Passenger

**ELDT Guide**

***Slide 1:*** **Passenger – Post –Crash Procedure**

***Slide 2:*** **Assessing the Scene**

Every crash is unique and it’s impossible to predict and prepare for every variable. Crashes often have common elements, but the specific steps you take will depend on the type of crash and its severity, as well as any employer- or state-specific requirements. The following procedures are based on a serious crash that may involve injuries. Keep in mind: the safety of your passengers is your key responsibility at all times.

***Slide 3:*** **Prevent Additional Harm**

You are the “captain of the ship,” and that is never truer than after a crash. If your vehicle is involved in an accident—even a minor one—you need to stop the vehicle, remain calm, and act as the authority on the scene until help arrives. The safety of your passengers and other motorists depends on you getting your emotions under control and taking charge of the situation.

After a crash, your emotions will likely be in high gear, but try to stay calm. Turn on your emergency flashers and move your vehicle to the side of the road, as far as possible from moving traffic. This will help avoid subsequent crashes or injuries. Once safely out of the way, engage the parking brake to ensure the vehicle will not move.

***Slide 4:*** **Start With Yourself**

You cannot take charge of the situation if you are not physically able to do so. After your vehicle is out of the way, assess your physical condition. Take a moment to calm yourself, then look and feel for any pain or signs of injury. If you lost consciousness, have neck or back pain, or you suspect any other serious injury, stay still and wait for help. Your adrenaline and endorphin levels will spike after a crash, so you may not feel pain—which means you may be more injured than you think.

* Apply direct pressure to control any serious bleeding—press down hard on the area and maintain pressure, as able. Do not let up until emergency services arrive to take over. If you have compression or pressure bandages in the
* vehicle’s first aid kit, these can be used to apply the pressure.
* If you personally need help, ask for assistance from your passengers. If necessary and you are able, pick a responsible individual and give him or her specific directions to follow for obtaining necessary assistance and performing
* other post-crash procedures.
* You may not feel or discover an injury until hours or even days after a crash. If you have any signs of injury, seek medical attention and report any injuries to your employer.

***Slide 5:*** **Check in With Your Passengers**

Calmly get the attention of your passengers, either personally or through the PA system. Do not wait to communicate after a crash. Absent instructions from you, your passengers will do whatever they feel is right or necessary, which may quickly lead to you losing control of the situation.

* Urge everyone to remain calm, follow your instructions, and to stay seated unless an immediate evacuation is required.
* *Communication Tips*
* Speak calmly but with authority, using clear and concise language. Project your voice—don’t mumble. If necessary, repeat your instructions multiple times to get the response you need from your passengers.
* If you use hand signals, such as indicating which exits to use, “exaggerate” them so the message is clear to everyone. For example, use your entire arm to point out a direction, rather than a single finger.
* If there are passengers with whom it is difficult to communicate due to physical or language barriers, you may need to speak extra clearly or loudly, or use extra hand signals to get your message across.

***Slide 6:*** **Getting Help**

**You must determine if there are any injured passengers and make sure that emergency** services are notified. If you personally do not make the call, advise one or more passengers or another motorist to call 911.

Be prepared to quickly assess the scene so you can relay critical information to the 911 dispatcher, including:

* + The number of injured individuals, including yourself, your passengers, and any other motorists or pedestrians
	+ The extent of their injuries
	+ Whether anyone is trapped in a vehicle
	+ Whether there is a fire
	+ Whether any vehicles are overturned
	+ The number of passengers on your vehicle

If you and your passengers do not have cellular phone service, seek help from anyone who can reach an area with service (such as someone who stopped at the scene with a working vehicle and cell phone). If possible, write down the crash details listed above and provide them to the individual before they leave the scene.

If authorized under your employer’s policies, help the injured to the extent that you can, and seek assistance from passengers as needed. If you have not had training in first aid, do not attempt anything that might cause more harm, such as trying to move an injured person. At the very least, keep any injured passengers still, warm, and as comfortable as possible until help arrives. Do not move an injured person unless there is risk of death.

If something is needed away from the scene, and it is safe to do so, send someone else. You may need to exit the vehicle, but under no circumstances should you leave the scene until released by the law enforcement officer in charge.

Most states have “Good Samaritan” laws that will shield you from liability for trying to help the injured at an accident scene.

***Slide 7:*** **Using a Fire Extinguisher**

If a fire breaks out on the vehicle, you quickly need to make a critical decision: whether to try to put the fire out yourself, or immediately evacuate the vehicle. Speed is critical in this situation. If in doubt, get the passengers out!

You may be able to extinguish a fire with your fire extinguisher, prior to evacuation, if the fire:

* + Is small
	+ Is not in the passenger compartment
	+ Is in an easily-accessible area
	+ Does not involve a tire

***Slide 8:*** **Know Your Equipment**

You should know critical information about your fire extinguisher(s) before you get behind the wheel. You should know:

* + Where it’s located
	+ What types of fires it can be used on
	+ What its rating is and what the rating means
	+ How to use it
	+ Whether it’s fully charged and ready for use

Modern extinguishers have color-coded symbols and “pictograms” indicating the type(s) of fires they were intended for. These include:

* + **Class A:** A green triangle with an “A” in it and/or a pictogram showing a burning garbage can and wood pile—to be used on common combustibles, such as wood, plastics, and paper
	+ **Class B:** A red square with a “B” in it and/or a pictogram showing a burning gas can—to be used on burning liquids
	+ **Class C:** A blue circle with a “C” in it and/or a pictogram showing an electrical plug and receptacle—to be used on energized electrical equipment.

Your extinguisher should be rated for the type of fire you need to fight. Even if you don’t have an exact match, however, the extinguisher may still work. For example, a Class B and/or C extinguisher may work on a Class A fire.

Avoid tackling a fire in energized electrical equipment if your extinguisher is not “C” rated. Otherwise, you may get a shock.

**The PASS Technique**

If you decide to fight the fire, first make sure the vehicle’s brakes are set. Then, grab the extinguisher from its location and use the “PASS” technique to put the fire out. PASS stands for Pull, Aim, Squeeze, and Sweep.

**Pull** onthe safety pin, pulling hard enough to break a seal if one is holding the pin in place

**Aim** the extinguisher at the base of the fire, not the flames, so you can affect the area that is actually burning

**Squeeze** the handle to activate the extinguisher

**Sweep** the extinguisher back and forth across the burning material

***Slide 9:*** **Warning Others**

Whenever you are stopped on the traveled part of a roadway or on the shoulder—for any reason other than necessary traffic stops—you need to warn other motorists about your presence.

The first warning device is your four-way flashers. Turn them on immediately and leave them on, preferably for the entire time you’re stopped but at least until you place other warning devices around the vehicle. Other warning devices must be placed within 10 minutes of stopping, but the sooner the better. Be sure your flashers are on while you are retrieving the warning devices as well.

Take these steps to place triangles or other approved warning devices around your vehicle:

* + Place them 10 feet, 100 feet, and 200 feet behind the vehicle if all traffic is approaching from one direction (such as on a freeway or one-way street)
	+ Place them 10 feet and 100 feet behind the vehicle, and 100 feet in front of the vehicle, if you are stopped on a two-way roadway
	+ If you are on a curve or a hill and the farthest warning device will not adequately warn approaching traffic, you can move it up to 500 feet away to provide more warning.

For reference, an average person’s pace is roughly 2½ feet long. Therefore, 10 feet equals roughly four paces, and 100 feet equals roughly 40 paces.

Reflective triangles are common, but the regulations in Sec. 393.95 also allow road flares.

***Slide 10:*** **Communicating with Others**

Your employer may have specific guidelines for talking to witnesses or other members of the public, your insurance employer, or the press, so be sure you know those policies ahead of time. Remain as courteous and professional as possible, but do not say more than necessary. When talking to law enforcement, answer questions simply and honestly.

**Notify Your Company**

Provide your employer with a brief report by telephone. Answer any questions they may have quickly and concisely, but don’t be afraid to say, “I don’t know, but I’ll find out.” Let your employer know when you expect to be able to call again with additional details.

**Talking with Paramedics**

When emergency-response personnel arrive at the scene, provide a brief “situation update.” They will want to know:

* + The number of injured
	+ The extent of any injuries
	+ The total number of passengers
	+ Whether all passengers have been accounted for
	+ If the vehicle is under any kind of threat, such as leaking fuel, smoldering engine or tire, etc.

Assist them in any way they ask. Do not leave the scene until released by the law enforcement officer in charge of the scene.

***Slide 11:*** **Other Emergency Procedures**

***Slide 12:*** **Planning & Attitude are Key**

A good bus driver anticipates and avoids emergency situations whenever possible, though emergencies—by their nature—are sometimes unavoidable. When an emergency does strike, you need to be as calm as you can under the circumstances and have a plan of action to avoid or minimize danger to your passengers, yourself, and your vehicle.

* Keep in mind—you are the “captain of the ship” in any emergency situation that might arise. You need to keep your wits and behave as the authority in charge, at least until any needed help arrives. The safety of your passengers and other motorists depends on it.
* Keep in mind that your personal safety is important. Passengers will depend on you for help and guidance during any emergency.
* Every emergency situation is unique, so the specific steps you take will depend on the type of emergency and its severity, the type of vehicle you are driving, and any employer- or state-specific requirements that might apply. Remember: the safety of your passengers is your key responsibility at all times.

***Slide 13:*** **Preparation Starts Before the Trip**

Many types of emergencies will involve both you and your passengers, so you and they need to know—in advance—how to respond. This starts with the passenger safety awareness briefing you deliver before each trip begins. The briefing should inform passengers what to do, and not do, when an emergency arises.

