SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Ed Barberini
Chief of Police

200 Franklin Parkway
San Mateo, CA 94403
(650) 522-7700
www.sanmateopolice.org

MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

For Immediate Release No. 20260515-034
Friday, May 15, 2026

"Click It or Ticket" Campaign Reminds Californians to Always Buckle Up

Seat Belt Safety Campaign Runs Through Memorial Day.

San Mateo, CA – May 15, 2026-The San Mateo Police Department reminds travelers to always buckle up and secure children in the right car seats when visiting friends and family.

This year's *Click It or Ticket* campaign runs from May 18 to 31. During this time, the San Mateo Police Department will have additional officers on patrol actively looking for drivers and passengers who are not wearing seat belts. This includes vehicles in which children are not secured in child safety seats or the appropriate safety seats for their age.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2023, 10,484 people killed in crashes in the U.S. were not wearing a seat belt. In California, there were 780 unrestrained people killed in crashes that same year, including 24 children. Additionally, unrestrained child fatalities in California increased by 4.3 percent from 2022 to 2023.

California law requires all children under 2 years old to ride in a rear-facing car seat, unless the child is 40 or more pounds or is 40 or more inches tall. Once a child reaches these milestones, all children under the age of 8 years are still required to be secured in a car seat or booster seat. Children under the age of 8 may not ride in the front seat unless the vehicle is not equipped with a rear, forward-facing seat. Children 8 and older, or who are at least 4 feet 9 inches tall, may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be wearing a properly fitted safety belt.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to keep children in the proper rear or forward-facing seat as long as possible and use the "Five-Step Test" to determine if their child is big enough to safely use a seat belt without a booster seat.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

MEDIA CONTACT
Andrew Peek
Public Information Officer
City of San Mateo Police Department
200 Franklin Parkway, San Mateo, CA 94403
650-522-7626 | pdpio@cityofsanmateo.org

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