

Loss Control Program

The cost of motor vehicle accidents both to human life and corporate bottom lines is staggering. The cost has not only been reflected in higher auto liability and worker compensation insurance premiums, but also in business disruptions and employee injuries. Today, fleet accidents account for ten percent of all job related disabling injuries and thirty percent of all job related deaths. The magnitude of the problem demands a sound loss control effort to minimize its impact whenever vehicle operations are part of a business. The guidelines shown below can be used to develop a program that will meet your particular needs.

I. Driver Selection

- A. A written plan providing hiring criteria should exist. It should address acceptable driving experience, motor vehicle records and physical condition of prospective driver.
- B. Employment application. All new drivers should complete an application that provides employment history, driving experience, necessary personnel information, medical history, etc.
- C. Reference checks. Documented reference checks must be made with previous employers to verify past driving experience.
- D. Motor Vehicle Records. Motor Vehicle Records should be ordered on all prospective drivers before hiring. MVRs should be followed up at least annually. Uniform criteria should be established to determine the acceptability of driving records.
- E. Road tests. Drivers should be tested in a vehicle of the type they will be required to operate in order to determine familiarity with equipment, ability to operate it under various conditions that will be encountered, driving attitude and awareness of motor vehicle laws.
- F. Indoctrination. Drivers should be advised that they are on a probationary status until their driving abilities and attitudes are considered adequate.

II. Preventative Maintenance

- A. Assigned Vehicles. Drivers should be assigned to specific vehicles in order to establish accountability for all losses and to instill a sense of pride and care for that assigned vehicle.
- B. Driver Inspection. Prior to leaving the terminal, it should be inspected by the insured to verify it is in safe operating condition. Any deficiencies found should be reported to the maintenance department for correction before the vehicle leaves the terminal. Upon returning to the terminal, the driver should sign off, indicating any changes in the condition of the vehicle.
- C. Vehicle Replacement. Criteria should be established and strictly followed for replacement vehicles due to mileage, maintenance costs, age or some other valid criteria.

III. Accident Review

- A. Reporting. An accident report form must be completed by the driver immediately after an accident.
- B. Investigation. All accidents should be investigated by a fleet safety person to determine the cause of the accident and to 1) retrain the driver to prevent reoccurrence, 2) identify poor maintenance procedures, 3) identify extra hazardous routes and consider alternative routing, 4) identify accident trends, and 5) serve as a basis for a driver disciplinary action program.