MUTUAL OF ENUMCLAW



Driver Safety Handbook

A Driver Safety Program at your business can reduce incidents and show your employees you care about their health and well-being. We've put together these tips to help you manage safer operation of your company's motor vehicles.

Contents

Focus on Careful Driving	4
Management Responsibility	5
Distracted Driving	7
Safety Promotion	9
Driver Selection	11
Driver Supervision & Training	13
MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) Evaluation Criteria	15
Maintenance of Equipment	16
Accident Investigation & Follow-Up	18
Additional Resources	21
What to Do in the Event of an Accident	22
Driver's Report at the Accident Scene	23
Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report	24
Vehicle Condition Report	25



Focus on Careful Driving

Whether your business operates just a few vehicles for running local errands or manages a large fleet of trucks, safe use of those vehicles can have a great impact on the company's bottom line. In fact, your business can save $3 in operating costs for every $1 spent on safety. But more importantly, a focus on careful driving helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of your employees. A responsible program of driver selection, training, supervision, and preventative maintenance can control motor vehicle risks and prevent accidents.

Reputation

When the company logo appears alongside dents or paint scrapes on a vehicle, the company's reputation is on the line. People may see this evidence of careless driving and wonder if the company is also careless about other aspects of its business, such as workmanship.

Business Costs

Vehicles that spend a lot of time in the shop cannot make deliveries on time. There may be additional costs associated with the rental of replacement vehicles, the hiring and training of new drivers, and the administration of these programs. A company that loses a customer's goodwill with late deliveries or damaged cargo can lose that customer's business.

Serious Accidents

Accidents can result in lost productivity and can drive up the company's auto and worker's compensation insurance costs. But that's just the beginning. No one wants to think about the worst, but the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that 19% of employee driving accidents are fatal. An injury or fatality resulting from a motor vehicle accident can be devastating to the employee, his or her family and the business.



Management Responsibility

Good safety management practices are the cornerstone of a profitable company. Nothing happens in a company without management support, so the success of the Driver Safety Program depends upon management's commitment and leadership.

This is best done in-house and not left to outsiders. Insurance companies, local police departments, and trucking associations are good sources for information and assistance, but the ultimate responsibility for the success of the program lies with company management.

Driver Safety Program

Develop and fully implement a safety program, assign accountability for each person's responsibilities, and evaluate the results. Don't be afraid to make changes if the results are less than expected. Policies, procedures, goals and accountabilities should be specific, documented, communicated, and kept up-to-date.

Professionalism

Build a sense of professionalism among the company drivers. Help the drivers feel proud of the good job they are doing when driving safely.

Ownership

Where possible, assign one vehicle to one driver. This encourages the driver to take ownership of that vehicle and take better care of it.

Maintenance

Show the driver that management cares by keeping vehicles clean and fixing defects as soon as possible.

Data Warehouse

Keep vehicle records, inspection records, policies/procedures, etc. in a location that is easily accessible to the Fleet Operator.

Technology

Use GPS to increase route efficiency and driver safety, while identifying areas of improvement for both driver and vehicle.

Route Planning

Preplanned routes with voice navigation are the safest way to go. Planning before departure reduces the tendency to check the map when the trip is already underway. And even when a driver has memorized the route, GPS can safely navigate around detours, traffic, or other delays.

Driver Monitoring

GPS can track speed and routes, and can alert management if a driver is over the speed limit or has deviated from a planned route.



Distracted Driving

Each year, thousands of U.S. motorists are killed and hundreds of thousands more are injured due to distraction-related crashes. Thankfully, there are things we can do to help educate drivers and inform better driving behavior.

Types of Distraction

- ***Visual:*** Looking at anything other than the road
- ***Manual:*** Taking one or both hands off the wheel
- ***Cognitive:*** Letting emotions dictate driving behavior or disrupt focus

Increased Risk of Accident



4x

Talking on the phone



8x

Texting



24x

Taking eyes off the road
(2 sec. or more)

It takes 27 seconds after a distraction for a driver to be fully engaged again.

Distracted Driving

It's important to have a no-distractions policy in place so employees know what is expected of them when they are behind the wheel.

Mobile Devices

The use of mobile devices in a vehicle. Drivers should keep mobile devices out of reach, set Do Not Disturb functions, and silence alerts. Consider outfitting company vehicles with technology that integrates approved mobile phones and/or devices.