Even if the passenger safety briefing is provided, you will need to stay alert to any emergency situation and be prepared to provide immediate instructions so you can keep the situation under control.

Your passengers may be the first ones to notice an emergency.

***Slide 14:*** **3-Step Process**

Your response to an emergency can be broken down into three steps:

**Assess the situation:**

* What type of emergency is it?
* Who is affected?
* How severe is it?
* What risks does it pose?

**Plan your response:**

* What’s the best course of action to take to resolve the emergency?
* Do you need to pull over and call 911, or can you continue driving, if only to a safe parking area?
* Is your assistance needed, or do passengers have the situation under control?
* Do you need to modify your route, such as to get to a hospital?
* Do you need to evacuate the vehicle?

**Take action:**

Follow through on your action plan, based on your training, your employer’s policies and procedures, and the procedures outlined below.

***Slide 15:*** **Emergency stops**

There are many types of emergencies that may require you to stop your vehicle as quickly as possible. Mechanical or medical problems, crashes, weather, downed power lines, earthquakes, fires, and other incidents may all require you to get off the road immediately to protect the vehicle, its occupants, and other roadway users.

Follow the three-step process when you encounter a situation that may require an emergency stop.

There are few good reasons to stop on the side of a major highway or other busy roadway. Doing so may put passengers, yourself, and other drivers at risk. Whenever possible, wait to stop until you can exit the highway and reach a safe, secure parking area away from traffic.

***Slide 16:*** **Passenger Planning & Attitude are Key**

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Keep in mind that your personal safety is important. Passengers will depend on you for help and guidance during any emergency.

***Slide 17:*** **Dealing with mechanical breakdowns & vehicle defects**

Thorough inspections and regular servicing will greatly reduce the chance of a breakdown. If you do encounter mechanical problems while driving, respond appropriately:

* + If the vehicle is losing power, move off the road as quickly as possible so you have time to position the bus in the safest possible location before all power is lost.
	+ Contact your employer as soon as possible to discuss the problem and decide on a course of action.
	+ Never have the vehicle towed with passengers on board. The only exception to this is when the vehicle must only be towed a short distance and it would be safer to have the passengers on board than to exit the vehicle.
	+ If it becomes necessary to transfer passengers to another vehicle, you and the other driver must closely supervise the transfer. Keep passengers as far away from traffic and other hazards as possible.

**Warning Devices**

Warning devices are required whenever you are stopped on the traveled part of a highway or the shoulder, for any reason other than necessary traffic stop.

***Slide 18:*** **Medical Emergencies**

Medical emergencies can strike at any time and may range from minor to deadly conditions if they aren’t addressed, including:

* + a cut finger
	+ bloody nose
	+ asthma attack
	+ seizure
	+ bee sting
	+ choking

While you are not expected to be a medical professional, you are expected to be able to assess the situation and—to the extent that you can—help those involved get through the emergency with as little harm as possible.

* Obtaining training in basic first aid and CPR can help you feel more confident and prepare you to respond to a medical emergency. In your position as a passenger-carrying driver, the odds that you will have to deal with an ill or injured person are greater than for most people. Knowing how to assist can make all the difference in the outcome. Your employer may require such training, or you may be able to find a local training provider, such as the American Red Cross or a fire department. Your level of training will determine what you can and cannot do in a medical emergency.
* If you don’t feel confident in your ability to respond to basic medical emergencies, seek out professional training!
* Also, always know the location of your vehicle’s first aid kit, be familiar with its contents, be sure it is always stocked, and be prepared to access it when needed. In some cases, the first aid kit may be sealed, which indicates that the inventory is still intact. If that’s the case, ask to see the inventory list and examples of the equipment the kit contains. That way, if you ever have to open it, you’ll be familiar with the contents.

***Slide 19:*** **Assess the Situation**

Responding to a medical emergency starts with your immediate assessment of the situation. Some questions to ask yourself and/or others include:

* + What happened, and how many people are affected?
	+ What is the immediate risk? Is someone choking, having trouble breathing, or passed out with no pulse, for example? Or has someone fainted or suffered a seizure with a resulting injury?
	+ Was there an act of violence, and is there risk of additional injuries from the perpetrator?
	+ Can others become affected if the threat is not addressed immediately?
	+ Does the situation involve bodily fluids such as vomit or blood?
	+ Is someone already helping the affected individual(s), and do they have the situation under control?
	+ Do you need to stop the vehicle? If so, is it safer to stop immediately or continue driving to a safer location?

**Plan & Act**

The actions you take in a medical emergency depend on your assessment of the situation and whether you or your passengers are trained and confident enough to provide immediate assistance when the need arises.

Keep in mind that you won’t know the medical history of each of your passengers, so it’s better to err on the side of caution and treat all medical situations seriously, regardless of how minor they may appear. Doing nothing is not an option.

Depending on your immediate assessment, the following steps will apply to many types of moderate to serious medical emergencies:

* 1. Pull over and stop in a safe location.
	2. Call your dispatcher and/or 911, or have a passenger make the call. If you’re unsure whether emergency help is needed, it’s better to make the call earlier than later.
	3. Evaluate first aid needs. Treat the most critical conditions first, and use CPR or other life-saving actions within your level of training and ability. See below for first aid tips. At the very least, keep the affected individual(s) still, warm, and as comfortable as possible until help arrives.
	4. If needed, ask passengers for help. Find out if anyone has been trained in first aid and assign responsibilities as needed. Advise other passengers to remain calm and seated.
	5. If necessary, relocate non-injured passengers to another area on the vehicle to make space for providing first aid, protect others from bodily fluids, and reduce bystander trauma.
	6. If a passenger needs to be sent to a hospital, keep a record of who they are and to which hospital they’re being sent.

In a life-threatening situation, it’s up to you to use your best judgement—including deviating from these steps—to reduce the risk of serious injury or death.

***Slide 20:*** **Providing First Aid**

If you are called upon to provide first aid, follow these guidelines:

* + Do not move an injured person unless there is risk of death from remaining in place. Instead, wait for emergency services personnel who have been properly trained to move an injured person safely.
	+ Check the person’s “ABCs”—Airway, Breathing, and Circulation:
		- Make sure the person has an open **airway**—that nothing is blocking his or her ability to get air in.
		- Make sure the person is **breathing**. Check for breath at the nose and mouth and look for chest rise and fall. When someone stops breathing, they don’t have long to live unless someone intervenes. If the person is talking to you, it’s safe to assume they have an adequate airway and are breathing.
		- Check for **circulatory** problems. Lack of a pulse or profuse bleeding are two problems that need to be addressed quickly. If the person has no pulse, CPR is necessary.
	+ The American Heart Association and American Red Cross encourage the use of “hands-only” CPR. This means doing chest compressions only, at a rate of 100 or more per minute, and no mouth-to-mouth breathing. Compressions alone can create enough air exchange that mouth-to-mouth breathing is not necessary during bystander-provided CPR.
	+ Apply direct pressure to control any bleeding. This involves pressing hard on the cut and holding pressure. Do not let up until emergency services arrive to take over. If you have compression or pressure bandages in the vehicle’s first aid kit, these can be used to apply the pressure.
	+ Avoid contact with anyone else’s blood and other bodily fluids. See “Bloodborne Pathogens” below.
	+ Provide comfort measures if the person is ill. This involves placing the person in the position he or she is most comfortable, keeping them warm and calm, and monitoring the person until emergency services arrive.

**Bloodborne Pathogens**

Protect yourself and others when blood is present. Bloodborne pathogens are disease-carrying organisms found in human blood and certain other bodily fluids. Contact with the bodily fluids of an injured or ill passenger can lead to your becoming infected with the disease as well.

There are two ways you can come into contact with bloodborne pathogens:

* + **Direct contact** with a bodily fluid such as blood, urine, or vomit
	+ **Indirect contact** through a contaminated object like a towel, bandage, or syringe

Do not touch any bodily fluids and *never* pick up or touch contaminated materials without proper protections in place. These include medical gloves (such as latex, nitrile, or vinyl gloves) from your first aid kit, or tools that allow you to deal with the bodily fluid or contaminated object without actually coming into contact with it.

Once the bodily fluid or the contaminated item has been removed, you will need to decontaminate the area by wiping it down thoroughly with a disinfectant. If tools were used, be sure to decontaminate them before putting them back into regular use. Do not remove your gloves until the entire area and any tools have been disinfected.

When removing gloves, turn them inside out while removing them so you do not have skin contact with the outside of the gloves while, and after, removing them.

Wash your hands immediately after removing the gloves. Be careful of what you touch after dealing with a bodily fluid or contaminated item until you have an opportunity to wash your hands. Do not eat, drink, smoke, or touch your eyes, nose, or mouth until you have washed your hands.

If you don’t have the appropriate equipment (gloves, disinfectant, soap, etc.), do not try to deal with a bodily fluid. Contact your employer for instructions.

***If you think you had direct contact*** with a bodily fluid or contaminated object, don’t panic. The odds of becoming infected are low—the other person would need to have a disease, and your body would have to allow that disease in through an opening such as a cut. However, take these precautions:

* + If your clothes were contaminated, remove them carefully; avoid touching the contaminated areas and do not allow the contaminated areas to touch your skin
	+ Immediately and thoroughly wash all skin that might have been exposed to a pathogen
	+ Notify your employer immediately

If your exposure was significant—if there is a reasonable chance that you may have been exposed to a bloodborne pathogen—you may be referred to a medical professional for evaluation and even blood testing.

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***Slide 22:*** **Emergency Evacuations**

The decision to evacuate a bus must never be taken lightly. In most emergency situations—including many types of crashes—it’s normally safer for passengers to remain on board where they are protected from traffic and the elements and can be more easily managed. There may be many more hazards outside the vehicle than inside. However, there are situations where you will need to evacuate the bus immediately to protect the passengers from harm.

