



## The Commission on VASAP

### Holiday Statement

December, 2019

The approaching holiday season brings joy, excitement and numerous celebrations. Sometimes these celebrations result in increased alcohol consumption. Drinking and driving can be deadly. If alcohol will be a part of your holiday celebration, please drink responsibly. Limit and monitor your consumption and make plans in advance to ensure safe transportation home, and never get in a vehicle with a drinking driver.

In Virginia in calendar 2018, 278 persons were killed, and 7,181 injured, in alcohol-related crashes. These are all preventable crashes. Any alcohol-related injury or death is unacceptable. These statistics represent people with families and friends whose lives have been impacted forever.

Last year, 19,790 motor vehicle operators were convicted of driving under the influence in Virginia. Those offenders who were fortunate enough to avoid a traffic crash still suffered many adverse consequences to include fines, attorney fees, jail time, increased insurance premiums, ignition interlock requirements, loss of license, education and treatment fees, and social embarrassment. On average, DUI offenders can count on the experience costing them a minimum of \$5,000. Sadly, irresponsible drivers who killed or maimed others will bear the guilt daily.

Alcohol-related crashes are not accidents. They occur because of poor judgement. Let's all do our part to have an enjoyable season and keep our highways safe. If we all work together, we can ensure that this holiday period is one of joy and thanksgiving. Celebrate responsibly and think before you drink.

Happy Holidays!