

## Driver selection: Who is driving your vehicles?



Did you realize that your company's liability limits go with each vehicle associated with your operations? Driver selection could be one of your most important risk management decisions. Every effort should be made to select the most qualified person to drive on behalf of your company. Prior to assigning driving privileges to any employee, the following sample guidelines should be incorporated into your fleet safety program:

### **Determine who is driving for your company**

By determining who is driving for your company, you can determine what types of driving they are doing and adjust your controls and testing accordingly. Most companies have drivers that may fall into the following categories:

- Occasional drivers; drive two or three times per month, short trips, using their personal auto for company business.
- Employees driving company-owned or leased-by-the-company vehicles. This may include employees with commercial driver licenses.
- Non-employees driving company autos. For example, you allow personal use of your private passenger autos and the spouse of your employee is allowed to drive it, too.

### **Employment application**

Every person who may be driving on behalf of your company (a company vehicle or using their personal auto) should be required to fill out a formal application. This application can help you determine if this person has the qualifications and background needed to fulfill the position requirements. On these applications, their driver's license number and expiration date should be obtained.

As part of the employment application process, a visual inspection of the driver's license should be made. This will help you determine and identify if the license is valid, the expiration date and if the applicant has the correct type of license (Class A, B or C) for the position. A front and back photocopy of the license should be retained in their personnel file.

References should be requested of the candidate. A written release should be obtained prior to contacting past employers. Depending upon the job description and the amount of driving required for this position, the following questions should be asked of their previous employer: verification of their employment dates, job description of the previous job, types of vehicles driven, and evaluation of their job performance.

This application should also request the applicant to disclose any accidents or violations they have had within the past three to five years.

If you have a drug testing policy, conduct a substance (drug) test.

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### Job descriptions

To ensure the applicant meets the essential requirements for the position, job descriptions should be established. These written job descriptions should identify the work activities of the job, skill level, and experience needed, as well as potential driving activities. This is a good way to determine if an owned auto should be used or a non-owned auto could be used for this position.

### Interviewing the applicant

This allows you to have a face-to-face discussion regarding the data they provided on the application and a chance to review the job description. Their experience, qualifications and knowledge of the position can be further assessed at this point. Their attitude will reflect their interest in the position and allow you to determine if they are a good potential candidate to represent your company. This is a good time to discuss the candidates past driving violations, safety awards and driving experience.

During this interview, the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) restricts questions regarding physical condition, past medical history, and/or if they have a disability. However, by reviewing the job description you can inquire about the candidate's ability to perform the essential job functions.

### Motor vehicle records

To be eligible to drive a company vehicle or a personal vehicle on behalf of the company, all drivers must have an acceptable motor vehicle record (MVR), which will be pulled before they are allowed to operate a company vehicle. An MVR will then be ordered at least annually to assist the company in their fleet risk management process.

The company has established a standard method of evaluating MVRs to determine a driver's eligibility. The table below outlines the types of violations. State-specific guidelines may be used to determine a driver's eligibility; such guidelines will be available for review if they are to be used.

Type A Violations	Type B Violations
Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol	Failure to yield the right of way
Racing and reckless or careless driving	Failure to obey traffic signs or signals
Leaving the scene conviction or hit and run	Speeding more than 20 mph over over the posted speed limit, three or more times in a three-year period
Refusing to take a substance test	Accidents: two preventable accidents in a 12-month period
Evading police	License suspended or revoked due to previous safety or moving violations
Operating a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony or a vehicular homicide, assault or manslaughter conviction	
Driving with an open container (alcohol)	
Failure to report an accident	
Operating a motor vehicle during a period of suspension or revocation of a license	



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### Employees driving their personal autos for company business

These employees should be subject to all the above criteria and the following:

1. Inspections of their vehicles should be completed on a regular basis. Privately owned autos may not be on a regular maintenance program. If an auto is not properly maintained, such as the brakes, it could be a significant factor causing an accident. The vehicle should be evaluated to ensure it is in safe operating order.
2. The owner of the auto should be required to show proof of insurance. The limits of insurance should be a combined single limit with a minimum of \$300,000.

### Road test

If a candidate or existing employee is going to be driving a vehicle with any special attachments; booms; vans; truck and trailer units; or hauling special equipment or loads (liquid or live loads), a test should be devised that will allow the operator to demonstrate their skills and judgment. This test should simulate situations that the driver will encounter during their normal job functions. This may include special training on watching for overhead power lines while running the boom or unloading device, backing a semi-trailer into an alley and up to docks, as well as general education on overhead obstructions, such as awnings and canopies. Vehicle inspection and maintenance inspections should also be part of this training.

### Additional requirements for commercial vehicle drivers

1. For drivers of commercial vehicles (over 10,001 pounds gross weight, but less than 26,000 pounds) the following applies:
  - They must have a Department of Transportation (DOT) driver qualification file established.
  - Optional substance (drug and/or alcohol) testing.
  - They must have a physical examination. The driver must carry this card with them at all times and a copy should be retained in their personnel file.
2. For drivers of commercial vehicles with a gross weight of greater than 26,000 pounds, the following applies:
  - All of the above requirements for drivers operating vehicles 10,001 pounds and greater.
  - Each driver is required to have substance testing. This testing must meet Department of Transportation guidelines: post offer, random, post accident and suspension.
  - Always verify state and federal laws prior to enforcing any program.

### Resources

UFG Sample Fleet Safety Program: [www.ufginsurance.com/insurance/services/risk-control/fleet-safety](http://www.ufginsurance.com/insurance/services/risk-control/fleet-safety)

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration–FMCSR–19DFR Part 390.5: <http://fmcsa.dot.gov/>

**Motor vehicle records can be obtained through your state's department of motor vehicles (DMV) or public safety department. In all cases, the employee must sign a pre-authorization form.**

### Optional vendors:

Unofficial Guide to the DMV: <http://www.dmv.org/>

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