

The Danger of Left-Turn Accidents Involving Pedestrians in Massachusetts Cities

A Boston pedestrian accident lawyer explains the legal process for recovering compensation

[Pedestrian accidents](#) often occur in busy Massachusetts cities like Boston, Worcester, and Springfield. And one of the most dangerous scenarios involves a vehicle making a left turn and hitting a pedestrian. Studies from the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#) and the [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#) have repeatedly found that left-turn collisions account for a large share of urban pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

When a driver turns left, their attention is often split between oncoming traffic, changing lights and judging gaps – leaving little focus on pedestrians crossing the intersection. That momentary distraction can lead to devastating consequences. But that’s no excuse for hitting a pedestrian in a crosswalk or at an intersection. And drivers who cause these accidents should be held accountable for their actions.

At the [Law Offices of Mark E. Salomone](#), we know how quickly these crashes happen and how serious injuries can be for pedestrians. That’s because our Massachusetts pedestrian injury lawyers have years of experience helping people in Boston, Worcester, and other cities throughout the state. If a driver turning left hits you or a loved one, you deserve justice.

Why are left-turn pedestrian accidents so common in Massachusetts?

Left-turn pedestrian collisions are a well-documented problem in cities nationwide, but they’re especially dangerous in older, compact New England cities where streets are narrow, intersections are congested, and sightlines are limited.

In Massachusetts, many intersections in Boston, Worcester, and Cambridge combine heavy vehicle traffic with high pedestrian volumes. There are several reasons these crashes happen so often throughout the state:

- **Driver distraction and divided attention** – Drivers making a left turn must watch oncoming vehicles, monitor changing lights, and often rush through short green signals. When [drivers aren’t paying attention](#) (often due to texting while driving or talking on the phone) this divided attention makes it easy to overlook a pedestrian crossing legally in the crosswalk, resulting in a left-turn pedestrian accident.
- **Speeding** – Drivers going too fast don’t have time to slow down and avoid hitting a pedestrian walking in a crosswalk.
- **Failure to yield** – Many drivers don’t respect pedestrians and don’t yield to them when they have the right-of-way in crosswalks.

Left-turn crashes are especially severe because pedestrians are often struck head-on or thrown into traffic, resulting in catastrophic injuries with long-term consequences. That's why it's critical that injured pedestrians receive the care and support they need right away to recover physically and financially.

How does distracted driving contribute to left-turn pedestrian crashes?

Distraction is a major factor in left-turn collisions. Whether a driver is glancing at a phone, talking to passengers, or adjusting the navigation system, even a second of lost focus can lead to disaster.

When making a left turn, drivers already have a lot to take into account. They must judge speed, distance and timing while looking in multiple directions. Adding distraction to that mix greatly increases crash risk.

According to the NHTSA, drivers who take their eyes off the road for just two seconds double their risk of a collision. In intersections, those two seconds often occur right as pedestrians begin to cross.

Where do left-turn pedestrian accidents happen most often in Massachusetts?

Left-turn collisions can happen anywhere at any time in Massachusetts. However, they often occur in densely populated cities with heavy foot traffic. Common hotspots include:

- **Downtown intersections in Boston** – Areas like Copley Square, Tremont Street and Massachusetts Avenue see hundreds of daily pedestrian crossings and high rates of turning vehicles.
- **Major intersections in Worcester** – Routes 9 and 12, Main Street and Kelley Square have complex traffic patterns that often put pedestrians at risk.
- **Urban areas near colleges** – Intersections around Boston University, Northeastern and UMass Amherst experience constant pedestrian movement mixed with aggressive or reckless drivers.
- **Commercial zones** – In cities and communities like Springfield, Holyoke, and Chicopee, intersections near shopping centers and restaurants often have multiple turning lanes.

Pedestrian accidents often occur at urban intersections with left-turn signals, according to [Massachusetts Department of Transportation \(MassDOT\)](#) crash data. Wherever your accident occurred, an experienced Massachusetts pedestrian injury lawyer can investigate your case and gather evidence in support of your injury claim or lawsuit.