The following situations may require evacuation:

* + A fire on or near the vehicle, or serious risk of a fire
	+ Being stalled or stuck in an unsafe location, such as on a railroad track or in a location where a high-speed impact from another large vehicle is likely
	+ Fuel leaking into the vehicle
	+ A specific threat from a passenger
	+ Suspicion that a bomb or other weapon of mass destruction is on the vehicle
	+ Toxic or noxious fumes or vapors leaking from the luggage compartment or any other area on the vehicle

If possible, move the vehicle to the safest possible location before beginning the evacuation. After the evacuation, call for emergency assistance (or have a passenger make the call) as soon as safely possible. If stuck on railroad tracks, alert the railroad as quickly as possible using the emergency call number located near the crossing.

If an evacuation is necessary:

Give the passengers clear and calm evacuation instructions, including:

* + The order in which they are to evacuate
	+ Which exits are to be used
	+ Where to meet once out of the vehicle
	+ Any special instructions based on the situation, such as asking others to help a disabled passenger or asking someone to call 911 once they are safely evacuated

***Slide 23:*** **Evacuating the Vehicle**

If you determine that evacuation of the vehicle is necessary and possible, the following guidelines could help protect you and your passengers from the security threat:

* + Shut down the vehicle in a safe location
	+ Relocate passengers at least 300 feet upwind and uphill from the vehicle
	+ Prohibit use of cell phones within 50 feet of the vehicle or suspicious device (if applicable)
	+ Take any onboard communication devices with you, if possible
	+ Wait for assistance
	+ Identify yourself and point out witnesses to law enforcement and first responders
	+ Follow your employer’s policies when speaking with reporters or unidentified people during or after the incident

***Slide 24:*** **Fires**

Short of a crash, a vehicle fire is one of the most serious types of emergencies you could face. Both smoke and fire can be fatal and can spread quickly. With most fires, immediate evacuation will be required.

The three most common vehicle problems that lead to vehicle fires relate to wiring, hubs, and tires. Problems with all three can be prevented during your pre-trip and post-trip inspections.

***Slide 25*: Electrical:**

* + Do not make any modifications to the electrical system without authorization
	+ Look for any wires that are fraying, worn, cracked, or broken, and get them fixed before driving again
	+ Look for signs of short circuits or potential short circuits, including charred wiring or a wire resting against a vehicle component
	+ Report any smell that could be an overly hot electrical component
	+ Report any failure or tripping of a circuit breaker or fuse if the cause is unknown
	+ Replace any blown fuse with a fuse of the same rating
	+ Make sure your battery covers are in place
	+ Make sure your battery connections and battery cables are secure and not making contact with any metal

Tires:

* + Verify the tires are properly inflated during inspections and each time the vehicle is parked.
	+ Repair any tire that is losing excessive air.
	+ Identify any “hot tires” during inspections—tires that are too hot to touch or are smoking. Do not operate the vehicle until the cause of the heat has been located and eliminated. A common cause is underinflation.

Hubs:

* + Make sure the vehicle’s hubs have adequate oil or grease in them. Get help from a mechanic if you are not authorized or able to do so.
	+ Check all brakes to make sure they are releasing fully and that you don’t have any dragging wheel bearings. If you feel the vehicle “dragging” as you begin moving—that is, it doesn’t roll freely on flat ground—stop and make sure that all brakes have released and that no hub bearings are dragging. This may require having a fellow employee walk next to the vehicle while you drive at a low speed to see if they can hear a brake or bearing dragging.
	+ Look for “hot hubs” during inspections—hubs that are too hot to touch or are smoking. Do not operate the vehicle until the cause of the heat has been located and eliminated. Usually, the problem is either low oil or grease in the hub, or the brake is dragging as the vehicle moves. Another cause could be excessive braking, especially if one of the brakes is adjusted tighter than the others.

***Slide 26:* If a Fire Breaks Out**

If a fire breaks out on the vehicle, or if there is imminent risk of fire, you quickly need to make a critical decision. As with any emergency, you will need to assess the situation, plan your response, and jump into action, but you will have very little time to do so.

Ask yourself this question: “Can the fire (or threat of fire) be easily and immediately extinguished, such that passengers are put at *less risk* by keeping them on the vehicle for the moment, or is the fire enough of a risk that immediate evacuation is required?”

In most cases, immediate evacuation is necessary. However, there may be cases where immediately extinguishing the fire—and *then* getting everyone off the bus—is the safest course of action. This could be the case if the fire:

* + Is small
	+ Is not in the passenger area
	+ Can be accessed easily
	+ Does not involve a tire

If you decide to fight the fire, remember to set the parking brake and turn on your emergency flashers as you leave the driver’s seat.

If the engine is on fire, do not open the engine compartment door or hood. Doing so could injure you and cause the fire to spread.

Using a fire blanket can help you extinguish a fire or protect a passenger from a fire, especially any passenger using a wheelchair.

**If anyone’s clothing starts on fire:**

* 1. Tell them to “stop, drop, and roll.” Do not allow them to run, which will fan the flames.
	2. Smother the fire by wrapping the person in heavy fabric (coat, blanket, etc.) and rolling the person on the ground. If fabric is not available, roll the person on the ground unwrapped.
	3. Pour water on them, if available.
	4. Call 911 and evacuate the vehicle as needed, following evacuation procedures.

***Slide 27:*** **Activities that can help reduce the odds of a vehicle fire include:**

* + Keeping trash from piling up in the vehicle—in the waste receptacles, luggage area, or the seating areas
	+ Prohibiting smoking on the vehicle, including the lavatory, and keeping people an adequate distance from the vehicle when smoking outside
	+ Avoiding the use of flammable liquids (especially gasoline) as cleaners
	+ While driving, watch your mirrors for indications of a possible heat-related problem. If you see smoke coming from under the vehicle, stop immediately and locate the problem.

***Slide 28:*** **Managing Security Breaches**

The safety and security of your passengers, your vehicle, and the motorists around you is always your highest priority. As the captain of your ship, bus and motorcoach security begins with you, based on your training, your knowledge, and your best judgment. A breach in that security can have tragic consequences. You must be able to:

* 1. **Assess the situation**, to identify security threats and incidents and help you distinguish between a “prank” or misunderstanding and an actual emergency
	2. **Plan your response** to minimize harm
	3. **Take action**

Most bus and motorcoach operators today have **security plans** in place to help prevent and respond to security breaches, both at fixed facilities and out on the road. It’s hard to expect plans to cover every type of security problem. They should, at a minimum, contain general guidelines to help prevent security breaches from occurring. Plans also help you respond to the types of breach you are most likely to encounter.

Become familiar with the security plan and follow all security procedures and policies that your employer has in place. This includes becoming familiar with any security-related equipment your employer has placed in your vehicle, such as a panic button, on-board video cameras, or supplemental equipment for securing the vehicle (steering wheel locks, theft alarms, a “kill switch,” or similar devices).

***Slide 29:*** **General guidelines**

* + Wear your required uniform and/or identification
	+ Keep all vehicle doors, hatches, and compartments locked when the vehicle is unattended
	+ Limit and monitor passengers’ access to baggage storage areas during rest stops, and match all checked bags with actual on-board passengers
	+ Maintain constant awareness of people, activities, and items around you (see below for details)
	+ Immediately report any security-related suspicions or incidents, including security weaknesses like faulty locks, damaged or broken doors or fences, and poor lighting

***Slide 30:*** **Monitoring Suspicious Activities & Items**

You must maintain a high level of security awareness at all times. Monitor and observe the people, events, activities, and items around you and take careful note of irregular or suspicious behaviors or activities. This should be done at fixed facilities and on the vehicle.

Look for **people** who :

* + Are not where they’re supposed to be
	+ Look lost or are wandering around
	+ Appear to be conducting surveillance, such as using a video camera, taking photos, etc.
	+ Cause disruptions or intentionally distracting behavior
	+ Show an unusual interest in you or your job
	+ Abandon an item and leave the area quickly
	+ Openly possess a weapon and/or prohibited or dangerous item
	+ Use a vehicle in a suspicious way

Look for **items or devices** that:

* + Were abandoned and either left in the open or hidden
	+ Appear to be suspicious or dangerous, such as a canister, tank, metal box, bottle, etc.
	+ Have an attached message
	+ Appear to be emitting a mist, gas, vapor, or odor
	+ Seem to have seepage or leakage of a suspicious substance
	+ Are connected to wires, timers, tanks, or bottles
	+ Appear to be the source of a foreign substance that is causing people to cough, have trouble breathing, feel nausea, lose consciousness, or have any other medical condition

Identifying a potential suspect should not be based on national origin, ethnicity, color, race, gender, or age.

**Inspecting the Vehicle**

When doing your pre-trip and post-trip inspections, watch for:

* + Pry marks or noticeable attempts of forced entry into the vehicle
	+ Unusual foreign item(s) attached to the vehicle
	+ Opened or disturbed compartments/cabinets

TSA recommends that drivers pay particular attention to the following areas, looking for suspicious packages, devices, substances, unattended baggage, etc.:

* + Floors
	+ Below seats
	+ Operator’s area
	+ Steps
	+ Wheelchair lifts
	+ Equipment compartments
	+ Lights
	+ Wheel wells
	+ Engine compartments
	+ Exhaust system
	+ Fuel and air tanks

***Slide 31:*** **Collecting & Reporting Information**

If you find something suspicious, are threatened, or are involved in a security incident, remain calm and stay focused. You will need to collect specific information about the threat or incident so it can be passed to the appropriate authorities. When reporting, make sure the information is accurate, detailed, and relevant.