GPS Navigation

Employees should program the route before driving and turn on voice commands before leaving. They shouldn't wait until they're lost to check the map! If they do need to look closely, they should pull over where it's safe to do so. When a smartphone doubles as GPS navigation, it should be placed in a secure dashboard cradle and not otherwise used.

Music & Podcasts

Trying to change the audio while driving is extremely dangerous, especially when it's streaming from a smart phone. Drivers should set up a playlist that lasts for the entire drive, and program the radio presets before driving.

Drowsiness

Company policy should make it clear that drivers are free to take breaks as needed to stay alert on the road.

Passengers

Have a policy regarding passengers in a company vehicle. When present, they must not distract the driver.

Eating, Drinking & Smoking

Drivers should avoid any activity that requires them to take a hand off the wheel.



Safety Promotion

Once management has adopted a Driver Safety Program and the basic steps have been put in place, driver safety can be promoted through contests, awards, posters, etc. Varying the types of promotions is more effective than running a series of the same kind.

Safety Contests

Safety contests should be well planned and conducted completely and consistently. They should be based on clear criteria over a set time period, with a prize for the group or individual attaining the best record according to the contest rules. Have fun but pay close attention; a poorly run contest can damage morale and make it difficult to successfully run contests in the future.

Teams

Competing in groups can be more motivating than against individuals. Groups should be natural units, such as departments or shifts, not arbitrary divisions.

Rules

These must be simple, easily understood and known to everyone from the beginning. Do not change the rules midway through the contest. The grading system must be fair to all groups.

Publicity

Talk up the contest before it starts, keep everyone informed of the progress with announcements, posters, etc. throughout the duration of the contest, and display the winners prominently. Good promotion of one safety contest builds interest in the next one.

Prizes

Prizes should create interest and be worth winning, but they don't have to be money. Have management cook a pancake breakfast for the winning group, give away special parking places for a month, or add to the group pride with jackets or hats Prizes that can be taken home are also very effective, with the added benefit of influencing drivers even when they're not at work. Other ideas such as coffee mugs, water bottles, pins, etc. can be customized with your safety message and are available through a variety of award companies.

Length & Frequency

Contests can be run for a few months to a year. Running a contest for a year encourages safe driving to become a habit. However, it may be difficult to keep enthusiasm high over such a long period. Contests of different durations should be tried to see what works best in your company. Management should be aware of drivers or groups who become ineligible for an award as they may lose interest in changing unsafe behavior and revert to their old ways.

Safety Awards

Safety awards serve several purposes: an inducement, a goodwill builder, a continuing reminder, and a publicity tool. To serve these purposes, an award must be meaningful and should be granted based on actual improvement of safety behavior. Drivers can be skeptical of awards that aren't hard-won or don't represent effort. The ultimate value of the award lies in its appeal to basic human factors: pride, recognition, competition, and desire for financial gain. Restaurant gift cards that can be shared with the family are very popular.

Award Ceremony

Presentation is very important. Awards should be selected that are worthy of good publicity, photograph well, and provoke conversation. Honoring drivers with their awards in front of their families or peer group is far more effective than doing so in private. Present the awards at the company picnic or hold a company function in a banquet room at a local hotel. Consider inviting VIPs, from inside the company or from the wider community, to make the presentation.

Safety Posters

Posters should be changed at least monthly or they will lose effectiveness. They can be rotated to different locations, or reused after a year or so. For maximum effectiveness, posters should be selected carefully, changed on a definite schedule, displayed attractively in a well lighted area, and placed where they will be seen by the greatest number of people. Smaller versions can be stuffed into paycheck envelopes so management can be sure that drivers see the message.

Different promotions can be run at the same time. For example, safety posters can be used in conjunction with a safety contest. Ask random drivers questions about the current safety posters; if they answer correctly, they win a prize.



Driver Selection

Pre-Hire Checklist for Fleet Drivers

Management is responsible for putting only qualified and safe drivers in its company vehicles. A good Driver Safety Program can help management select those good drivers and prevent a charge of negligence in the event of an accident.

Experience

Require at least three years experience operating a vehicle, particularly vehicles similar to those in the fleet. Alternately, require completion of a certified driving school program.

Minimum Age

Set a minimum age requirement of 25. Statistics show after age 25, people have more road experience and fewer accidents.

