



# DRIVER SAFETY AND FLEET MANAGEMENT

## KEY STRATEGIES AND BEST PRACTICES

Establishing and executing a strong driver safety and fleet management program pays for itself every day. With Builders Mutual's Drive to Protect program, you can equip your team with the knowledge to prioritize the safety of your workers, others on the road, and your bottom line.

These Key Strategies and Best Practices outline ways to help you build and maintain an effective driver safety and fleet management program that include critical details and tips on:

- Managing The Fleet
- Driver Management
- Accidents
- Monitoring Vehicles and Drivers
- Large Trucks – DOT Requirements

---

## MANAGING THE FLEET

### Management Commitment

Employee behavior can greatly influence a company's loss experience, either positively or negatively. Since employees often mirror management's commitment, it is crucial for management to set clear goals and controls for the company. Therefore, the success of the fleet safety and employee safety program must be rooted in strong management support. Senior leadership should ensure the allocation of adequate staff and financial resources to manage and sustain the overall fleet safety program. Moreover, actively promoting employee participation and engagement at all levels is an effective strategy that contributes to the program's success.

### Vehicle Selection

Vehicle selection can directly influence driver safety and operational efficiency.

- Evaluate crash test ratings and safety features like airbags and stability control.
- Choose vehicles suited to their specific tasks, considering factors like braking systems and visibility.
- Incorporate advanced technologies such as collision detection, traction control, and lane-keeping assist to mitigate risks.
- Consider vehicles offering maximum fuel efficiency and adequate towing capacities to ensure safety and efficiency during their specific use in the company.
- Prioritize safety to reduce accidents and maintain high operational standards.

### Maintenance

Regular maintenance helps enhance vehicle reliability and prevent accidents caused by mechanical failures.

- Create a file for each vehicle to stay organized. Keep inspection forms, maintenance records and repair receipts, registration, and other information in the file.
- Conduct regular inspections to help identify issues like worn brakes, tire defects, engine malfunctions, and faulty lights.
- Document all repairs and service work done by local repair shops.
- If repairs are done in-house, consider keeping frequently used items, such as brakes, oil, and oil filters in stock to help prevent disruptions in service.
- Well-maintained vehicles boost driver confidence, reducing stress and improving performance.

### Inspections

Vehicle inspections ensure vehicles are in optimal condition to prevent accidents.

## MANAGING THE FLEET (CONTINUED)

### Inspections (continued)

- Inspections help identify problems like brake wear, tire degradation, and engine issues before they escalate.
- Consistent inspections help fleets adhere to safety regulations, minimizing the risk of legal penalties and fines.
- Inspections are proactive by preventing costly breakdowns, reducing downtime, and improving overall fleet performance.
- Ensuring vehicles are in top condition protects drivers, cargo, and other road users, fostering a culture of responsibility within the fleet.

### Inventory

Effective inventory management ensures vehicles are well-equipped, maintained, and operationally ready.

- Maintain accurate records of safety equipment like first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, reflective vests, and warning triangles/cones.
- Track vehicle parts and maintenance supplies to enable timely service and prevent mechanical failures.
- Inventory management helps compliance with safety regulations.

---

## DRIVER MANAGEMENT

### Hiring/Driver Selection

Hiring the right drivers is essential for fleet safety, reducing accident risks, and ensuring operational reliability. Skilled, responsible drivers help ensure the safety of vehicles, cargo, and other road users.

- Job Descriptions: Include driving in jobs that require driving company vehicles and include the type of driver's license required for each position.
- Application Form: Use written applications to gather information in areas specific to the job description.
- In-Person Interview: During the interview, ask about driving responsibilities and experience with the types of vehicles at other companies.
- Medical Fitness for Duty: Certain medical conditions and treatments can directly affect driving abilities and performance. Drivers should be checked by a medical professional to see if they can safely operate a vehicle.
- Employment Background Checks: Perform employment background checks to verify/confirm previous jobs and experience in certain vehicles or equipment.
- Criminal Background Checks: Perform criminal background checks, especially for certain positions involving exposure to colleges, schools, and children.
- Probationary Period: Include a 30-90 day probationary period to train and monitor drivers to help ensure they are gaining skills and demonstrating safe driving behaviors. Use the period to provide training, ride-alongs, and provide guidance/direction, reinforcing the company's commitment to safety.
- Prior Experience: For large DOT-regulated trucks, require a minimum of 2 years CDL experience.
- Drug Testing: Complete drug testing per company and DOT requirements, if applicable.
- Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Checks: Review driving history, status of licenses, and moving violations and accident involvements. Develop guidelines for MVRs to determine acceptability guidelines.
- Road Tests: Consider road tests to assess actual skills in vehicles (and equipment) to be operated by the driver.