What types of injuries result from left-turn pedestrian crashes?

Pedestrians struck by turning vehicles often sustain severe injuries that require extensive medical care. Such injuries can cover a wide range, including:

- **Traumatic brain injuries (TBIs)** – Resulting from head impact with the hood, windshield, or pavement.
- **Spinal cord injuries** – Causing partial or total paralysis.
- **Bone fractures** – Especially to the legs, pelvis and ribs.
- **Internal organ damage and bleeding** – From blunt force trauma.
- **Severe lacerations and disfigurement** – From contact with metal or glass.
- **Chronic pain** – Weeks or months later, many injured pedestrians experience severe pain.
- **Psychological trauma** – Many survivors experience lasting fear or anxiety when walking near intersections.

Even at relatively low speeds, a turning vehicle can cause catastrophic harm to a pedestrian. Recovering from such an injury often requires emergency surgery, long hospital stays, physical therapy, future surgical procedures and ongoing medical care.

What traffic laws apply to left-turn accidents in Massachusetts?

Massachusetts law is clear about driver responsibility when making a left turn.

- **Right-of-way at crosswalks** – Under [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 89, Section 11](#), drivers must yield to pedestrians lawfully within a crosswalk.
- **Turning safely** – [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 90, Section 14](#) states that drivers must ensure turns can be made safely and without endangering other road users.
- **Obeying signals** – Drivers who enter an intersection on a yellow or red signal while attempting a left turn can be cited for running the light or reckless operation.

Violating any of these laws can serve as strong evidence of negligence in a legal case against the at-fault driver. When a driver fails to yield or misjudges timing while turning left, they should be held responsible for the injuries and mayhem they cause.

What role does driver negligence play in left-turn pedestrian accidents?

The short answer? Everything. Most left-turn pedestrian crashes in Massachusetts come down to driver negligence. When motorists rush through intersections, misjudge timing or fail to yield, they create dangerous conditions for pedestrians legally crossing the street.

In congested city environments like Boston and Worcester, even a moment of carelessness can have devastating consequences. Drivers turning left are responsible for watching both oncoming traffic and pedestrians, but many fail to divide their attention safely.

Common forms of driver negligence in left-turn accidents include:

- **Failing to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk** – Massachusetts law requires drivers to stop for pedestrians who have the right-of-way. Turning drivers who roll through intersections often violate this rule.
- **Turning too quickly or accelerating to beat the light** – Drivers trying to “catch” a yellow signal may speed through turns, increasing the risk of impact.
- **Driving distracted** – Glancing at a phone, GPS, or dashboard during a turn leaves no margin for error.
- **Drunk driving** – Drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs often misjudge stopping distances or don’t see pedestrians at all.
- **Drowsy driving** – Tired drivers have reduced reaction times and poor depth perception, both critical for safe turning.

In every case, these behaviors amount to a breach of the driver’s duty to operate safely and attentively. When negligence causes a pedestrian’s injury, the driver – and their insurance company – should be held financially accountable.

How do lawyers prove fault in left-turn pedestrian accidents?

Establishing fault requires a detailed investigation. Experienced attorneys use every available resource to reconstruct the crash and demonstrate how driver negligence caused the pedestrian accident. Key evidence in left-turn accidents often includes:

- **Traffic camera footage** – Many Massachusetts intersections are monitored by municipal or MassDOT cameras that can show the driver’s speed, light timing and turn movement.
- **Dashcam videos** – The vehicle that caused the collision or another car might have video footage of your pedestrian accident as it happened in real time.
- **Surveillance video** – Businesses near intersections frequently capture clear footage of crosswalks and turning vehicles.
- **Witness statements** – Pedestrians, cyclists or nearby drivers often provide valuable accounts confirming that you or a loved one was in the crosswalk when struck by a car.
- **Police reports** – Official accident reports often include diagrams, citations, and officer observations about signal compliance.
- **Vehicle data** – Event data recorders (EDRs) and onboard GPS logs can reveal the car’s speed and whether brakes were applied before impact.
- **Signal timing data** – Engineers can retrieve exact timing sequences from the intersection’s traffic control system to prove the pedestrian had the walk signal.