If there is a **threat**:

* + Report the location as accurately as possible. If the threat is moving, report the direction it’s headed.
	+ Identify the type of threat. Is it something that was observed, or was there a verbal or written message?
	+ Describe any suspicious behavior.
	+ Describe suspicious device(s), including size, shape, components (wires, batteries, clocks), color, location, sounds, etc.
	+ Describe any suspicious odor, mist, vapor, powder, color, quantity, residue, and/or location.
	+ Observe and notice weather conditions, especially wind direction.

If there was a security **incident:**

* + Report your exact location and the condition of the scene
	+ Describe the type and number of injured victims
	+ Note the type of symptoms and/or unusual human behavior
	+ Identify the location of passengers and injured victims
	+ Describe any suspicious people, packages, devices, and/or substances
	+ Collect all pertinent information from passengers
	+ Suggest safe access routes for responding employees and/or emergency services personnel

When **reporting** a security threat or incident:

* + Immediately notify dispatch, operations control, or your supervisor
	+ Identify eyewitnesses
	+ Contact law enforcement and/or emergency responders
	+ For incidents involving explosive devices, avoid using radios and cell phones within 50 feet of materials or devices that may be explosive
	+ Provide a description of any vehicle (license plate number, color, make, etc.) and/or individuals (attire, hair color, etc.) involved
	+ Remain calm and answer questions to the best of your recollection
	+ Clarify by repeating any instructions that were given to you
	+ Confirm that assistance is on the way and ask for estimated time of arrival

***Slide 32:*** **Vehicle Orientation**

***Slide 33:*** **Vehicle Size**

The largest buses and motorcoaches are capable of transporting more than 60 passengers over long distances—safely and comfortably—often with reclining seats, restrooms, and multiple luggage storage areas. To accommodate that many people and all those features requires a very large size. The typical luxury motorcoach is roughly:

* **45’ long:** As long as 3 average cars placed bumper to bumper
* **9’ wide:** Over 40% wider than the average sedan
* **12’ tall:** More than twice as tall as the average human male

In addition to simply being large, most buses and motorcoaches are straight, single-unit vehicles that lack a pivoting joint (articulation point) like those formed when a truck hooks up to a trailer. You will have to become very familiar with how this affects your operation of the vehicle.

The vehicles you operate may not be quite as large or capable of transporting so many people, but your priorities must remain the same: the safe, professional, and legal transportation of your passengers to their destination.

***Slide 34:*** **Knowing Your Vehicle & the Space Around It**

The size of your vehicle will determine how you manage the space around it and where you can safely and legally travel. Your bus or motorcoach may simply be too large or heavy to enter certain areas, go on certain roads, go under certain bridges or, go over certain railroad crossings, or take certain routes.

Safe and legal operation of your vehicle requires you to become familiar with the following characteristics of your vehicle:

* + Height
	+ Length
	+ Width
	+ Ground clearance
	+ Rear overhang
	+ Gross vehicle weight and gross vehicle weight rating
	+ Axle weights

These characteristics change as passengers and cargo are added to or removed from your vehicle. An empty motorcoach that weighs 35,000 pounds could reach 55,000 pounds fully loaded, for example, and will handle differently at each weight.

Certain vehicle systems can affect these characteristics. For example, your vehicle may have:

* + A “kneeling” suspension system that allows you to lower the vehicle’s front end (and reduce ground clearance) to make loading and unloading easier
	+ A rear-lift suspension system that elevates the rear of the vehicle by several inches to improve ride quality as weight gets added
	+ A wheelchair lift and other components that can add weight

When you compare driving a car to driving a bus, you will come to realize that a bus’s large size means it has a longer stopping distance, slower acceleration, wider turning radius, and higher and wider clearances. A higher sitting position gives the driver a better view in a bus, but requires more attention on the mirrors for adequate rear and side viewing.

If you don’t know the dimensions of your vehicle, ask your employer, review documentation in or on the vehicle, or find information from the manufacturer.

***Slide 35:*** **Ground Clearance**

When you’re sitting high, it may seem like there’s a lot of room under the vehicle, but that may not always be the case. An especially high or low point on the road could cause your vehicle to “hang up,” which could put your passengers and/or other motorists at risk.

* + Be familiar with the ground clearance on your vehicle, both empty and loaded.
	+ Be especially alert on dirt roads, driveways, or other areas where the road surface may have worn away, creating a high “crown” in the middle of the road. Getting stuck on this crown could trap your vehicle in the traveled part of the road or other dangerous area.
	+ Watch for depressions or deep dips in the road, such as drainage channels that cross the road, and cross them carefully or find an alternate route if necessary.
	+ Railroad tracks are particularly dangerous. If you hang up on an active track, it could spell disaster. Watch for signs indicating a railroad grade crossing with low clearance, and NEVER take a chance on getting hung up halfway across.

If you do get hung up, notify your employer, emergency services, and/or the railroad as quickly as possible, and determine if your vehicle must be evacuated.

Careful route planning can help you avoid problems with clearance. Whenever possible, stick to a familiar route that you know is safe and contact your employer if you need to detour off that route.

**Overhead Clearance**

The height of your vehicle can be a concern when driving through tunnels or under overpasses, canopies, or other rigid structures.

Pay close attention for signs near bridges or tunnels indicating the amount of clearance.

Do not entirely rely on posted clearance signs! Know the height of your vehicle, and do not proceed if you have any doubt that your vehicle will fit.

Keep in mind that clearance can be reduced by road resurfacing, ice on the road, or a crown or uneven surface on the road.

Beware of underpasses, tunnels, or bridges that might have enough clearance in the center of the road but not along the edges.

Never drive under a structure if you are not certain that your vehicle will fit.

When in doubt, find an alternate route or call your dispatch center for guidance.

***Slide 36:*** **Rear Overhang & Tail Swing**

Rear overhang refers to the part of the vehicle that extends behind the drive axle. The rear overhang on a large bus can be roughly 10 feet, and it can cause several problems:

* + The rear of the vehicle—the “tail”—will swing to the side when you make a turn (it will pivot at the drive axle), possibly hitting nearby vehicles, pedestrians, or objects.
	+ The underside of the tail can “bottom out” if there isn’t enough ground clearance when the road angles upward. Again, watch for deep dips in the road or a road that suddenly angles upward to avoid bottoming out.

The distance that the rear overhang swings to the side when you turn the vehicle is known as the “tail swing” or “kick out.” That distance may be 1-2 feet, depending on the vehicle’s design.

This means you must leave *more* than that amount of space between the vehicle and other objects when turning.

One common type of accident caused by tail swing can occur when you pull away from a curb or other stationery object. The tail will swing over the curb and can strike a sign, a fire hydrant, or even a bicyclist or pedestrian, for example. Or, the tail could hit a stopped car as you pull away from a row of cars.

You can avoid tail-swing crashes by taking a few precautions:

* + Become familiar with the dimensions of the bus and how much tail swing you can expect, especially if you are driving a different vehicle for the first time.
	+ Maintain several feet of clear space on the sides of the vehicle whenever possible.
	+ Avoid sharp turns, because the sharper the turn, the bigger the swing. When stopped, leave extra space in front of your vehicle, if possible, so you can pull out at a shallower angle, minimizing tail swing.
	+ Make sure your mirrors are properly adjusted, so you can check for obstacles or pedestrians on the sides of the bus both before turning and during the turn. Check the left side of the bus when turning right, and the right side of the bus when turning left, and make sure you have the right of way.
	+ Maneuver away from objects slowly, check your mirrors often, and stop if the tail might hit something.

***Slide 37:*** **Knowing the Weight**

You are responsible for making sure your bus remains within safe and legal weight limits and is never overloaded. Loading a bus beyond its maximum weight capacity can be dangerous, can cause unnecessary wear on the engine and other components, and could lead to violations of weight laws.

On a fully loaded bus, the total “payload”—the passengers plus all baggage—is only about one-third of the total vehicle weight. The remaining two-thirds is the empty weight of the vehicle itself. For example:

The weight of a fully loaded 45-foot motorcoach (with all seats taken, plus baggage) may be about 47,000 pounds, while its empty weight is about 36,000 pounds. This weight is distributed between the front and two rear axles. The first (forward-most) of the rear axles—the drive axle—may carry almost half of the total weight.

***Slide 38:*** **Passenger Wheels, Rims, & Tires**

The large size and weight of a bus or motorcoach makes everything on the vehicle larger than what you’d see on a car. This includes the tires, wheels, and rims.

You will be checking the inflation and overall condition of your tires, wheels, and rims every day as part of the inspection process. You must become familiar with certain characteristics of the wheels and tires on your assigned vehicle before you first begin operating it. Every vehicle is different. Check the following:

* + Wheels and rims. Know the current condition of the wheels and rims, including any areas that have unusual “wear and tear” that may need to be watched more closely or checked more frequently than others. Know how the wheels are attached and how to inflate the tires.
	+ Tire pressure monitoring system. The tire pressure monitoring system, if there is one, alerts you to low pressure in one or more tires. Understand how the system works in your vehicle.
	+ Tire type, number, and ratings. The more tires, the more weight you can carry. Check if the drive axles have standard dual tires or “super singles”—one wide tire that replaces traditional dual tires. Know the load, speed, and inflation ratings. See below for more details.
	+ Spare tire. Know where it is, how to remove it from its storage location, and whether it can or cannot be used on any axle on the vehicle. Also, learn the location of tools for changing a tire, such as the jack and lug wrench.

