil traffic violations committed during the baseline calendar year 2020, (c) driver's gender and (d) driver's age. This process produced a

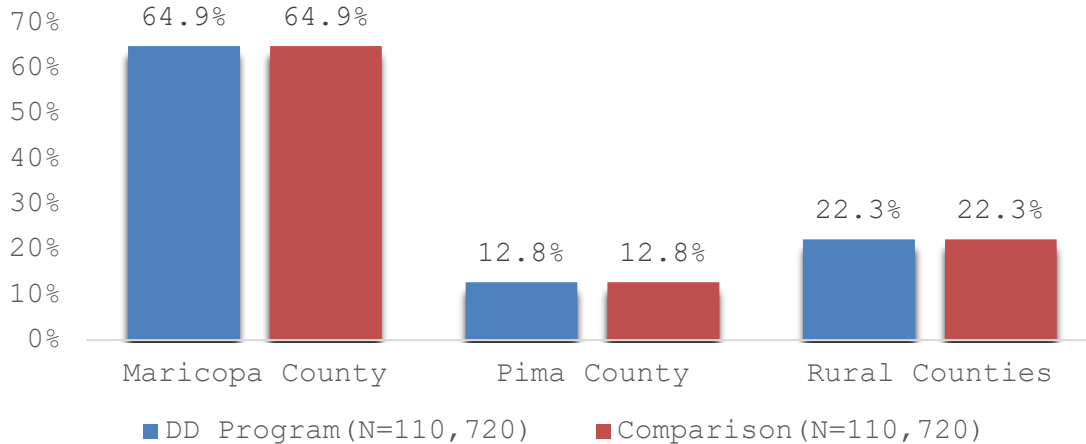
comparison group of drivers that matched the 110,720 drivers enrolled in the DD Program.

### Cohort Sample Characteristics

The matching procedure produced two comparable cohorts: the DD Program and the comparison group. Across both cohorts, comparative descriptive statistics are reported on the four matching criteria. The subsequent sections detail the distributions of urban-rural counties and baseline months, followed by the distributions of participant characteristics: age and gender.

**Urban-Rural Counties and Baseline Months of Traffic Violations.** The distributions of the location and baseline months of the initial traffic violations are reported in this section. Figure 6 details the proportion of traffic violations committed in urban and rural counties. There were no differences between the DD Program and the comparison cohorts. Most (64.9%) of the traffic violations occurred in Maricopa County. A little over one fifth (22.3%) of the individuals had traffic citations in rural counties and a 12.8% in Pima County.

**Figure 6. Urban-Rural Counties by Cohort**



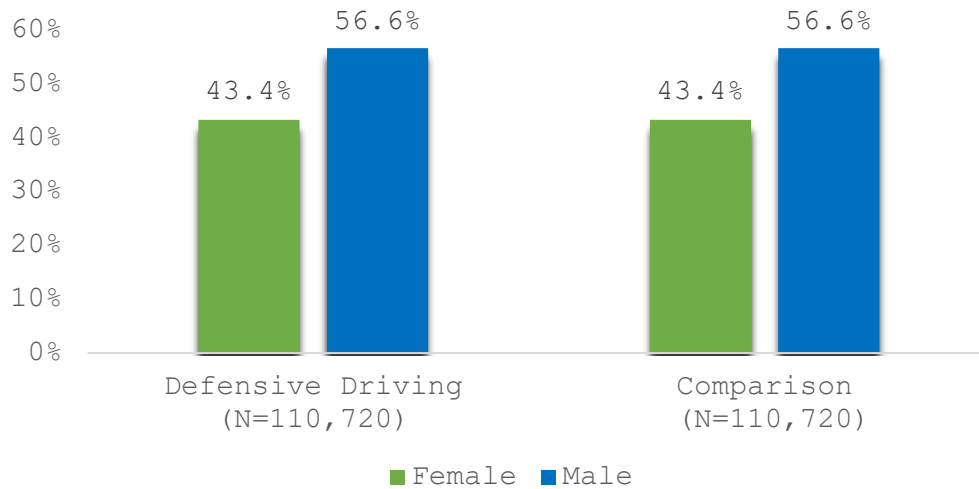
Individuals with traffic violations eligible for the DD Program were subdivided across twelve months during calendar year 2020. The frequency and percent distribution of the twelve baseline months categorized by urban and rural counties are reported in Table 2. The percent distribution ranged from 6% to 10%. January, February and December had the highest percent (10%). April, June and July had the lowest proportion of moving violations.

