

Tips for Employees Who Drive

Your employer has important obligations to protect each of their employee's health and safety, including when employees are operating a motor vehicle in the course of their work. However, in very practical terms, road safety has to be a partnership between your employer and you. Your employer can develop any number of good policies and procedures, but none of them will work until you apply them.

Some employers find it challenging to implement road safety measures. When employees are driving they are not at a specific site, so it can be difficult for a supervisor to observe or direct that work. The driving environment is dynamic - road, weather and traffic conditions change frequently. It's tough to write a policy or procedure to address every possible event a driver may encounter.

Your employer is partially relying on you to conscientiously apply your training, driving skills and good judgement plus the procedures explained in the road safety plan. More importantly, your family and friends are counting on you to arrive home safely at the end of each day.

Each employer has a duty to provide a safe workplace. It is also in each employee's best interest to do what they can to ensure their own safety. Take responsibility. Learn, understand and comply with legal requirements. Know and apply your employer's procedures. If you are unsure, ask a safety lead for help. If you aren't confident you can complete a driving task, ask for training. If your route is making you increasingly fatigued, tell your supervisor. And, if you feel conditions are unsafe, you have the right to refuse unsafe work. Talk to your supervisor or manager to determine a better way to get the job done. Accept shared responsibility for your own safety.

Here are some important things every driver needs to consider.



Before You Drive

- Manage your journeys - Ask yourself if you really need to make this trip? Can you get your work done without driving? Would a phone call or online meeting be just as effective? If you need to drive prepare for the trip, even if it's short.
- Prepare the driver - Are you well-rested and alert? Do you feel relaxed about the trip, ready and confident to get the job done?
- Prepare a travel plan - Check the route you intend to travel, and an alternate route. Check traffic and road conditions. Communicate your plan to a co-worker or supervisor, and set up a check-in contact.
- Prepare your vehicle - Are the seat, mirrors and headrest adjusted for you? Do a pre-trip inspection to confirm everything is working properly. Is the maintenance up to date? If you don't think the vehicle is up to the trip, talk to your supervisor.





While You Drive

It's up to you to know the rules and make sure you follow them.



- Wear your seatbelt.
- Take a break from driving at least once every two hours. Stretch your legs. Have a quick walk. Rehydrate.
- Pay attention and avoid distractions. Don't use a cell phone or adjust the GPS while driving. When you're behind the wheel, driving is your only job.
- Drive for the conditions. Speed limits are set for optimal driving conditions. Adjust your speed so that it's right for you and your vehicle in those conditions. Watch out for the other guy.

After You Drive

Did you notice any vehicle damage or anything in need of repair? If so, report it to a supervisor so repairs are completed before the next trip. Did you notice anything unsafe or inefficient about the route or time of day you chose to travel? If so, share that information with other employees and managers so they can plan to avoid that route or timing. Working together will help ensure your safety while you drive on the job.