***Slide 39:*** **Reading a Tire**

“Reading” a tire requires knowing how to interpret the codes printed on the sidewall of the tire. For example, a typical bus tire might read:

**315/80 R22.5**

In this example:

* + 315 is the width of the tire in millimeters. This number may also be shown in inches, typically 11 or 12.
	+ 80 is the “aspect ratio,” the ratio of the height of the sidewall to the tire’s width, shown as a percentage. In this case, the height of the tire is 80% of its width.
	+ R indicates that it’s a radial tire (how the tire was constructed).
	+ 22.5 is the diameter of the rim on which the tire can fit, in inches.

Tires may also have a load and speed code, such as “**156/150L**,” where:

* + 156/150 is the load index in a single or dual configuration. In this case, “156” indicates that a single tire is suitable for 8,818 pounds, and “150” indicates that a dual tire is rated for 7,385 pounds.
	+ L is the speed rating, in this case indicating a maximum speed of 75 mph.

Even if your tires do not have a speed rating, they may have a speed *restriction*. If the restriction is 55 mph or less, you must never exceed that speed.

***Slide 40:*** **Load Rating**

You must never load your tires beyond their load rating as marked on the tire. In fact, it’s prohibited under federal regulations. In typical operations, overloading the tires is difficult to do, but it can happen, particularly with large, high-capacity buses (especially those with double decks) loaded to full capacity.

Avoid overloading by knowing the load capacity of your tires and being aware that the weight of the passengers and cargo, and the way your vehicle is loaded, can affect tire safety.

For example, one common motorcoach configuration has three axles with a GVWR of between 53,000 and 61,000 pounds. If the vehicle has double decks and you load them to near the maximum number of passengers and luggage, you could exceed:

* + The GVWR
	+ One or more gross axle weight limits, or
	+ The tire weight ratings

Overloaded tires are more likely to overheat and fail, potentially placing passengers and other motorists at risk. To avoid this risk, you may need to take some or all of the following steps, in consultation with your employer and its policies:

* + Restrict the number of passengers or amount of luggage, if needed, to keep the vehicle within the allowable tire weight rating and state vehicle weight limits.
	+ Monitor the loading of your vehicle and make sure excessive weight is not concentrated over one axle. Spread the weight whenever possible, though typically there is no need to ask passengers to move.
	+ Add pressure to the tires so they can handle additional weight. Tires, particularly those in the rear, may need to be filled to their maximum pressure if carrying the maximum load. On the other hand, allowing the pressure to go too low could result in an overloaded tire, making daily inspections critical.

***Slide 41:*** **Steer Tires**

The steer tires are located at the front of the vehicle. Steer tires take more abuse than others, which is one reason they are required to have additional tread. Steer tires that fail can lead to a loss of control, potentially leading to a crash. For this reason, and according to federal regulations (Sec. 393.75), the steer tires on a bus must never be recapped, retreaded, or regrooved. These processes involve placing new tread on an old tire, or cutting deeper tread on a worn tire.

***Slide 42:*** **Mirrors**

Proper adjustment and use of all mirrors is vital to the safe operation of any vehicle, but it is especially important in a bus or motorcoach. Before you first operate the vehicle, you will need to familiarize yourself with the types of mirrors it has and how to adjust them.

The number and type of mirrors on your vehicle will depend on the body style and manufacturer. The following is an overview of a typical vehicle’s mirrors. Newer vehicles may also have video cameras and display screens to provide views outside the vehicle, especially to the rear.

**Outside Left & Right Side Mirrors**

These mirrors are mounted at the left and right front corners of the bus, at the side or front of the windshield. They may be attached at the top or bottom edge, or both. They’re used to monitor traffic and check clearances and passengers on the sides and to the rear of the bus.

Side mirrors won’t show you the area directly behind the vehicle. This blind spot typically extends 50 to 150 feet behind the vehicle, and may even reach 400 feet depending on the length and width of the bus.

***Left (Driver’s Side) Flat Mirror***

* + You should see the left side of the vehicle along the inside edge of your left mirror
	+ The horizon should be about one-third to one-fourth of the distance from the top of the mirror
	+ Your rear tires should be barely visible, touching the mirror’s bottom edge
	+ You should be able to see about 200 feet (four motorcoach lengths) behind the vehicle

***Right Flat Mirror***

* + You should see the right side of the bus along the inside edge of your right mirror
	+ The horizon should be about one-fourth of the distance from the top of the mirror—slightly higher than it is in your left mirror
	+ You should be able to see about 200 feet (four motorcoach lengths) behind the vehicle

***Slide 43:*** **Left & Right Convex Mirrors**

Convex mirrors are located below the outside flat mirrors and can help you see areas your regular flat mirrors cannot. Their outward curvature provides a wide-angle view but also distorts the size and distance of objects that appear in the mirror.

* + Adjust your convex mirrors so you can see the entire area along the side of the vehicle, as well as the point where the front of the rear tire touches the ground
	+ You should be able to see at least one traffic lane on each side of the vehicle
	+ Assume that anything in your convex mirrors is directly beside your vehicle, due to the distortion effect

***Side Crossover Mirrors***

Crossover mirrors are mounted at the very front of a bus, on each side. They are always present on school buses but are not as necessary on shuttle and coach-style buses. They allow you to see “danger zones” where passengers (particularly children) and objects may not otherwise be visible: along the front bumper and the left and right sides, including the door and front wheel areas. Adjust them so you can see:

* + The entire area in front of the bus, from the ground below the bumper up to a height where you can see directly
	+ The right and left front tires touching the ground
	+ The area from the front of the bus to the door

Like convex mirrors, crossover mirrors usually offer a distorted view.

***Slide 44:*** **Inside Mirror**

The inside mirror—mounted above the windshield—allows you to keep an eye on your passengers. It may also provide a limited view out the back of the vehicle if there is a window.

Adjust the mirror so you can see as many of your passengers as possible, including those directly behind you.

***Slide 45:*** **The Driver’s Seat**

Proper seat adjustment goes hand-in-hand with adjusting your mirrors. A properly adjusted seat will:

* + Let you get the maximum visibility from your mirrors and out of your windshield
	+ Ensure that critical controls are within reach
	+ Help prevent fatigue

Familiarize yourself with the driver’s seat and its controls, whether manual or electrical. Follow these steps to adjust the seat (these steps may vary depending on how adjustable a particular seat is):

* 1. Sit in the driver’s seat and fasten your seatbelt.
	2. Move the seat forward until you can comfortably reach the foot controls with your feet. Make sure you will be able to apply the full force of your legs if you need to make an emergency stop.
	3. Check the distance between the hollow at the back of your knees and the front of the seat cushion. You should be able to fit two to three fingers in the gap. This will help the circulation in your legs.
	4. Adjust the tilt angle of the seat to a comfortable position.
	5. Adjust the tilt angle of the seatback. Your back should come into full contact with the seat—from your bottom to your shoulders—with the angle of your elbows at around 95-135 degrees as you grip the steering wheel.
	6. Adjust the seat height so your feet are squarely on the floor and there is no pressure against the bottom of your thighs when you operate the accelerator. Your knee angle should be around 110-120 degrees.
	7. Adjust the steering wheel position to a comfortable position. Make sure your elbows remain angled at 95-135 degrees and that you have a clear view of the dashboard.
	8. Adjust the seatbelt position so it provides a tight fit across your sternum without rubbing against your neck.

Your vehicle may have additional adjustment options to help the positioning of your spine, such as a seat damper (how “tight” or “soft” the seat feels) and adjustable lumbar support.

* + The damper setting should be tightened (making the seat feel firmer) on bumpier roads but can be softened on good roads
	+ The lumbar support should fit flush against the small of your back, supporting the natural inward curve of your lower spine

***Slide 46:*** **Windshield & Wipers**

As with any vehicle, you must become familiar with the controls for the windshield wipers, defroster, and washing system so you always have a clear view of the road, day and night.

Adjust your seat and mirrors properly, then orient yourself to the vehicle by:

* + Scanning the windshield and side windows and focusing on both what you can *and cannot* see. Familiarize yourself with any obstructions, such as the pillars on either side of the windshield, cracks, or stickers.
	+ Checking the location of the wiper, washer, and defrosting controls and testing them to make sure all are in good working order. The wiper blades should make full contact with the windshield. The defroster should blow a steady stream of warm air on the windshield and driver’s side window.

Never use a portable windshield defroster (heater)—they’re prohibited under federal regulations.

As in a car, the windshield wiper and washer controls will likely be mounted on the combination switch on the left side of the steering column, along with the turn signal and high-beam/low‑beam headlight controls.

***Slide 47:*** **Lighting**

The lights on any vehicle are critical to safety, especially at night or in bad weather. Be familiar with all lights on your vehicle and how to operate them. Depending on the size of your vehicle, this includes:

* + Headlights, both high-beam and low-beam
	+ Tail lamps
	+ Brake lights
	+ Turn signals
	+ Four-way flashers
	+ Backup (reverse) lights
	+ Clearance and marker lights

The need for clearance and marker lights will depend on the length and width of the vehicle:

* + Marker lamps (and reflectors) are required on the side of buses that are more than 30 feet long
	+ Marker and clearance lamps, at front and rear, are required on buses that are 80 inches or more in width

School buses are the only passenger-carrying vehicles that *require* additional lights, such as strobe and stop-arm lamps. Many passenger-carrying vehicles come with additional lights that are not required, such as:

* + Boarding lights
	+ Stairwell lights
	+ Passenger lights
	+ Luggage compartment lights

Make sure these lights are working at all times, just like the required lights, even though the regulations do not require them.