**Table 2. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Baseline Months by Urban-Rural Counties and Cohort**

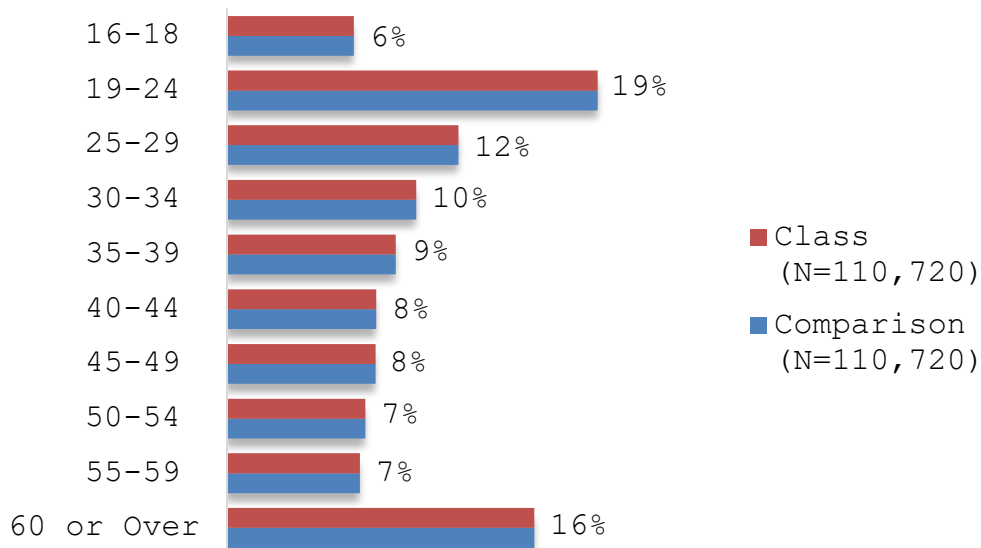
Month (2020)	Urban Counties						Rural Counties			Cohort Total		
	Maricopa			Pima			DD Program	Comparison	%	DD Program	Comparison	%
	DD Program	Comparison	%	DD Program	Comparison	%						
Jan	7,377	7,377	10%	1,445	1,445	10%	2317	2317	9%	11,139	11,139	10%
Feb	7,383	7,383	10%	1,482	1,482	10%	2295	2295	9%	11,160	11,160	10%
Mar	6,269	6,269	9%	985	985	7%	1977	1977	8%	9,231	9,231	8%
Apr	4,534	4,534	6%	567	567	4%	1115	1115	5%	6,216	6,216	6%
May	5,857	5,857	8%	1,231	1,231	9%	2126	2126	9%	9,214	9,214	8%
Jun	4,863	4,863	7%	1,141	1,141	8%	1922	1922	8%	7,926	7,926	7%
Jul	4,419	4,419	6%	1,280	1,280	9%	2178	2178	9%	7,877	7,877	7%
Aug	5,585	5,585	8%	1,383	1,383	10%	2099	2099	9%	9,067	9,067	8%
Sep	6,201	6,201	9%	1,286	1,286	9%	2435	2435	10%	9,922	9,922	9%
Oct	5,926	5,926	8%	1,097	1,097	8%	1925	1925	8%	8,948	8,948	8%
Nov	5,951	5,951	8%	1,148	1,148	8%	2256	2256	9%	9,355	9,355	8%
Dec	7,530	7,530	10%	1,122	1,122	8%	2013	2013	8%	10,665	10,665	10%
Total	71,895	71,895	100%	14,167	14,167	100%	24,658	24,658	10%	110,720	110,720	100%

**Characteristics of the Study Sample.** Demographic characteristics for both cohorts are reported in this section. The selection criteria ensured that the gender and age distributions were identical for both groups. According to Figure 7, the percent distributions of gender are identical for both cohorts. The majority (56.6%) of the persons were males. The percent distribution for age for both cohorts is reported in Figure 8. Regardless of gender, the most frequently occurring age category was between 19 and 24 years.