Driving Record

Have applicants bring their previous driving record. This will be a good indicator of how safely a person will operate your vehicle. Management should have a clear standard for what is considered acceptable.

Documentation

Document all information, such as driving record, road test, etc., in a secure place.

Drug Testing

Require drug screenings as part of the hiring process.

PBackground Check

Conduct a background check.

History

Require applicants to have a minimum of three years with a clean driving record before hiring will be considered.

Driving Test

Give the applicant a driving test to evaluate how they conduct themselves behind the wheel, to assess their courtesy to other drivers, and to see how they manage a variety of road conditions.

Other Hiring Considerations

In addition to the criteria outlined above, consider the following when selecting fleet drivers:

Medical Test

Have applicants provide a physician's statement that certifies they are physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle.

Trial to Hire

Instead of hiring full time immediately, hire temporarily on a "trial" to ensure safe driving habits and a good fit with the company.

Personal Vehicle Inspection

Take a look at the applicant's personal vehicle. A driver who keeps his or her personal vehicle neat and clean will probably be a safer driver, and will take better care of the company's equipment.

Commercial Driver's License

The law specifies the hiring procedures for drivers required to have a Commercial Driver's License so they are not listed here, but many of the same hiring practices are good to use for non-CDL drivers.



Driver Supervision & Training

Once you have hired a driver, continuous reinforcement of good driving practices is essential. There must be regular, ongoing accountability.

Orientation

Conduct sessions to introduce new employees (or current employees making a change) to their new vehicle. This is particularly important for larger and or more complex vehicles.

- Provide the new driver with a copy of your Driver Safety Program.
- Provide the new driver with necessary safety equipment.
- Have someone ride along with the new driver for several days to explain routes, areas or roads to stay away from, customer safety requirements, etc.

Safety Meetings

These can be a quick 10-minute discussion of a safety topic once a week, preferably at the start of the work week, or formal classroom discussion for longer times.

Safety Films

These can be found through trucking associations, the National Safety Council, insurance companies, state OSHA programs, etc. Some companies have a hard time getting all their drivers together at the same time to view a film. In these cases, there are resources available on the Internet, or equipment can be set up to allow drivers to view the film on their own schedules. The film should be changed monthly to be effective.

Outside Speakers

Drivers can attend off-site safety conferences, seminars, or classes, or classes can be held on the company premises. Outside speakers can help reinforce the company's safety message.

Route Maintenance

Ride along with each driver periodically and evaluate the hazards along the route. The route may need to be changed due to deteriorating road conditions or seasonal/temporary hazards, such as snow or construction.

Public Complaints

Discuss complaints with the driver carefully. Filter the complaints to see if there is a pattern before approaching the driver. Informing the driver about each and every complaint can damage employee morale.

Driver Assessment

Make an assessment of your drivers through road observations when they are not aware of being observed.

Progressive Discipline

Establish a progressive disciplinary policy that outlines what happens in the case of an accident, infraction, or policy violation. For example, a speeding violation or fender bender could result in a verbal warning, followed by a written warning for the second violation, and termination if there is a third.

For more serious violations, more serious penalties should be in place. For example, an at-fault accident for a driver with no other violations should result in a written warning, followed by termination if a second at-fault accident occurs.

A few things to keep in mind about your company's Progressive Discipline Policy:

- Employees should be aware of the policy, and it should be included in their orientation or training program.
- It should be flexible enough that otherwise great employees aren't let go because of a single mistake.
- It should also be flexible enough that one egregious violation can be grounds for termination.
- It should restate and/or refer to your distracted driving and mobile device policies.



MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) Evaluation Criteria

A driver with one of the following major violations appearing on his or her driving record in the past three years should be considered ineligible to operate a company vehicle:

- **DWI/DUI**
- **Reckless Driving**
- **Hit and Run, Leaving the Scene of an Accident**
- **Vehicular Assault**
- **Vehicular Manslaughter**
- **Driving while License Suspended, or Revoked**
- **Racing or Speed Contest**
- **Eluding a Police Officer**
- **Felony Utilizing a Vehicle**
- **Passing a Loading or Unloading school bus**

A driver with any combination of more than two preventable or at-fault accidents and/or the following moving violations in the past three years should be considered ineligible to operate a company vehicle

- **Exceeding Speed Limit**
- **Negligent Driving**
- **Failure to Obey Traffic Signal or Sign**
- **Too Fast for Conditions**
- **Following Too Close**
- **Improper Lane Use**
- **Crossing Center Line**
- **Wrong Way on a One Way**
- **Failure to Yield**
- **Improper Passing or Lane Change**
- **Other Moving Violations (Not Including Equipment Violations)**



Maintenance of Equipment

Inspections

Whether your company vehicles are maintained in-house or by local shops, it is management's responsibility to keep them in top mechanical condition. The driver is responsible for making sure the vehicle is operating as expected. Employees should complete pre-trip, on-the-road, and post-trip inspections daily, whether they are using an automobile or a full sized tractor/ trailer combination.