***Slide 48:*** **Engine Compartment**

Engines and their locations differ from vehicle to vehicle. While you are not expected to know how to fix an engine, you do need to know some basic information about them. On a large bus or motorcoach, the engine may be located in the front or rear, and each has its advantages:

**Engine in Front**

* + Better frontal crash protection
	+ Easier to service
	+ Easier to evacuate through the rear

**Engine in Rear**

* + Easier passenger loading
	+ Closer to the drive wheels, meaning better traction, less vehicle weight (no driveshaft), and less loss of power (no need to transfer power from the front to the rear of the vehicle)
	+ Lower center of gravity
	+ Less noise in the passenger compartment
	+ More comfort and better visibility for the driver
	+ More seating capacity

With any type of engine, you must know how to unlock and lift the hood or access door to check the engine compartment. Depending on the model, you must become familiar with:

* + The cutoff switch, so the engine cannot be started while you’re under the hood
	+ Sight glasses and dipsticks to check the level of all fluids (coolant, oils, transmission fluid, brake fluid, steering fluid, etc.)
	+ Caps for adding fuels and fluids (these may be in several places around the vehicle)
	+ The main fuse and major electrical wires
	+ All belts and hoses
	+ Alternators, compressors, and cooling fan
	+ Air and fuel filters
	+ Engine block heater, if equipped (to help start a cold engine)
	+ Regeneration switch (to clean soot from the emissions system filter)
	+ Ignition bypass switch (to start the engine if the ignition system fails)
	+ Lavatory service valves

***Slide 49:*** **Electrical System**

Most of the components described above rely on electrical controls, so you will need to become very familiar with your vehicle’s electrical system. The “cockpit” of a modern bus or coach looks similar to that of an airplane, with dozens of electrical control switches, knobs, dials, and indicator lights. Additional electrical controls, indicators, and other components are found outside the vehicle.

You will need to know the location and function of each one, and what to do if there is a problem. Electrical problems can range from a minor inconvenience—such as a broken reading lamp—to a fire, an inability to start the vehicle, or even a crash.

Become familiar with any electrical components you may find on your vehicle, including:

**Switches, Buttons, & Knobs**

* + Engine starter button
	+ Transmission shifter
	+ Exterior and interior lights (multiple switches)
	+ Master electrical cutoff
	+ Backup battery switch
	+ Kneeler and tag axle height controls
	+ Engine fast-idle switch
	+ Emergency override/cutoff
	+ Horn
	+ Passenger electrical power
	+ Windshield washer and wiper
	+ Door/compartment locks
	+ Destination sign controller
	+ Mirror controls and mirror heater
	+ Wheelchair lift control
	+ Entrance door control
	+ Audio/visual controls
	+ Cruise control
	+ Climate controls

**Dash Lights (Tell-Tales)**

* + Check or stop engine
	+ Low coolant or low fuel
	+ Malfunctioning alternator
	+ Cruise control
	+ Regeneration required
	+ Light indicators (for turn signals, hazard lights, hi-beam, etc.)
	+ Water in fuel filter, or clogged filter
	+ Brakes applied
	+ Anti-lock brake system malfunction
	+ Stability control/traction control
	+ Seat belt warning
	+ High/low ride or kneel
	+ Door ajar
	+ Wheelchair interlock
	+ Fire in engine compartment
	+ Lavatory emergency

**Dials**

* + Speedometer
	+ Air pressure
	+ Oil pressure
	+ Coolant temperature
	+ Fuel gauge
	+ Diesel exhaust fluid gauge
	+ Tachometer (engine rpm)
	+ Voltmeter
	+ Transmission temperature

**Other**

* + Battery compartment(s) and batteries
	+ Fuse panel and spare fuses
	+ Circuit breakers
	+ Wheelchair lift
	+ Electric door/panel locks and openers
	+ Any wiring that will be part of your daily inspection
	+ Other electrical switches

In addition to the above, you must become familiar with any **alarm sounds** your vehicle generates. For example, an alarm may sound while the front of the vehicle is kneeling or while the vehicle is backing.

***Slide 50:*** **Brake System**

The brake system is a critical safety component. You must know:

* + The types of brakes on your vehicle (parking and service brakes)
	+ How to use them properly, including all switches and knobs
	+ How to read and respond to any brake‑related warning lights
	+ What to do if you suspect a problem with the brakes

To some degree, the size and age of your vehicle will determine the types of brakes it has. Federal regulations specify the amount of force the brakes must be able to generate, which then determines the size and type of brakes the vehicle must be equipped with.

All brake components—brake controls, brake lines, connections, adjusters, shoes, and drums or rotors and pads, etc.—must be in good working condition. Be sure to check with your employer on the specifics of what should be checked on your vehicle’s brake system. Know the limits on any of the parts that wear or move (such as the slack adjuster and the brake shoes or pads).

The vehicle must also have a warning system to warn the driver if the system loses pressure. If the warning system (light and/or buzzer) ever activates while you are operating the vehicle, stop immediately! The parking brakes may apply automatically if the pressure drops too low.

Most buses and coaches today have an antilock braking system (ABS) and an ABS malfunction indicator. Become familiar with how these work and how to conduct a “key-on” ABS check. This involves turning the key on and then verifying that the ABS malfunction light comes on and then goes off. If it does not turn on, the diagnostic system is not working or the bulb is burned out. If it turns on and stays on, this usually means there’s a problem with the ABS.

***Slide 51:*** **Pre-Trip, Enroute, and Post-Trip Inspection**

***Slide 52:*** **Completing a Pre-Trip Inspection**

You must be certain your vehicle is safe before driving. This is true at all times, but especially important at the start of your day, before you hit the road and before any passengers are on board. If you discover a problem, you can get it addressed before you start your run.

Under federal regulations and many company policies, there are four parts to a proper pre-trip inspection:

* 1. Verifying and documenting that any previously identified defects were fixed
	2. Checking the current condition of all critical vehicle components as required by regulation
	3. Checking other items as required by policy
	4. Making sure that all baggage, cargo, and vehicle equipment is properly stowed and secured

Do not rush these steps! Missing something critical could spell disaster. Expect your pre-trip inspection to take 30 minutes or more, depending on the vehicle involved.

***Slide 53:*** Make sure everything gets inspected and that you do the inspection the same way every time. This ensures that nothing gets missed, whether you follow this six-step process or use your own or your employer’s procedures.

***Slide 54:*** ***I. Vehicle Overview***

Get a feel for the vehicle’s overall condition as you approach. Look for anything obviously missing, suspicious, or otherwise wrong with the vehicle, such as:

* + Body damage
	+ Fluid on the ground
	+ Anything hanging from underneath the vehicle
	+ Whether the vehicle is leaning
	+ Any signs of tampering
	+ Missing license plates, annual inspection stickers, toll devices, or any decals you may need on your trip, such as airport and parking permits

Look at all your light and reflector covers to ensure they’re intact and not broken.

**Security concerns:** Given the possibility of a large bus or motorcoach being used as a weapon of terror, your pre-trip inspection must include a watchful eye for anything suspicious, in terms of security. Watch for:

* + Unusual wires
	+ Any abnormal materials in, on, or attached to the vehicle
	+ Items of luggage or packages that may have been intentionally left behind in the luggage compartment or any other area
	+ Signs of tampering with cargo or the vehicle, such as pry marks, forced entry, or opened compartments

If you find something suspicious during your inspections, or see suspicious activities, get away from danger and report the incident immediately.

***II. Detailed Walk-Around***

Start at the front of the vehicle and then begin your detailed walk-around inspection along one side.

**Windshield:** Make sure it isn’t cracked or chipped. Specifically, look for any of the following at a minimum:

* + Damage that’s larger than a penny
	+ A crack or chip that’s within 3" of another crack or chip
	+ Damage that’s above the steering wheel but more than 2" below the upper edge of the windshield or 1" from the sides
	+ Cracks that intersect

If you see any of these, report them to your maintenance department following your employer’s policies.

**Wiper blades:** Test for a snug fit against the glass. Check that they’re flexible and not stiff, cracked, or weather-rotted.

**Mirrors and windows:** See that they’re clean, tight, and in good condition. As you walk around the vehicle, check for any windows that appear to be protruding, which could indicate that the window isn’t properly latched.

**Bumper:** Make sure the bumper is secured in place.

***Slide 55:*** **Steer (front) tires and wheels:** Look at the tread and condition of each tire. Steer-tire tread needs to be more than 4/32" deep.

***NOTE:*** *While a tread-depth gauge is highly recommended, you can also use a standard U.S. quarter to measure this. From the top of the quarter to the top of Washington’s head is about 4/32 of an inch. So, as long as the top of his head is inside the tread depth, you should be good to go.*

Look for chunks of missing tread, damage, sidewall bulges, cuts, gouges, uneven wear, and feathering. Front tires take a lot of abuse, so they need to be examined closely. Steer tires cannot be retreaded, recapped, or regrooved.

**Air pressure:** Gauge your tires during the pre-trip when they’re cold. If you check them when they’re hot, their pounds per square inch (PSI) will read 5% to 20% higher than recommended.

Make sure the valve stems and caps are in place and undamaged.

**Rims:** Look for any cracks, bends, or welds. All such problems must be reported and repaired.

**Lug nuts:** Make sure they’re tight. Indications they might be loose include shiny metal or new rust, or your vehicle may have built-in indicators. You should never be able to turn a lug nut by hand. If you see cracking from lug nut to lug nut, that’s an indication they’ve been loose for a while.

**Hubs:** Check the oil level and check for oil leaks, which are a common cause of wheel separation and vehicle fires. Be sure to check the hubs inside and out for signs of leakage. Make sure hub seals are secured.

Having under-inflated tires is the number one cause of tire-related incidents on the road. When tires lose 10% to 20% of their optimal air pressure, they start getting strange wear patterns. If they’re low by 20% or more, you risk a sidewall blowout. If they’re 20% off, their pressure is likely too high.

