

Driver Selection

Best Practices for Obtaining Quality Drivers

Motor vehicle accidents are among the leading causes of work-related fatalities. In addition to the cost of lives, motor vehicles pose liability risks to your business. It is important to take precautions to prevent accidents involving your vehicles and employees from occurring. Employers can reduce the likelihood of accidents by following certain best practices for driver hiring. This will help ensure that new employees are quality drivers and can be trusted operating vehicles on the job. The time spent evaluating drivers can reap big benefits and save your business both time and money in the long run.

As a general guideline, every prospective driver should be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Motor Vehicle Record (MVR):** Prior driving experience is typically reflective of current driving habits. Studies conducted on vehicle accidents have shown a direct correlation between past driving performance and accident experience. Ask the prospective employee to bring in a copy of their MVR at the time of the interview. The MVR can be thought of as a background check; analyze it to determine if the driver is eligible to drive a company vehicle or their own personal vehicle on company business.
 - ❖ Ensure there are no violations of an extreme nature – this includes driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, reckless driving, or leaving the scene of an accident.
 - ❖ Drivers with more than two moving violations, or a combination of moving violations and accidents, may cause future problems for an employer.
 - ❖ Any person with a suspended license cannot legally drive a vehicle. Therefore, any potential employee with a suspended license should not be hired for driving.
- **Driving Experience:** Not everyone gets a driver's license at 16 years of age, so confirm the number of years the potential new hire has been driving. We recommend looking for at least five years' experience. Any prospect with less than five years driving experience is considered a potential high risk.
- **Prior History and Reference Checks:** Older accidents and violations do not appear on the MVR. In order to get an accurate representation of a driver's past performance, inquire further into their history through reference checks. Previous employers can typically verify such things as length of employment, number of accident reports, and overall driving performance.
- **Road Test:** Just because an applicant is qualified on paper to drive, doesn't make them a good driver. Another way to find out whether a driver can do the job expected of them is to actually test their driving ability. Cover a variety of potential situations in a road test sufficiently long enough to determine driving skill. This is also an opportunity to establish the applicant's attitudes toward safety.

While some employees are full-time drivers, others are often hired for purposes other than their driving experience. The operation of vehicles for company purposes may be incidental to the employee's occupation and duties; however, it is still important to ensure the quality of any employee hired for driving purposes.

Additional requirements, which are not covered here, exist for drivers of commercial motor vehicles.