- Check that the tires are inflated, have adequate tread depth, and have no gouges, bubbles, or side damage.
- Inventory safety equipment (fire extinguisher, first aid kit, accident packet, traction aids, reflective warning signs, flashlight, etc.) to make sure that it is present and operating properly.
- Use the written checklist on page 24 so no item is overlooked.

Document the results and report defects to a supervisor or maintenance personnel promptly. The driver should receive a timely response as to the action taken to correct the defect. The supervisor should review inspection forms periodically to make sure drivers are routinely completing them.

Preventative Maintenance

Many mechanics do more frequent repairs or replacements, but at minimum you should follow the manufacturer's preventative maintenance schedule. Wash and clean vehicles on a regular basis. Drivers appreciate being in a clean vehicle and tend to treat it with more care and consideration. Quickly replace or repair the radio, air conditioning, and other things that may distract the drivers if they aren't functioning properly.

Mechanical Work & Repair

Keeping meticulous maintenance records can lead to fewer accidents. And if an accident does occur, management may need the maintenance records to help fight a claim or lawsuit. Review them periodically—if a vehicle is receiving more repairs than others, it can indicate that the driver is rough on the equipment, and may not be a safe driver.

PLockout/Tagout

A Lockout/Tagout program prevents someone from jumping in a vehicle that shouldn't be on the road. When a vehicle is in need of service and awaiting repair, a lockout tag should be installed so no one can use it by mistake before the repair is completed.



Accident Investigation & Follow-Up

Accident Investigation

Drivers should report all company vehicle accidents to their supervisors, even small things like:

- A fender bender on company property.
- A scrape or dent that costs less than the insurance deductible to repair.
- Minor damage that can be repaired or replaced in-house.

Even minor damage can be an indication that a driver has a problem. It's better to address these early on, before they lead to a major accident. Management should regularly inspect company vehicles to make sure that drivers are not failing to report things like minor scrapes, dents, missing reflectors, etc.

The supervisor should seek to thoroughly understand the cause of an accident. The driver may be reluctant to provide details if the accident is his or her fault. Provide regular training so drivers know they should immediately fill out a detailed report form (page 22), and also sketch a diagram of the accident showing the location and direction of travel of each vehicle. At the same time, the supervisor should ask careful questions and contact witnesses to get the full story. The form on page 23 can be used by a supervisor to document findings. If possible, the supervisor should visit the scene of the accident to get a better understanding of what happened, and carefully review a copy of the police report.

Keep an accident reporting form, sketch paper, witness cards, pen or pencil, and a camera in each company vehicle.

Accident Follow-Up

An accident is defined as an occurrence that results in any amount of property damage and/or any kind of personal injury, no matter how serious, how many people are injured, or who they are. It is considered preventable if the driver fails to use every means possible to prevent the occurrence.

There should be a procedure in place for making the determination of whether an accident or any other incident involving a company vehicle was preventable or non-preventable. Management can make the decision on its own, or by peer review. Peer review committees tend to hold drivers to a higher standard than management alone.

A driver is expected to avoid accidents in spite of the wrong actions of other drivers and in spite of any adverse road, weather, or driving conditions.

Peer Review

Committee

This should consist of three to five drivers and a member of management. Members should be rotated so that everyone gets experience with the procedure.

Meetings

They should meet within a week of an accident, or monthly if there are frequent accidents or incidents to discuss.

Process

The committee should have all the photos and written documents of the accident. The driver should attend in order to tell the details of the story and answer questions. All accidents should be judged impartially, without consideration of gender, age, tenure with the company, years of experience, or previous accidents.

Decision

After the committee presents their recommendation, the final determination is made by management. An accident must be found to be either preventable or non-preventable—there is no partially preventable. The committee should use a secret ballot to make its judgment so that the members do not have to worry about repercussions. The driver should be notified in writing of the determination.