**Suspension and brake components:** To visually check the suspension and brake components, you may need to turn the wheel. Make sure that:

* + None of the suspension or brake components is broken or cracked
	+ All bolts and pins are in place
	+ There’s no oil or grease on the brakes or the rim
	+ The drum and disc are not unusually or unevenly worn
	+ The brake pads and shoes are not excessively worn

**Under the vehicle:** Check for fluid leaks, animals, or obstructions.

**Luggage bay:** Check the luggage bay compartments as you continue down the side of the vehicle, making sure the doors and locks operate properly and the bays are clean.

***Slide 56:*** **Wheelchair lift:** Check its condition, securement, and operation following your employer’s procedures and the manufacturer’s instructions. Operate the lift through a complete cycle to make certain that it’s working properly. The following are general guidelines, but equipment and policies will vary:

* 1. Make sure there’s a clear area for the lift to deploy, activate the parking brake, and engage power to the lift
	2. Open and secure the wheelchair lift door(s)
	3. Check the weather seals for damage
	4. Activate power to the lift, if necessary
	5. Make sure any warning lights and/or buzzers are working properly
	6. Activate the unfolding system for the platform and watch for smooth movement
	7. Lower the platform until it rests squarely on the ground
	8. Check mountings, supports, and handrails for damage
	9. Check for leaks in the hydraulic lines or any damage to electrical lines
	10. Check for instructions and any needed tools for manual operation, in case of a power outage
	11. Cycle each of the “roll stops” or “safety flaps” to verify they work properly and lock in place
	12. Inspect the seat belt for any damage, and verify that the lift will not operate with the seat belt unfastened (if applicable)
	13. Raise the platform and fold it back into its travel position, watching for smooth operation
	14. Be sure to turn off power to the lift to avoid unintentional operation

You may need to run the vehicle at high idle to ensure adequate power for the lift.

***Slide 57:*** **Battery compartment:** Make sure the battery compartment is secure, there are no leaks or excessive corrosion, and check the wiring for any signs of damage. Confirm the vehicle has spare fuses for any required electrical circuits that rely on fuses.

**Roadside emergency equipment:** The vehicle must have at least three reflective warning triangles and/or six road flares, as well as a fire extinguisher. These are commonly stored in the luggage bay, near the driver’s seat, or under a passenger seat. Inspect their condition:

* + The triangles must be reflective on both sides and must not be broken or damaged; open each one for inspection
	+ The fire extinguisher must be securely fastened, fully charged, and have its pin in place

**Fueling area:** Check if there are any fuel leaks under the vehicle. Open the fueling door and make sure the tank cap is in place and tight. Perform the same steps with any diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) filler.

**Rear-axle wheels, rims, and tires:** Check these much like you checked the steer wheels, with these differences:

* + The tires must have a tread depth of at least 2/32" to be legal.
	+ Look between the set to make sure the rims are butted up against each other but that the tires are not touching and there’s nothing wedged between them.

***NOTE:*** *Just like a quarter can be used to gauge the steer tires, a penny can be used to gauge the rear tires. From the top of the penny to the top of Lincoln’s head is about 2/32 of an inch.*

**Rear suspension and brake components:** Because these are found behind the inside tire, you may find it easier to check these components by looking under each side of the vehicle and checking the opposite side. Again, look for any broken or cracked suspension or brake components. All bolts and pins should be in place. Verify there is no oil or grease on the brakes or the rim. If there’s a second axle behind the main drive axle, check those brake and suspension components as well.

**Rear mud flaps:** Make sure they:

* + Are present
	+ Are in good condition
	+ Are securely mounted
	+ Reach to within roughly 6" of the ground

**Spare tire and tools:** If your vehicle is equipped with a spare tire, make sure it is in place, properly inflated, and secured. Check for a lug wrench, jack, and other needed tools, as necessary.

***Slide 58:*** ***III. Engine Compartment***

Verify the following before opening the engine compartment door:

* + The parking brake is on
	+ The wheels are chocked
	+ The keys are in your pocket

Open the compartment door and do a visual scan of the entire compartment for any obvious issues, like leaks.

**Fluid levels:** Check the oil, coolant, power steering, and transmission fluid levels, using one of these methods:

* + Find the dipstick, pull it out completely, wipe it clean, reseat it completely, then pull it out and check the level
	+ Find the sight glass and read the fluid level

Top off any fluids that are below the “add” line.

**Belts:** Make sure they are not worn, loose, frayed, or cracking.

Push down on each belt mid-way between pulleys and check for excess movement.

If the vehicle has air-powered auto tensioners, recheck the belts after the engine has been running and the air pressure is built up.

**Alternator, air compressor, and water pump:** Check for any leaks, excessive wear and tear, corrosion, secure mounts, and secure wiring.

**Hoses:** Look at all visible hoses and check for cracks, bulges, leaks, loose clamps, and loose connections.

**Exhaust system:** Check for any indication of a leak, such as soot build-up at a seam or bend.

**Toilet tank reservoir (if so equipped):** Make sure the toilet tank reservoir for the on-board restroom is properly filled with water and chemical (this may need to be checked from inside the vehicle, depending on the model).

These inspection procedures may need to be adjusted depending on the type of engine in your vehicle.

For many buses or motorcoaches, a good rule of thumb is that there should be less than 1" of play on a belt, preferably no more than 3/4".

***Slide 59:*** ***III. Engine Compartment***

Verify the following before opening the engine compartment door:

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	+ The wheels are chocked
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Open the compartment door and do a visual scan of the entire compartment for any obvious issues, like leaks.

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* + Find the dipstick, pull it out completely, wipe it clean, reseat it completely, then pull it out and check the level
	+ Find the sight glass and read the fluid level

Top off any fluids that are below the “add” line.

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***Slide 60:*** ***IV. Inside the Vehicle***

The fourth step of a routine pre-trip inspection process is conducted inside the vehicle.

**Entrance area:**

* + Make sure the door opens properly and hinges are securely attached
	+ Check the door seal for excessive weathering, cracks, or other damage; these issues can cause air to leak into the vehicle while driving, creating a lot of noise
	+ Check the windows for damage or anything that could block the view
	+ Make sure all the stair treads and handrails are safe and secure
	+ Check for any trip hazards, and that the step light(s) works

**First aid kit:** Confirm that the kit is securely in place and is properly stocked (or sealed).

**Seats:** Check every passenger seat to make sure they are secure, clean, and in the upright position. Push on the backs and pull them toward the aisle to check for any extra movement, which could mean a loose bolt or broken seat.

Check each seat belt, if equipped. They must latch properly, be securely mounted, be adjustable, and in good condition with no fraying or rips.

**Slider/folding seats:** There are several styles of seats that can move or fold out of the way to make room for a wheelchair. Make sure the seats slide or fold smoothly and lock in place.

**Wheelchair restraints:** Check the wheelchair securement points, tracks, and belts for any damage, debris, corrosion, or looseness.

**Cleanliness:** Check the seats, seat pockets, and floor for cleanliness, to give your passengers the best experience possible.

**Overhead luggage compartments or racks:** Make sure they are securely attached, the doors and latches function properly and are not cracked, and they’re clean of trash and spills.

**Restroom (if equipped):** Ensure the door latch, sink, toilet, and emergency buzzer all work. Verify that there’s an adequate supply of soap and toilet paper, and confirm the area is clean.

**Emergency exits:** As you work your way back to the front of the vehicle, check the emergency exits.

* + **Overhead exits:** Reach up and push the exits open, making sure they open, close, and seal properly. Make sure the exits are clearly labeled.
	+ **Window exits:** Check that they open, close, and seal properly. Make sure the “Emergency Exit” labels are in place and clearly visible.

If a hatch is left open for fresh air (if allowed), keep in mind the higher clearance while driving.

***Slide 61:*** **Driver’s seat:** Adjust your seat so you can reach the steering wheel and controls comfortably. Check your seat belt and make sure it’s not damaged and that it buckles and unbuckles correctly.

**Engine ignition:** Make sure the parking brake is on, then start the engine.

**Gauges:** Check the oil pressure. The needle should come up immediately when the engine starts. If it does not, shut off the engine immediately. Next, look at your voltage gauges, oil gauge, water gauge, and fuel gauge, followed by your air pressure gauges. You may need to give each of these some time to achieve their “normal” ranges. Make sure the batteries are recharged from the start-up and the air tanks are full (if the vehicle has an air system) before moving on.

**Indicators:** Check the turn-signal, hazard, and high-beam indicators, as well as the indicators for any other systems, such as your kneeler control and tag axle, if equipped.

**Mirrors:** Check the mirrors for their condition and adjustment. Adjust them as needed for proper sight lines.

**Heater, air conditioner, and defroster:** Make sure these all work properly.

**Windshield wipers/washers:** Turn on the wipers to confirm they work, then test the washer(s).

**Steering wheel:** Verify the tilt feature is locked. Check for play in the wheel, to see how much it turns before the steer tires move. The free-play should be no more than 5¼ inches on a 20-inch steering wheel with power steering, or 2½ inches with manual steering.

**Horn(s):** Test the city horn and the air horn.

**Interior mirror:** Adjust it so you can see the passenger area from the driver’s seat.

**Interior lights:** Check to make sure they all work.

**Fire extinguisher:** If mounted inside the vehicle, make sure it’s firmly mounted, completely charged, and ready for use.

**Driver window:** Test window operation to make sure it works as it should.

**Sunshade(s):** Test that all work properly.

**Keys:** Ensure you have all necessary keys, including those for the fuel tank door and luggage bay doors.

***Slide 62:*** ***V. Light Check***

**Turn on the low beams and emergency flashers:** Verify the parking brake is on, exit the vehicle, and make sure the lights and four-way flashers are on, front and rear. Also make sure the side marker lights are blinking with the flashers.

**Confirm that the high beams work.**

**Check the following:**

* + **Turn signals:** Front, back, and side.
	+ **Parking, clearance, side-marker, and tail lights:** Make sure all are working properly.