**Figure 7. Gender by Cohort**



**Figure 8. Age by Cohort**



The frequency and percent distribution of age categories segmented by gender is reported for both cohorts in Table 3. The frequency distribution of age between the two cohorts are identical for females as well as for males. Furthermore, the percent distributions of age across both genders are very similar.

**Table 3. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Age by Gender and Cohort**

Age (years)	Gender						Cohort Total		
	Female			Male			DD		
	DD Program	Comparison	%	DD Program	Comparison	%	Program	Comparison	%
16-18	2,541	2,541	5%	4,614	4,614	7%	7,155	7,155	6%
19-24	9,096	9,096	19%	11,803	11,803	19%	20,899	20,899	19%
25-29	5,853	5,853	12%	7,194	7,194	11%	13,047	13,047	12%
30-34	4,836	4,836	10%	5,828	5,828	9%	10,664	10,664	10%
35-39	4,305	4,305	9%	5,208	5,208	8%	9,513	9,513	9%
40-44	3,836	3,836	8%	4,576	4,576	7%	8,412	8,412	8%
45-49	3,716	3,716	8%	4,673	4,673	7%	8,389	8,389	8%
50-54	3,377	3,377	7%	4,430	4,430	7%	7,807	7,807	7%
55-59	3,250	3,250	7%	4,255	4,255	7%	7,505	7,505	7%
60 +	7,192	7,192	15%	10,137	10,137	16%	17,329	17,329	16%
Total	48,002	48,002	100%	62,718	62,718	100%	110,720	110,720	100%

**Summary of Cohort Sample Characteristics.** Subsequent to the data selection process, the matching procedure established two comparable cohorts: the DD Program and the control group. The comparative descriptive statistics for both cohorts demonstrated how indistinct these groups are on four characteristics: urban-rural counties; months for baseline year 2020, gender and age categories. The majority of individuals were males (57%) and had a traffic violation in Maricopa County (65%).

## **Purpose of Defensive Driving Impact Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of the Defensive Driving Program on the reoccurrence of moving violations. The frequency and proportion of repeat offenses within a year following the initial violation, which qualified for the Defensive Driving Program, served as the metric for recidivism. Re-offense rates were examined for:

- Driving Defensive Program vs. Comparison Group,
- 2020 Baseline Months,
- Age & Gender,
- Rural vs. Urban Counties,
- Re-offense Traffic Violation Types, and
- Instructional Methods: online vs. in-person and English vs. Spanish language.

## Defensive Driving Impact Study Results

Twelve-month traffic re-offense rates were reported for the DD Program and comparison cohorts. Furthermore, cohort differences were reported for: a) 2020 baseline months, b) age, c) gender, d) urban vs. rural counties, and e) re-offense charge categories. Finally, recidivism rates were reported for instructional methods: online vs. in-person and English vs. Spanish language.

### Cohort

There was a program effect. The DD Program was effective at reducing subsequent traffic violations. DD Program participants had a 15.4% traffic re-offense rate while those in the comparison cohort had a 20.3% re-offense rate (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Re-offense Rate by Cohort**

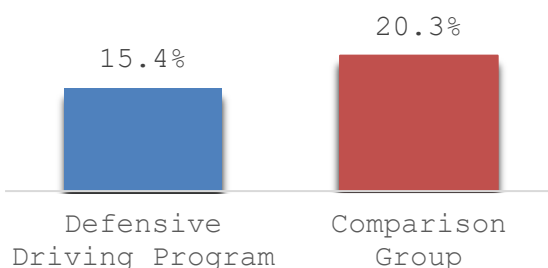


Table 4 indicates that those who did not participate in the DD Program had more reoccurrences of moving violations during twelve-months' follow-up than defensive driving class attendees. That is, traffic offenses reoccurred 31.9% more often in the comparison cohort ( $n=22,508$ ) than in the DD Program ( $n=17,070$ ).