Action

Management should have a clearly defined Progressive Disciplinary Policy in place, outlining what action is to be taken after a driver has a preventable accident or incident. This action can be disciplinary, additional education, or a combination of the two. At the very least:

- Keep a record of the incident in the driver's personnel file for three years.
- Revoke and/or disqualify the driver from safety awards or recognition for a year.
- Decide if the driver still meets the established criteria for an acceptable driving record.
- DO NOT retain drivers with consistently poor records.

Peer Review

Appeals

If management chooses to have an appeal process, it should be established from the beginning. Management should be very careful about overruling any of the committee's decisions. To be effective, the committee must feel that its efforts are taken seriously.



Additional Resources

- **What to do in the event of an accident**
- **Supervisor's accident investigation report**
- **Driver's report at the accident scene**
- **Vehicle condition report**



What to Do in the Event of An Accident

Be careful when exiting a vehicle after an accident. Wait for traffic to stop, or look very carefully if traffic continues to move around the accident scene.

1. Call for medical assistance for anyone who is hurt.
2. Take precautions to protect the vehicles involved in the accident from being hit by oncoming traffic, protect the scene of the accident from fire, and try to prevent environmental damage from engine or cargo fluids leaking into nearby storm drains. Place warning reflectors behind the scene or station someone to direct traffic to allow oncoming traffic to slow or stop in time. Do NOT use flares if there is any possibility of a gasoline spill.
3. Get the names of any witnesses and note them on the accident report form. Additional witnesses can be written on the back of the form.
4. Diagram the scene and the placement of all vehicles involved. Fill out the description of the accident as soon as possible.
5. Take plenty of pictures of all vehicles, the position of the vehicles, the road conditions, and any signs or hazards that may have contributed to the accident from multiple angles and distances. Get photos of the complete skid marks, if any.
6. If it is legal and the vehicles are drivable, move them off to the side of the road. Call the police or state patrol in any serious accident. Remain at the accident scene until released by the authorities.
7. Do not make any statements of responsibility for the accident. In some states, even saying “I’m sorry” can be a statement of responsibility. Of course, any questions asked by investigating police officers should be answered, but do not provide additional information or opinions.
8. When it is safe to do so, contact your supervisor and report the incident.
9. Keep a copy of this page inside each company vehicle.

Driver's Report at the Accident Scene

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____

Location of Accident: _____

Name of Driver: _____ Vehicle: _____

Witnesses' Names & Statements: _____

_____

_____

Witnesses' Names & Statements: _____

_____

_____

Witnesses' Names & Statements: _____

_____

_____

Description of Accident: _____

_____

_____

Date: _____ By: _____

Give this form to the driver and keep it in the vehicle at all times.

Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____

Location of Accident: _____

Name of Driver: _____ Vehicle: _____

Description of Accident: _____

_____

_____

Unsafe acts and/or unsafe conditions: _____

_____

_____

Action to be taken to prevent reoccurrences: _____

_____

Date: _____ By: _____

Supervisor should visit the scene, interview the driver and witnesses, and use this form to document findings following an accident.

Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report

Name of Driver: _____ Vehicle: _____

Date: _____ Odometer Reading: _____

Check any defective items found and describe them below:

Outside Vehicle

- ☐ Headlights
- ☐ Parking Lights
- ☐ Fog Lights (if any)
- ☐ Tail Lights
- ☐ Brake Lights
- ☐ Turn Signals
- ☐ Hazard Lights
- ☐ Tires

Inside Vehicle

- ☐ Turn Signals
- ☐ Hazard Lights
- ☐ Wipers
- ☐ Windshield Washer
- ☐ Front Window Defroster
- ☐ Rear Window Defroster
- ☐ Brakes
- ☐ Rearview Mirror
- ☐ Side Mirrors
- ☐ Seat Belts
- ☐ Horn
- ☐ Heater
- ☐ Air Conditioning
- ☐ Fire Extinguisher
- ☐ Refectors/Flares
- ☐ Spare Fuses
- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Accident Packet

☐ No Defects

Comments or Defect Descriptions: _____

_____

☐ Defects corrected.

☐ Correction of defects not required for safe operation of vehicle, but will be repaired soon.

Mechanic's Signature: _____

Keep several copies of this form in each company vehicle. Drivers should inspect the vehicle before, during, and after each trip.