



10 essential tips for building your road safety program

Safe driving starts before anyone gets behind the wheel.

1

Understand your obligations to your drivers

All employers are legally required to protect the health and safety of their workers. This includes taking every reasonable precaution to make sure the workplace is safe, training employees about hazards and the safe use of equipment, and immediately reporting all critical injuries. Road safety can be complicated because it involves both provincial and federal law. Know your responsibilities!

2

Establish your commitment

The success of your road safety program depends on your commitment to safety. You need to give your drivers the necessary resources and training, and be actively engaged in implementing road safety measures. Management must demonstrate full support of the safety plan and always lead by example.

3

Engage and communicate with your employees

The active involvement of all employees is essential for your road safety program's success. You must rely on your employees to contribute to your program: they know the most about the hazards they encounter regularly. Engage workers with regular safety meetings, listen to their suggestions, and respond to their comments. Communicate *with* your workers rather than *to* them.

4

Identify hazards, evaluate risks, and define safety measures

Ask your drivers what they regard as dangerous. Have them think about hazards posed by the driver (e.g., fatigue, distraction, or skill limitations), the vehicle (substandard equipment or maintenance), and the journey (road, weather, or traffic conditions). How well you recognize, evaluate, and understand these hazards will define how well you can build safety measures to prevent them.

5

Develop policies and safe work procedures

Develop policies that describe the plan for action. Clearly state that management is committed to carrying out the road safety program and describe the duties of all managers, supervisors, and employees. Safe work procedures should describe the steps employees need to take to minimize the risk caused by a hazard. For example, what drivers need to do before getting behind the wheel and what is expected of them while they are driving.

6

Establish a driver selection and review process

How often does your organization require its drivers to submit a current driver's abstract? Who reviews it? How do supervisors evaluate skills and driving behaviour to confirm that the drivers are qualified to do the work you assign? All of these factors should be a part of your driver selection and review process.

7

Adopt vehicle selection, inspection, and maintenance processes

Decide what safety features and equipment are necessary for the vehicles your company uses. Vehicles used for different purposes will require different features and specifications. When buying new vehicles, look for safety features (such as electronic stability control and forward collision warning systems) that help drivers avoid collisions or reduce the severity of injuries. Obtain crash-test rating information from reputable insurance companies and vehicle manufacturers. Conduct regular vehicle inspections and maintenance.

8

Implement an incident management process

Unwelcome as it is, a motor vehicle incident is an opportunity to identify and understand gaps in your road safety program. By taking steps to fill those gaps, you can ensure that similar incidents don't happen in the future. Decide what events will be reported (e.g., near misses and collisions), how they will be investigated, who will be involved in the investigation, and how the follow-up actions in the report will be taken and tracked.

9

Decide how you will put your safety program into effect

Who will manage and administer the program? Set up a document management system, or adapt existing processes to include road safety, if possible. Create tools to explain procedures and track results. For example, both online reporting and hard copy forms may be needed. Make sure drivers have the necessary training, equipment, and resources to follow the right procedures.

10

Evaluate and improve your program

Designate a group of individuals, such as Health and Safety Committee members with management and employee representatives, to review the organization's results every year. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of the existing measures and proposing ways to improve future performance. Road safety is a process of continual improvement.



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