**Table 4. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Re-Offense by Cohort**

Re-Offended within 12 Months	Cohort			
	Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
No	93,650	84.6%	88,212	79.7%
Yes	17,070	15.4%	22,508	20.3%
Total	110,720	100%	110,720	100%

## Baseline Months by Cohort

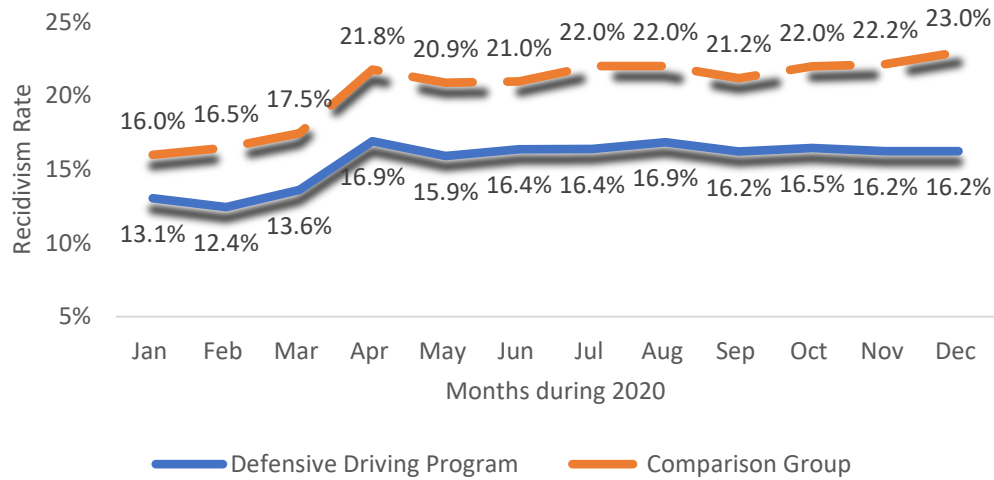
Recidivism was examined for twelve months following baseline months. The baseline months ranged from January to December of 2020 and consisted of dates of traffic violations eligible for the Defensive Driving Program. The re-offense occurrences and rates are reported by 2020 baseline month for both cohorts in Table 4.

**Table 5. Distribution of Baseline Months by Cohort**

Month (2020)	Sample Size for each Cohort	Cohort			
		Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group	
		Re-offense	Rate	Re-Offense	Rate
Jan	11,139	1,454	13.1%	1,782	16.0%
Feb	11,160	1,389	12.4%	1,840	16.5%
Mar	9,231	1,256	13.6%	1,612	17.5%
Apr	6,216	1,052	16.9%	1,355	21.8%
May	9,214	1,466	15.9%	1,926	20.9%
Jun	7,926	1,298	16.4%	1,663	21.0%
Jul	7,877	1,291	16.4%	1,736	22.0%
Aug	9,067	1,528	16.9%	1,998	22.0%
Sep	9,922	1,609	16.2%	2,103	21.2%
Oct	8948	1474	16.5%	1969	22.0%
Nov	9355	1520	16.2%	2073	22.2%
Dec	10665	1733	16.2%	2451	23.0%
	110,720	17,070	15.4%	22,508	20.3%

Regardless of month, DD Program participants had less reoccurring traffic violations than those in the comparison group. The pandemic hit toward the end of March 2020. Those with baseline months prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, had lower re-offense rates than those in subsequent months. Figure 10 indicates that DD Program participants who had initial qualifying civil traffic violations during January, February and March, had re-offense rates ranging between 12.4% and 13.6%; subsequently, the re-offense rates increased to a range between 15.9% to 16.9%.

