

LOSS CONTROL TOPIC

MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS

Securing your employee's motor vehicle record (MVR) is one part of a complete auto management program. Whether you have company owned vehicles or have employees using their own vehicles on company business, it is a good practice to check the driving records of all employee applicants and current employees who drive on company business. Employee's MVR should be checked at least once a year and after any driving incident. While a clean driving record is not a guarantee that a particular driver will be accident free, a poor driving record with frequent violations is a red flag and a fairly good predictor of future behavior.

When reviewing MVR's, there are certain violations that command immediate attention. The appearance of any one of these violations on an employee's driving record should be cause for the immediate suspension of company driving privileges:

- Driving under the influence of intoxicating substances or drugs
- Reckless driving
- Negligent homicide
- Leaving the scene of an accident (hit and run)
- Suspension of driving privileges by any jurisdiction
- The use of false driving records or false vehicle registrations
- Motor vehicle theft
- Assault with a motor vehicle

Other violations, while not as serious as those cited above, are still cause for closer examination and a review of the employee. Violations in this area are cause for reexamination of the employee's driving record at six month intervals.

- Ignoring a traffic signal or sign
- Failure to yield right of way
- Exceeding the posted speed limit by over 25 miles per hour
- Improper passing or merging – aggressive driving
- Driving too slowly on a major highway
- Defective tires or brakes

It is not unusual for the average driver to be cited for at least one minor moving violation every three years, however, if there are three or more of these within one year, you should consider referral for driver training. Also a warning should be issued that company driving privileges could be suspended, should another violation appear within one year. Some examples of minor moving violations can include:

- Failure to display a vehicle registration or drivers license (assuming neither has been suspended)
- Tail light, turn signal, headlight and other minor equipment violations
- Improper backing
- Obstructing traffic/blocking an intersection
- Speeding violations not exceeding 25 MPH above limit

It is important to note that there are often differences between individual state motor vehicle violation laws and how they are enforced locally. Motor vehicle accidents that do not require the issuance of a citation are often not recorded. Some jurisdictions do not require the investigating officer to file a report if the auto accident did not result in bodily injury.

It is also important to take note of the type of driving conditions the employee is exposed to while on company business. An employee who logs high mileage and travels interstate highways has a higher probability of being cited than one who is doing local, infrequent driving only.

As stated earlier, checking employee driving records is but one part of an automobile safety management program and should be used along with other performance evaluation tools. For a more comprehensive discussion, please refer to our Risk Solution, "Auto Safety Management".

Source Materials

National Safety Council, Motor Fleet Safety Manual, www.nsc.org

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, www.NHTSA.dot.gov

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, www.FMCSA.dot.gov

Motor Fleet Safety and Security Management, Daniel Della-Giustina, CRC Press, 2004

These guidelines are intended to offer general suggestions for follow up and discussion and should not be considered a substitution for professional advice. You are strongly urged to seek the services of a professional automobile fleet manager in these areas.

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