Evidence builds strong legal cases. The more evidence you have in support of your injury claim or lawsuit, the more likely your case will be successful. That’s why it’s critical that you have an

experienced Massachusetts pedestrian accident lawyer investigating your accident right away – before any important evidence is lost or destroyed.

Who's responsible for paying for a left-turn pedestrian accident in Massachusetts?

Determining who pays often depends on the specific circumstances of the crash. Massachusetts follows a no-fault insurance system, meaning the injured pedestrian first uses their Personal Injury Protection (PIP) benefits to cover medical bills and a portion of lost wages.

However, severe injuries often exceed PIP limits. In those cases, victims may pursue additional compensation from:

- **The at-fault driver's insurance** – Through a bodily injury liability claim.
- **The vehicle owner's insurance** – If someone else owned the car.
- **Employers** – If the driver was performing job-related duties when the accident occurred.
- **Municipal or state agencies** – If road design or signal malfunction contributed to the collision.

An attorney can identify every potential source of compensation and make sure no opportunity for recovery is missed – and no money is left on the table.

Can I sue the driver who hit me while turning left?

Yes. If your injuries meet the state's serious injury threshold – typically involving significant disfigurement, permanent impairment or over \$2,000 in medical expenses, which is common in these cases – you can file a lawsuit against the at-fault driver.

Through a civil claim, you can seek compensation for:

- **Medical expenses** – Hospitalization, surgery, rehabilitation, and long-term care.
- **Lost income** – Wages lost during recovery and reduced future earning capacity.
- **Pain and suffering** – Physical pain and emotional trauma.
- **Permanent disability or disfigurement** – Compensation for lasting harm.
- **Punitive damages** – In extreme cases where the driver's conduct was egregious, such as knowingly running a red light, additional compensation might be awarded by a judge or jury in order to send a message that such reckless behavior will not be tolerated.

Keep in mind that a civil case is separate from any criminal proceedings for reckless driving. Even if the driver faces no criminal conviction, you can still hold them financially responsible through the civil system. And no matter the outcome of a criminal case, your civil lawsuit seeking compensation can move forward through Massachusetts' court system.

How much is my left-turn pedestrian accident claim worth?

Every case is different. The value of a pedestrian accident claim often depends on many different factors, including the severity of your injuries, evidence of fault, and the long-term impact on your life. Factors that affect compensation include:

- Extent of medical treatment and recovery time
- Permanent physical limitations or scarring
- Loss of income and future earning capacity
- Pain, emotional suffering, and reduced quality of life
- Insurance coverage available from all parties
- Strength of evidence proving negligence

Take all these issues into account and your case could be worth thousands of dollars or significantly more. An experienced lawyer can calculate the full value of your claim by reviewing medical records, consulting with experts and making sure that all future costs are included.

Discover what a Massachusetts pedestrian accident lawyer can do for you

Massachusetts pedestrian accidents caused by a driver turning left often quickly turn into complex legal cases. Sometimes, it's because the driver denies doing anything wrong. Other times, it's the at-fault driver's insurance company that does everything it can to deny your injury claim and not pay you the money you deserve.

Whatever the circumstances of your case, the Boston pedestrian accident attorneys at the [Law Offices of Mark E. Salomone](#) can help you demand the money you deserve. Our lawyers can move quickly to investigate your accident, gather evidence, and build a strong case. We understand how devastating these injuries can be and how much victims depend on fair compensation to move forward.

If you or a loved one was struck by a left-turning driver in Massachusetts, [contact us](#) and schedule a [free case evaluation](#). Our law firm has recovered over \$1 billion for injury victims and their families across the state. We can answer your questions, explain your rights, deal directly with insurance companies and fight for the justice and compensation you deserve. We have offices in 10 locations conveniently located throughout Massachusetts.