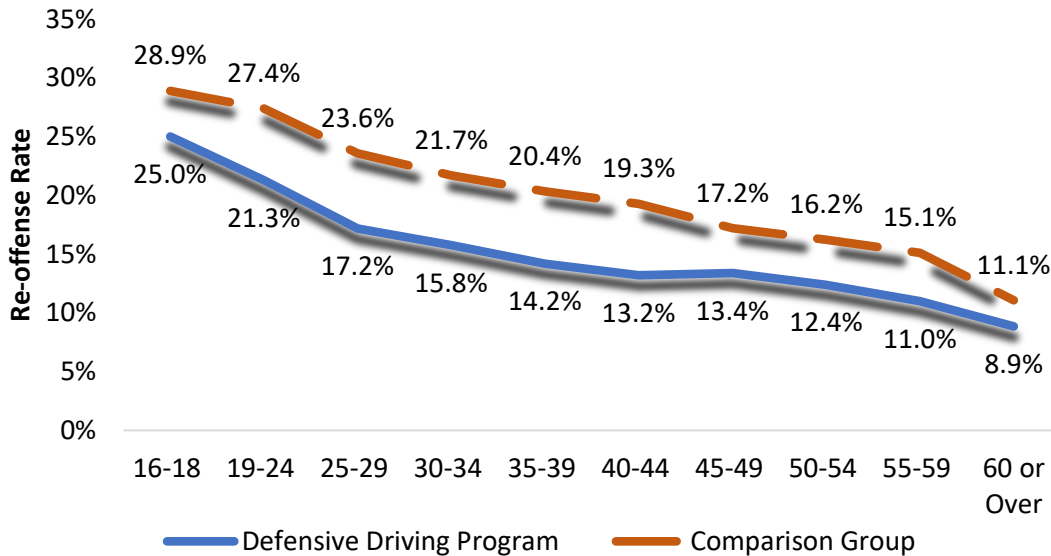
**Figure 10. Re-offense Rate by Baseline Months and Cohort**



### Age by Cohort

Regardless of cohort, there was a negative relationship between re-offense rates and age (see Figure 11). For both DD Program and comparison groups, recidivism rates decrease as individuals got older. Younger persons are more likely get a subsequent traffic violation within one year of the initial traffic violation.

**Figure 11. Re-offense Rate by Age and Cohort**



The greatest difference between the DD Program participant group and the comparison group was found for drivers between the ages of 35 and 44 years old. For this age group, the drivers in the comparison group re-offended 43.5% to 46.0% more often than drivers in the DD Program participants (see Table 6). For drivers between ages 25 and 34, as well as between ages 55 and 59, the comparison group re-offended between 37.2% and 37.9% more often than the DD Program group.

**Table 6. Re-offense Rates by Age and Two Cohorts**

Age (years)	Sample Size for each Cohort	Cohort				Comparison vs. DD Program	
		Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group		Difference	%
		Re-Offense	Rate	Re-Offense	Rate		
16-18	7,155	1,790	25.0%	2,068	28.9%	278	15.5%
19-24	20,899	4,448	21.3%	5,724	27.4%	1,276	28.7%
25-29	13,047	2,243	17.2%	3,078	23.6%	835	37.2%
30-34	10,664	1,680	15.8%	2,316	21.7%	636	37.9%
35-39	9,513	1,349	14.2%	1,936	20.4%	587	43.5%
40-44	8,412	1,111	13.2%	1,622	19.3%	511	46.0%
45-49	8,389	1,123	13.4%	1,443	17.2%	320	28.5%
50-54	7,807	967	12.4%	1,268	16.2%	301	31.1%
55-59	7,505	825	11.0%	1,134	15.1%	309	37.5%
60 or Over	17,329	1,534	8.9%	1,919	11.1%	385	25.1%
Total	110,720	17,070	15.4%	22,508	20.3%	5,438	31.9%

### Gender by Cohort

For both DD Program and comparison groups, males are more likely to commit new traffic violations than females (see Figure 12). For both males and females, those who complete a defensive driving class are less likely to have a future traffic violation than those in the comparison group. Cohort differences by gender are reported below.