### Behavior Feedback

Providing feedback on driving behavior promotes driver improvement and reinforces safe practices.

- Use telematics data, coaching, or performance reviews to identify and address risky behaviors like harsh braking or speeding.
- Enhance driver awareness and foster accountability through constructive feedback.
- Feedback fosters a culture of continuous improvement, lowering accident rates and near misses.

### Record Keeping

Maintaining accurate fleet records is crucial for ensuring compliance, accountability, and operational efficiency.

- Track driver behavior and performance to identify risks and implement corrective actions.
- Schedule and document regular maintenance to prevent breakdowns and extend vehicle lifespan.
- Keep detailed records of accidents and incidents to analyze causes and prevent future occurrences.
- Maintain documentation to meet legal requirements and avoid costly penalties and fines.
- Analyze data on vehicle usage and fuel consumption to make cost-effective decisions.

## DRIVER MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

### MVR Check - Initial and Ongoing

Regularly reviewing drivers' Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) is essential for fleet safety, providing insight into driving histories and risk levels.

- MVR checks reveal patterns of unsafe driving, such as speeding violations, DUIs, and accidents, enabling proactive interventions to prevent incidents.
- Monitoring MVRs helps businesses adhere to safety regulations and company policies, reducing liability, and avoiding legal penalties.
- Regular MVR reviews support informed decisions regarding driver retention, training, and corrective actions, fostering a culture of accountability.
- Continuous monitoring contributes to overall road safety by ensuring that only qualified and responsible drivers operate company vehicles.

### Drug Testing

Implementing a comprehensive drug testing program is essential for fleet safety, ensuring drivers are fit to operate vehicles and reducing accident risks.

- Regular drug testing helps identify drivers under the influence, mitigating accident risks and enhancing road safety.
- Adhering to mandated drug testing protocols helps fleets comply with safety regulations, reducing liability and legal penalties.
- Consistent testing fosters a culture of responsibility, deterring substance abuse and encouraging safe driving behaviors.
- Identifying and addressing substance abuse among drivers safeguards lives and protects company property from costly accidents.

### Hired & Non-Owned Auto

For those employees who may drive personal vehicles for work purposes, ensure the following controls are in place:

- Verify the owner of the vehicle has an auto liability insurance policy in place. Obtain certificates of insurance.
- Verify limits of liability coverage. Consider adopting minimum limits.
- Check the policy to see if there is no business exclusion on the individual's policy.
- Include these employees in MVR checks along with other company drivers.
- Verify the vehicle is in overall good working order with any appropriate state-issued inspections current.

---

## ACCIDENTS

### How to Handle

If an employee is involved in an accident while driving a company vehicle, they should know to follow these steps to ensure safety, compliance, and proper reporting.

- **Check for Injuries & Ensure Safety:** Employees should assess themselves and others for injuries. If there are serious injuries, call 911 immediately. If it's safe to do so, move the vehicle out of traffic to prevent further accidents.
- **Call Emergency Services:** Contact law enforcement to report the accident, even if it seems minor. A police report can help with insurance and liability claims.
- **Notify Your Employer:** Employees should inform their supervisor or fleet manager as soon as possible and follow company procedures for reporting accidents.
- **Document the Scene:** Take photos of vehicle damage (include all vehicles involved), license plates, road conditions, and any relevant road signs or signals. Collect names and contact information from witnesses.
- **Exchange Information:** Obtain the names, contact details, insurance information, and vehicle details of any other drivers involved in the accident.
- **Avoid Admitting Fault:** Do not admit responsibility or make statements about fault. Let the insurance companies and authorities determine liability.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** Even if the employee feels fine, some injuries may not be immediately apparent. A medical evaluation can document any potential issues.
- **Complete an Incident Report:** Follow company policies for submitting an accident report, including providing all necessary details and documentation.
- **Cooperate with Investigations:** Provide accurate information to insurance adjusters and company representatives as needed.
- **Follow Up:** Employees should always stay in touch with their employer and insurance provider to ensure all necessary steps are completed and any required repairs or medical claims are addressed.

## ACCIDENTS (CONTINUED)

### Documentation

Maintain a comprehensive accident file by promptly completing an incident report and organizing all related documents. This ensures easy reference and accurate documentation for future needs.

