

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 5, 2020

Contact: Jessica Cowardin

(804) 367-6834

jessica.cowardin@dmv.virginia.gov

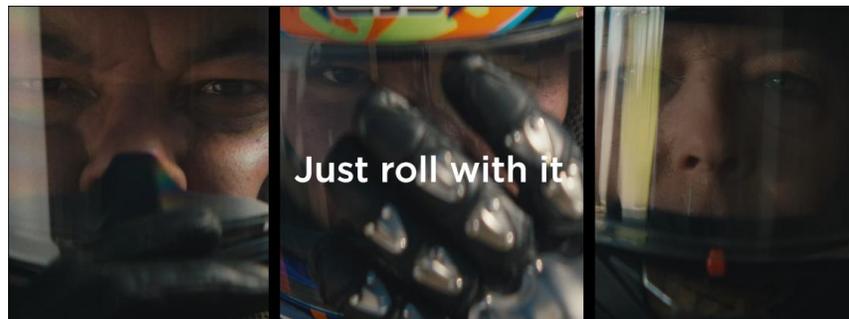
Motorcycle Riders Urged to Always Wear Lifesaving Protective Gear *DMV Debuts New Video for Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month in Virginia*

RICHMOND – Wearing the proper gear, from head to toe, can often save a motorcyclist's life during a crash. As of May 1 this year, 17 motorcyclists have died and 243 were injured in 321 crashes on Virginia roadways; in 2019, 89 motorcycle riders lost their lives.

"The most important action a motorcyclist takes before every ride is to suit up in the safest gear possible," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb, the Governor's Highway Safety Representative. "To drive this point home, DMV is releasing a new motorcycle safety video for Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month reminding riders to always wear the proper gear."

The video reminds all motorcyclists that, no matter how they roll, to ride with full gear on, because it could save their life. The video is posted on DMV's website, social media, and on the state's Toward Zero Deaths website, TZDVA.org.

As the weather gets warmer, more motorcyclists will return to the roads.



"While Virginia continues to observe social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, some people may see a leisurely motorcycle ride as a way to get some fresh air," said Ken Crumpler, DMV's Motorcycle Safety Coordinator and an avid rider. "Just because there is less traffic on the roadways, we shouldn't let ourselves be lulled into a false sense of security. Staying alert, maintaining a safe speed, and wearing safety gear is just as important as ever so everyone gets home safely."

DMV's new motorcycle safety video features Virginia RiderCoaches. These Motorcycle Safety Foundation certified instructors teach courses for beginner riders and those who need to refresh their skills through the Virginia Rider Training Program. To learn more, or to find a class near you, visit dmvNOW.com.

"Putting the spotlight on RiderCoaches for this safety video was deliberate since they constantly demonstrate a phrase that's known around the riding community as ATGATT – or all the gear, all the time," Crumpler said. "It's an unfortunate possibility that motorcyclists will tangle with hazardous road conditions, quickly changing weather, and larger vehicles, and if this happens, you want to be protected in the right gear."

In Virginia, the law requires that motorcyclists and their passengers always wear a helmet, and the helmet must meet or exceed the standards and specifications of the Snell Memorial Foundation, the American National Standards Institute Inc., or the U.S. Department of Transportation. A rider without a helmet is 40% more likely to suffer a fatal head injury than is a helmeted rider.

Crumpler added that a well-ventilated, full-face helmet with a flip down face shield is the safest; however, some type of eye protection is encouraged, such as safety goggles, even if a bike is equipped with a windshield. "Jackets, trousers, gloves and footwear that are durable, non-slip, fit snugly and are designed to keep riders safe are highly recommended," he said. Bright or reflective clothing is also encouraged.