Female DD Program participants had a 12.9% re-offense rate while females in the comparison group had a 17.7% re-offense rate (see Figure 12). Table 7 indicates female defensive driving class attendees had less re-offense traffic violations during twelve-months' follow-up than females who did not participate in the DD Program. Among females, re-offenses occurred 37.0% more often in the comparison group ( $n=8,502$ ) than in the DD Program group ( $n=6,204$ ).

**Figure 12. Re-offense Rate by Gender and Cohort**

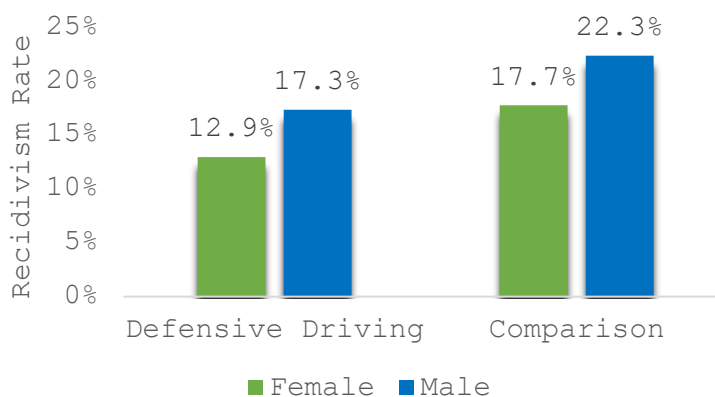


Figure 12 indicates males who took defensive driving classes had a 17.3% recidivism rate while comparison group males had a 22.3% re-offense rate. Among male drivers, the comparison cohort ( $n=14,006$ ) re-offended 28.9% more often than those in the DD Program ( $n=10,866$ ).

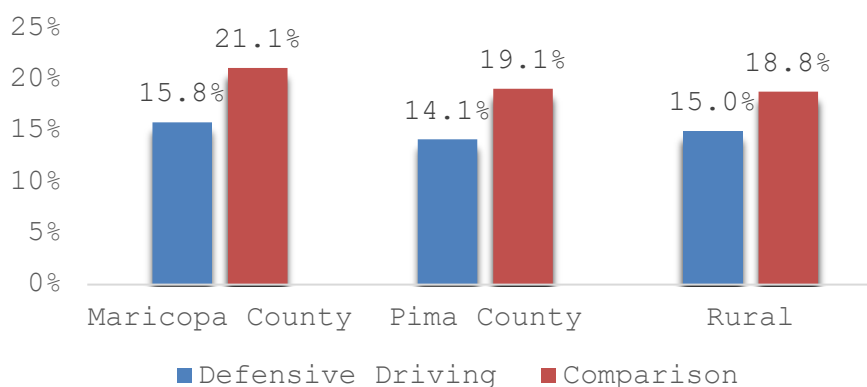
**Table 7. Frequency and Percent Distribution of Re-Offenses by Gender and Cohort**

Gender	Re-Offended within 12-Months	Cohort			
		Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group	
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Female	Not Offended	41,798	87.1%	39,500	82.3%
	Re-offended	6,204	12.9%	8,502	17.7%
	Subtotal	48,002	100%	48,002	100%
Male	Not Offended	51,852	82.7%	48,712	77.7%
	Re-offended	10,866	17.3%	14,006	22.3%
	Subtotal	62,718	100%	62,718	100%

### Urban-Rural County by Cohort

Pima & rural counties have lower re-offense rates than Maricopa County. Across urban and rural counties, the DD Program cohort had lower recidivism rates than the comparison group cohort (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13. Re-offense Rate by County and Cohort**



