



## **LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE** **December 29, 2025**

### **Sugar Bowl 2026: Make sure your game plan features a sober driver**

As the Ole Miss Rebels and Georgia Bulldogs prepare for a college football playoff battle in New Orleans' Sugar Bowl on New Year's Day, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission reminds fans that a winning game plan includes a sober driver.

Whether you're enjoying the game in the Louisiana Superdome, at a party, a restaurant, or a bar, always secure a designated driver if you plan on drinking alcohol. If someone's had too much to drink, offer to get them a safe ride home, LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said.

"Football during the holidays is a great tradition in Louisiana, and so is taking care of friends," Freeman said. "Getting a sober ride home for a friend who's been drinking is a great way to start the New Year."

Impaired driving remains a serious problem in Louisiana, according to 2024 data from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU. Drivers who had been drinking were involved in crashes that killed 210 people and injured another 551 in Louisiana last year, the statistics show.

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant that slows brain activity, inhibits clear thinking, and affects coordination and physical control, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Even one drink can affect a person's ability to drive, especially if they've taken certain prescription or illicit drugs.

"There is no blanket standard for how many drinks are too many because there are so many variables," Freeman said. "And, once the drinking starts, you can't really calculate those variables or judge what your driving abilities are. That's why you're better off handing your keys to someone else if you've been drinking."

If you are hosting a Sugar Bowl party, make sure there are non-alcoholic drink selections for anyone who will be driving a motor vehicle. To make it a good experience for the designated driver, come up with something more creative than a pitcher of water, Freeman suggested.

"Do something special for your designated drivers so they're part of the fun," Freeman said. "It doesn't take that much effort to put together some non-alcoholic Sugar Bowl-themed drinks."

Here are two "mocktail" recipes for Georgia and Ole Miss fans:

#### *Sparkling Peach Mocktail*

1/3 cup peach juice

1/3 to 1/2 cup lemon-lime soda or ginger ale

1-1/2 tablespoons non-alcoholic grenadine

Pour the peach juice over ice in a tall glass. Add the soda or ginger ale. Add the non-alcoholic grenadine, which will sink to the bottom of the glass and gradually rise. Enjoy.

*Mississippi Mocktail*

1/3 cup each of blueberries, raspberries and chopped strawberries

1 cup of coconut water

2 tsp each simple syrup, lime juice, and lemon juice

Club soda

Place fruit in ice cube trays, fill trays with coconut water, and freeze

Fill glass with cubes. Add syrup and juices. Top with club soda. Mix and enjoy.

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