



Safety Bulletin
September 2026

Reducing motor vehicle accidents while driving for work

Why This Matters

Motor vehicle crashes remain one of the leading causes of workplace deaths. Employees who drive as part of their job—including fleet vehicles, utility vehicles, emergency vehicles, pool cars, and personal vehicles used for agency business—are exposed to roadway hazards every time they travel.

The Numbers

According to the latest complete U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, 5,070 workers died from occupational injuries in 2024. Transportation incidents accounted for 1,937 deaths, or 38.2% of all workplace fatalities.

In 2024:

1,146 workers were killed in roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles. 369 workers were killed in pedestrian incidents involving motorized vehicles. Transportation incidents remained the leading category of fatal occupational injuries. Transportation and material-moving occupations experienced 1,391 fatal work injuries. Nationally, NHTSA estimates that 39,345 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2024.

Employer Responsibilities

Employers should establish and enforce a comprehensive motor vehicle safety program that includes:

1. Written Safety Policy

Address seat belts, distracted driving, impaired and drowsy driving, speeding, vehicle maintenance, backing, accident reporting, and use of personal vehicles for business.

2. Driver Qualification

Verify appropriate licenses, review motor vehicle records, establish minimum driver qualifications, and provide initial and refresher training.

3. Distracted Driving

Prohibit texting and other activities that divert the driver's attention. Employees should pull over before using a phone, entering navigation information, or performing other distracting activities.

4. Seat Belts

Require every employee and passenger to wear a seat belt on every trip, regardless of distance.



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5. Speed Management

Require compliance with posted speed limits and adjustment of speed for traffic, weather, visibility, road conditions, and work zones. Work schedules must allow sufficient travel time so employees are not pressured to speed.

6. Fatigue Management

Monitor excessive work hours and require employees to stop driving when fatigue makes continued driving unsafe.

7. Vehicle Maintenance

Implement documented preventive maintenance and daily/driver inspections. Safety defects should be corrected before the vehicle is returned to service.

8. Backing Safety

Avoid backing whenever possible. Use walk-arounds, spotters, cameras, and other controls when backing cannot be avoided.

9. Vehicle Selection

Consider crash-test ratings and available safety technologies such as automatic emergency braking, forward collision warning, blind-spot monitoring, lane-departure warning, and rear cameras.

10. Crash Investigation

Investigate all crashes and significant near misses to identify root causes and corrective actions—not simply to determine fault.

MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Written motor vehicle safety policy
- ☐ Driver qualification and MVR review
- ☐ Initial and refresher driver training
- ☐ Mandatory seat-belt policy
- ☐ Distracted-driving prohibition
- ☐ Fatigue and impaired-driving controls
- ☐ Preventive vehicle maintenance
- ☐ Backing and pedestrian safety procedures
- ☐ Crash and near-miss investigation



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☐ Annual program review

Key Message

Driving is part of the job—and safety doesn't stop when you leave the workplace.

Slow down. Buckle up. Put the phone down. Stay alert. If conditions are unsafe, stop and report the problem.

Risk Management Recommendation: Employers should review their motor vehicle safety program at least annually and following any serious crash, significant near miss, change in fleet composition, or change in job duties.