**Table 8. Re-offense Rates by Urban-Rural Counties and Cohort**

Urban-Rural Counties	Sample Size for each Cohort	Cohort				Comparison vs. DD Program	
		Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group		Difference	% Difference
		Re-Offense	Rate	Re-Offense	Rate		
Maricopa	71,895	11,373	15.8%	15,169	21.1%	3,796	33.4%
Pima	14,167	2,004	14.1%	2,704	19.1%	700	34.9%
Rural	24,658	3,693	15.0%	4,635	18.8%	942	25.5%
Total	110,720	17,070	15.4%	22,508	20.3%	5,438	31.9%

### Type of Traffic Violation by Cohort

Among recidivists, the majority (91%) of the new violations committed by drivers were civil traffic violations. A much smaller proportion (9%) the new violations committed were criminal traffic. Table 9 details the type of new moving violations between DD Program participants and the comparison cohort.

**Civil Traffic Violation Relapse.** DD Program participants had a 14.4% civil traffic re-offense rate, while drivers in comparison group had an 18.1% re-offense rate. Notably, 1,083 of the comparison group cohort subsequently had their driver’s license suspended for failure to appear, while only 89 of the DD Program cohort did.

Comparison group recidivists ( $n=776$ ) got a driver's license violation 516% more often than those in the DD Program group ( $n=126$ ). Comparison group had more no-insurance and seat belt violations than DD program.

**Table 9. Re-offense Rates by Violation Types and Cohort**

Subsequent Violation Type	Defensive Driving Program		Comparison Group		
	<i>n</i>	Re-offense Rate	<i>n</i>	Re-offense Rate	
<b>Civil Traffic</b>	15,941	14.4%	20,043	18.1%	
Speeding	10,648	9.6%	10,839	9.8%	
Red Light Violation	931	0.8%	1,087	1.0%	
School Zone Violation	152	0.1%	159	0.1%	
Seat Belt Violation	423	0.4%	832	0.8%	
Using Wireless Communication Device	252	0.2%	240	0.2%	
No Insurance	879	0.8%	2,283	2.1%	
Driver License Violation	126	0.1%	776	0.7%	
Registrations Violation	529	0.5%	978	0.9%	
License Suspended for Failure to Appear	89	0.1%	1,083	1.0%	
Other Civil Traffic	1,912	1.7%	1,766	1.6%	
<b>Criminal Traffic</b>	1,129	1.0%	2,465	2.2%	
DUI	464	0.4%	985	0.9%	
Criminal Speed	396	0.4%	470	0.4%	
Racing on Highway	42	0.0%	67	0.1%	
Reckless Driving	67	0.1%	107	0.1%	
Leaving the Scene of Accident	41	0.0%	73	0.1%	
License Suspended, Revoked or Canceled	48	0.0%	540	0.5%	
Criminal Other	71	0.1%	223	0.2%	
	Re-offended Total	17,070	15.4%	22,508	20.3%
Study Sample		110,720		110,720	

**Criminal Traffic Violation Relapse.** Comparison group drivers had a 2.2% criminal traffic re-offense rate, while the DD Program group had a 1% re-offense rate. Comparison group recidivists ( $n=985$ ) got a subsequent DUI 112% more often than those in the DD Program group ( $n=464$ ). License suspension or revocation for subsequent criminal moving violations occurred 1,025% more often in the comparison group ( $n=540$ ) than in the DD Program group ( $n=48$ ). Comparison group drivers were more likely to leave the scene of an accident than those who participated in the program. Comparison group had more subsequent violations for reckless driving or racing on a highway.

## Instructional Methods for Defensive Driving Program

The effect of different instructional methods – in-person vs. online classes and classes taught in English vs. Spanish – were examined. The twelve-month traffic re-offense rates are reported in Table 10. There were no recidivism rate differences in traffic violations between online (15.4%) and in-person (15.5%) classes. Moreover, the difference in re-offense rates between the language classes was minuscule: English (15.6%) and Spanish (15.2%) .

