



Fleet Safety Program Evaluation Guide

Believing that an investment in Safety is an investment in Your Future.

Management is the cornerstone of any organization's safety program. Management establishes the policies, procedures, and programs needed to ensure a safe working environment. It assigns responsibility, authority, and accountability for following company safety policies and procedures, and it establishes the process for measuring safety program effectiveness. Employees also play a critical role in the safety management process. Employees are more likely to support and participate in achieving program goals if they have an opportunity to provide comments and receive feedback on the overall results of their efforts.

The Benefits:

Organizations successful in establishing an effective fleet safety management program often experience benefits beyond reduced accident costs, including:

- Lower accident frequency and severity, resulting in lower insurance costs.
- Reduced or eliminated civil forfeitures for failing to comply with regulatory requirements.
- Improved public image and reputation.
- Competitive advantages in the market place as a result of lower operating costs.
- Productivity improvements.
- Employee satisfaction and reduced turnover.

Common Components of a Successful Fleet Safety Program:

Listed below are several fleet safety program components safety professionals recommend, along with questions designed to guide fleet owners and managers in safety program development.

- ☑ **Safety policy:** Communicates to employees the importance the organization places on safely operating company vehicles and how safety will be integrated into company business practices.
 - Is management's support for safety initiatives communicated clearly, and are the necessary

resources provided to ensure they are carried out successfully?

- Does the policy express a commitment to employee and public safety?
- Are all employees and owner-operators advised to observe government regulations, statutes, and company safe driving and work rules? Are these regulations, statutes, and company policies and procedures outlined?
- Is management's responsibility to provide reliable and safe vehicles stated?

- ☑ **Written safety program:** Defines the common elements of a comprehensive fleet safety program.
 - Are standards developed to select only competent and safe drivers?
 - Is driving performance monitored? If so, how frequently?
 - Is a process in place to measure critical risk factors or activities known to contribute to accident?
 - Are safety audits conducted periodically to evaluate safety program effectiveness?

- ☑ **Accident reporting and investigations:** Policies and procedures are developed to ensure accidents are reported promptly and investigated. Information obtained in this process is used to prevent recurrences.
 - Are vehicles equipped with accident response kits that include instructions, accident report forms with diagrams, witness cards, and disposable cameras?
 - Are all accidents investigated to determine obvious and underlying causes?

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- Does a safety committee comprised of management and employee representatives review all accidents and incidents?
 - Are countermeasures developed to prevent recurrences?
 - Are safety committee members given the support and resources needed to adequately fulfill their duties, including training?
- Fleet safety training and communication:**
Training is provided to drivers initially and on an ongoing basis. Drivers are provided opportunities to learn new skills and gain knowledge and information relevant to their job responsibilities. Safety program objectives are reinforced through training. Management ensures open communication of safety program results and information relating to program goals and objectives.
- Has an orientation program been developed and are all newly hired drivers required to attend? Do topics include a review of company safety programs, regulatory requirements, and defensive driving concepts?
 - Are training programs designed based on evaluation of data indicating skill, knowledge, or awareness deficiencies of individual drivers or groups?
 - Have measurements been established to determine effectiveness in meeting training goals?
 - Are safety warnings and instructions posted where employees will see them?
 - Are safety milestones and achievements celebrated and communicated throughout the organization?
 - Do company meetings routinely include discussions relating to fleet safety?
- Supervision and performance evaluation:**
Without practical application and feedback, safety policies and procedures are likely to have little impact on performance. Absent the opportunity to ride with employees and observe driving habits and skills, managers must rely on other sources for information about driving performance.

- Are performance evaluations conducted periodically to review driver safety performance?
 - Is training used as an opportunity to help employees understand performance standards and provide the skills or knowledge needed to operate a commercial motor vehicle safely?
 - Is a vehicle-monitoring program used to provide feedback on the safe driving habits of drivers? Is it used to help develop objectives for defensive driving training programs?
 - Is there a process for recognizing safe driving milestones and achievements?
- Driver hiring and retention:** The process for recruiting and selecting safe, stable drivers is a critical component in most fleet operations. Selection procedures should include an evaluation of the applicant's past employment history and driving record. This information should be used to gauge whether the driver is a good job candidate.
- Are drivers road tested prior to employment to assess their level of skill and safety awareness?
 - Have formal, written hiring and qualification criteria been established?
 - Are job descriptions developed to identify ideal candidate profiles?
 - Does management thoroughly review the previous employment history of each applicant and contact previous employers?
 - Does management review driving records prior to employment? Are there criteria for evaluating these records?
 - Are recruiting efforts designed to generating a sufficient volume of qualified applicants?
 - Do recruiters and operations personnel have performance objectives designed to reduce driver turnover?
 - Is there a process to address concerns new hires and their families may have during the first 90 to 180 days of employment?
 - Are employees recognized for outstanding performance?

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