- Complete the incident report immediately to preserve accurate details.
- Keep medical records, repair estimates, and insurance correspondence.
- Collect witness statements and any other relevant paperwork.

### Photographs

Capture clear and comprehensive photographs after an auto accident to document evidence effectively.

- Take wide shots of the entire accident scene.
- Capture close-ups of vehicle damage and license plates.
- Photograph road conditions, traffic signs, and skid marks.
- Include injuries and any visible property damage.
- Ensure good lighting and multiple angles for clarity.
- Record timestamps, if possible, for accurate documentation.

### Witnesses

Witness statements are crucial after an auto accident because they provide an objective account of what happened, which can help establish and clarify disputed details.

- Witnesses offer independent viewpoints that may support or challenge the drivers' accounts.
- Their testimony can help determine who was responsible for the accident.
- Insurers rely on witness statements to assess claims accurately.
- If the case goes to court, witness testimony can serve as strong evidence.
- Witnesses may notice crucial details that those involved might miss due to stress or injury.

---

## MONITORING VEHICLES AND DRIVERS

### Telematics

Telematics in company vehicles use GPS and data tracking to improve safety, efficiency, and fleet management.

- Monitors vehicle location, speed, and driving behavior.
- Helps reduce fuel costs by optimizing routes and reducing idle time.
- Enhances driver safety by identifying risky driving behaviors.
- Assists in vehicle maintenance by tracking usage and service needs.
- Provides valuable data for insurance claims and compliance with regulations.

### Cameras

Integrating cameras into company vehicles offers numerous advantages that enhance safety, accountability, and operational efficiency.

- **Accident Documentation:** Cameras provide objective visual evidence of incidents, aiding in determining fault and expediting insurance claims.
- **Driver Behavior Monitoring:** Video footage allows for the identification and correction of risky driving habits, promoting safer practices and reducing accident rates.
- **Fraud Prevention:** Recorded evidence can deter and disprove fraudulent claims, helping protect the company from unwarranted liabilities.
- **Enhanced Training:** Real-life footage serves as a valuable tool for training drivers, illustrating best practices and areas needing improvement.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Combining cameras with GPS tracking offers insights into route optimization and vehicle utilization, leading to improved efficiency.
- **Asset Protection:** Continuous monitoring helps in safeguarding vehicles from theft and vandalism, helping to ensure the security of company assets.

Implementing camera systems in fleet vehicles not only fosters a culture of safety and accountability but also contributes to the overall success and reputation of the company.

## MONITORING VEHICLES AND DRIVERS (CONTINUED)

### GPS Tracking

GPS tracking devices in fleet programs can enhance operational efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness.

- Provides real-time visibility into fleet vehicle locations.
- Aids in recovery of stolen vehicles.
- Helps track unauthorized vehicle usage.
- Identifies the most efficient routes, reducing fuel consumption and travel times.
- Helps determine trends and patterns in routes.

### Coaching Drivers

By providing training and feedback, you can help develop the driving skills of anyone who gets behind the wheel.

- Develop a structured coaching plan. Create a clear agenda for each session to maintain focus and efficiency.
- Utilize data-driven feedback. Employ telematics and real-time data to provide objective insights into driving behaviors.
- Encourage open communication.
- Use the opportunities to introduce new training or provide re-training.
- Emphasize continuous improvement to all drivers.

---

## LARGE TRUCKS - DOT REQUIREMENTS

A commercial fleet that contains heavy trucks such as dump trucks, boom crane trucks, or other trucks used to transport equipment and/or supplies may be subject to DOT safety rules and guidelines. Some of the areas of compliance are listed below, however please see the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's website (<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>) for a comprehensive list and detailed information.

- Commercial Driver License (CDL) held by all drivers of large trucks
- Obtaining a Motor Carrier number
- Electronic logging of drivers' on- and off-duty service
- Log of all vehicle accidents
- Maintaining a vehicle list
- Vehicle inspection reports
- Vehicle maintenance records
- Driver qualification files
- Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) for all CDL drivers
- Alcohol and Drug Policy and Testing (<https://www.transportation.gov/odapc>).
- Medical Examination Certificate
- Roadside Inspections
- State DOT Inspection Programs

## NEED HELP WITH IMPLEMENTATION OR TRAINING?

Reach out to your Risk Management consultant with any questions or to schedule a training session. Not sure who your consultant is? Visit [buildersmutual.com/rm](http://buildersmutual.com/rm) to find a consultant in your area.