**Table 10.** *Re-Offense Rates for Two Kinds of Instructional Methods*

Instructional Methods		Sample Size	Re-Offended within 12-Months			
			No		Yes	
			Count	Rate	Re-Offense	Rate
Class Type	In-Person	41,260	34,870	84.5%	6,390	15.5%
	Online	69,460	58,780	84.6%	10,680	15.4%
Language	English	54,476	45,983	84.4%	8,493	15.6%
	Spanish	56,244	47,667	84.8%	8,577	15.2%
Total		110,720	93,650	84.6%	17,070	15.4%

## Summary

Based on the study's findings, the DD Program was effective at reducing the number of traffic violations. Comparison group participants had 31.9% more reoccurrences of moving violations during twelve-months' follow-up than the DD Program participants. There is a negative relationship between age and traffic re-offense rates. That is, younger persons had more subsequent moving violations than older persons. Regardless of cohort, males commit more subsequent traffic violations than females. Regardless of county, individuals in the comparison group had more subsequent traffic violations than DD Program participants. Maricopa County had higher traffic re-offense rates than Pima and rural counties. Comparison group individuals who recidivated are more likely to get a criminal traffic offense than participants in the DD Program. There were no substantial differences in reoccurrence of moving violations between instructional methods: in-person vs. online; or English vs. Spanish language classes.

## Appendix A

### List of Violations Eligible for Diversion Benefits from Defensive Driving Program

28-644A1	28-724A	28-771A	28-853A
28-644A2	28-724B	28-771C	28-854A1
28-645A1A	28-725	28-772	28-854A2A
28-645A1B	28-726A1	28-773	28-854A2B
28-645A3A	28-726A2	28-774	28-854A3
28-645A3B	28-726A3	28-775A	28-854B
28-645A3C	28-727	28-775A1	28-855B
28-645B	28-728B	28-775A2	28-855C
28-645C	28-728C	28-775A3	28-856.1
28-646A1	28-729.1	28-775C	28-856.2
28-647.1	28-729.2	28-775D	28-856.3
28-647.2	28-729.3	28-775D1	28-857A1
28-651	28-730A	28-775D2	28-857A2
28-701.02A1 *	28-730B	28-775E	28-858
28-701.02A2 *	28-730C	28-775E-1	28-891A
28-701.02A3 *	28-731	28-775E-2	28-891B
28-701A	28-732	28-776A	28-894
28-701E	28-733B	28-777	28-895A
28-702.01C	28-734	28-792A	28-895B
28-702.04B	28-735A	28-792B	28-896
28-704A	28-736 B2	28-794.1	28-897
28-704C	28-736B1	28-794.2	28-901A1
28-705	28-737A	28-794.3	28-901A2
28-706A	28-751.1	28-797.F	28-903A
28-706B	28-751.2	28-797.G	28-903B
28-709A1	28-751.3	28-797.H	28-903C
28-709A2	28-751.4A	28-797.I	28-903D
28-710A	28-751.4B	28-815D	28-904A
28-710B	28-752	28-851A	28-906
28-721A	28-753	28-851B	28-914A1a
28-721B	28-754A	28-851B	28-914A1b
28-722	28-754B	28-851C	28-914A2
28-723.1	28-754C	28-851D	999(Local/City Ord)
			999(Out of State)
28-723.2	28-755	28-852	CO

\*These misdemeanor speed violations may qualify for the defensive driving diversion program at the discretion of the judge.

## **Certified Defensive Driving Schools Online Directory**

[azcourts.gov/drive/OnlineClasses-DDS](http://azcourts.gov/drive/OnlineClasses-DDS)

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### **Acknowledgements**

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**DEFENSIVE DRIVING  
IMPACT STUDY**

**Arizona Supreme Court**  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
Certification & Licensing Division

1501 W. Washington St., Suite 104  
Phoenix, AZ 85007  
602.452.3378 | [azcourts.gov/cld](http://azcourts.gov/cld)