**Brake or stop lights:** Get a helper for this step, if necessary, since you cannot see the rear of the vehicle while activating these lights. Your employer may also authorize you to use something reflective to check these lights, such as a wall or another vehicle.

***Slide 63:*** ***VI. Brake Check***

If the vehicle has **air brakes:**

* + **Confirm that the wheels are chocked** so the vehicle cannot move, and that the air pressure is over 100 PSI, which will enable you to perform these tests.
	+ **Shut off the engine** and put the key or ignition switch in the “on” position so you will be able to hear the audible alarms.
	+ **Do a leak check.** Release the parking brake and apply the foot brake for one minute. Watch the air pressure gauge to make sure it doesn’t leak more than 3 PSI during that minute.
	+ **Check the emergency features of the air brakes**, which include both an audible and visual alarm on the dashboard. Pump the air pressure down and notice where the alarm sounds and the lights come on. Most vehicles activate around 60 to 80 PSI. Continue pumping down.
	+ The brake button should pop out between 20 and 40 PSI, switching over from the parking brake to the emergency brake.
	+ **Perform a rolling brake check.** Restart the engine, rebuild the air pressure, and remove the wheel chocks. Put the vehicle in drive, release the brake, and accelerate to five miles per hour, then press the brake pedal to stop. Determine if the vehicle is pulling to one side or if there’s a delayed stopping action. Either one is a problem that needs to be addressed.
	+ **Test the parking brake.** Activate the parking brake, shift into drive, and accelerate slowly. Make sure the parking brake holds the vehicle in place.

If the vehicle has **hydraulic brakes**:

* + **Check for leaks.** Pump the brake pedal three times and hold it down after the third pump. The pedal should not fade (i.e., it should remain solidly in place under pressure).
	+ **Check the parking/emergency brake.** Apply the emergency brake and attempt to move the vehicle forward. It should hold steady.
	+ **Check the service brake.** Release the parking brake and roll forward at five miles per hour. Apply the foot brake and make sure the vehicle stops crisply without pulling to one side or the other.

**Keep in mind:** If a safety-related item is not in satisfactory condition during your pre-trip inspection, do not operate the vehicle until the problem has been addressed. Operating an unsafe vehicle puts you, your passengers, and the motoring public at risk!

***Slide 64:*** **4. Inspecting Baggage, Cargo, & Equipment**

In most cases, your pre-trip inspection will be completed on an empty vehicle. Cargo, equipment, other items, and even people that get added to that vehicle can affect the safety of its operation. They too must be inspected or sometimes even restricted.

Under federal regulations, you must ensure the following before driving:

* + All cargo on board is properly distributed and is not so unbalanced that it affects handling or weight limits
	+ All luggage and other cargo is secured so it does not:
		- Get damaged
		- Shift excessively
		- Prevent passengers from exiting through any window or door in an emergency
		- Injure any passengers by falling or shifting
	+ All doors, tools, tarps, spare tires, and other vehicle equipment is secured
	+ No objects:
		- Obscure your view while driving, including the view ahead and to the right and left sides
		- Interfere with the free movement of your arms or legs
		- Prevent you from quickly accessing emergency equipment
		- Prevent you from quickly exiting the vehicle

Do not allow riders to leave carry-on baggage in a doorway or aisle. There should be nothing in the aisle that might trip other riders.

Make sure passengers are always behind the standee line marked on the floor, if you allow standing passengers.

***Slide 65:*** **Performing En-route Inspections**

The regulations do not require a passenger-carrying driver to conduct any vehicle inspections during the workday. However, most things wear out from use, any existing problems can get worse, and items can shift in transit. A quick walkaround inspection during a scheduled stop might turn up a problem that can easily be remedied where you’re parked, instead of needing to be fixed on the side of the road.

**Check the tires and hubs:** Use a tire thumper to check for firmness if the tires have not had a chance to cool, since gauging a hot tire will give a false reading. You can also put your hand close to the hub and feel for excessive heat caused by a failing tire or bearing. Avoid touching anything that might be hot.

**Check the passenger area:** Make sure the passenger compartment remains in good condition, especially the temperature and amenities like the video player and restroom supplies. Check that all passengers are back on board the vehicle before departure.

**Keep security in mind:** Always remain vigilant about the security of your vehicle and passengers until you’re back on the road. During your en-route walkaround—as during the pretrip—watch for anything unusual, like strange wires, signs of tampering, packages left behind, suspicious individuals around the vehicle, etc.

**Remain alert:** Keep an eye on your gauges while driving, as well as the sounds, smells, and feel of the vehicle, so you aren’t caught off guard by a problem.

***Slide 66:*** **The Post-Trip Inspection**

Once you’re done operating a commercial vehicle for the day, your inspection responsibilities aren’t over. Federal regulations don’t actually call for a complete post-trip *inspection*, but you do need to report any problems that came to your attention over the course of the day. The post-trip inspection is highly recommended—and may be required by your employer—as a way to:

* + Catch any safety-related defects you did not notice earlier
	+ Make sure passengers did not cause any damage
	+ Ensure the bus is clean
	+ Prepare the bus for the next shift

In addition:

* + Your employer may have post-trip requirements that go beyond the regulations
	+ Your state or municipality may have post-trip requirements depending on your operations

***Slide 67:*** **When to Refuel**

Whether your vehicle operates on diesel, gasoline, or anything else, fuel is a necessity. For safety purposes, it is best to plan ahead and stop for fuel as little as possible.

Avoid fueling your bus with riders on board unless absolutely necessary. Never refuel in a closed building with riders on board. Don't talk with riders, or engage in any other distracting activity, while driving.

Follow these practices when deciding when to refuel the vehicle:

* + **NEVER:** Refuel in a closed building with riders on board.
	+ **AVOID:** Refueling with passengers on board. Avoid this whenever possible—and it may be prohibited under company policy. If it’s an option and you consider it safe, have passengers disembark and reach a safe area (preferably inside the building) before you pull into the fuel island.
	+ **GOOD:** Refuel before any passengers are on board.
	+ **BETTER:** Make sure you have a full tank of fuel during your pre-trip inspection or have at least enough fuel to complete the trip. If you do not, refuel before the trip begins.
	+ **BEST:** Refuel when the vehicle is not being used for business, such as while it’s stationed at a fixed facility. Ideally, your bus will be refueled and ready when you arrive to work.

***Slide 68:*** **Safety Equipment**

As you pull into a fueling lane, take it slow and watch your mirrors and your surroundings closely to ensure your vehicle safely fits into position for refueling.

Once stopped, take a moment to check the location of three important safety items near the fuel pump:

* + The **emergency shut-off switch** will be vital should the pump malfunction or there is any other reason that fuel flow must be stopped quickly. Emergency shut-off switches are marked with a label or sign.
	+ A **spill kit** can be used to absorb spilled fuel. Generally, an attendant will take care of a spill if you report it to the front desk.
	+ The **fire extinguishers** at fueling stations are generally not meant to combat large fires but can be useful for a small fire. Fire extinguishers are usually located on a pole at each pump location or on the outside wall of the station building.

***Slide 69:*** **Other Safety Precautions**

Once you’re ready to fuel the vehicle, there are two things you must do:

* 1. Shut off your engine before you begin fueling.
	2. Monitor and be in control of the fueling process at the point where the fuel tank is filled:
		+ Keep in mind that most fuels—and the fueling process itself—are highly volatile and dangerous; a small mishap can quickly escalate into a major problem
		+ Don’t walk away or become distracted unless an attendant has taken over
		+ Be prepared to stop the fueling process and/or respond to any emergency situation that arises until you’ve safely closed the tank(s) and shut off the pump

***Slide 70:*** **Idling**

Unnecessary idling of a vehicle’s engine affects human health, pollutes the air, wastes fuel, causes excess engine wear, and may violate state or local anti‑idling laws. In this chapter you will learn the importance of managing your engine idling and complying with idling laws and regulations.

***Slide 71:*** **The Effects of Idling**

Idling, or operating your engine without applying the accelerator, is sometimes required. You may idle the engine to warm it up, when stopped in traffic, to cool down or warm the interior in extreme temperatures, or when checking the brakes during an inspection.

At other times, idling is unnecessary, causes more harm than good, and may violate regulations. Consider the following:

* + Diesel exhaust has many bad **health effects**. It’s a carcinogen and it contains small particles that can lodge deep into your lungs and heart and cause a variety of health problems. Children are more susceptible than healthy adults. Exhaust can drift into nearby shelters or buildings, affecting those around the vehicle as well as those inside.
	+ Exhaust pollutants contribute to **environmental problems** like ozone pollution, acid rain, and climate change.
	+ The **cost of fuel** usage for idling can add up quickly, especially when multiplied across a fleet of vehicles over time.
	+ Engine idling can lead to **maintenance costs**. Long‑duration idling accelerates oil and oil filter deterioration, causing the need for more frequent oil and filter changes. Also, longer engine idling leads to more wear on the engine and more frequent engine service.
	+ Many jurisdictions across the country impose **fines** for violating idling laws that limit the amount of time and/or the location where you can idle the engine.

***Slide 72:*** **Reducing Idling**

The easiest way to reduce idling is by getting into the habit of shutting off the engine when no one is on board.

Stated another way, vehicles should typically be moving whenever the engine is on, **except** for:

* + Idling required for passenger health or safety, to run heating, defrosting, or cooling equipment
	+ A brief warm-up and cool-down period if recommended by the vehicle manufacturer
	+ Idling needed to perform vehicle inspections or maintenance
	+ Normal traffic conditions

***Slide 73:*** **Idling**

Whenever the bus is idling, the driver must stay with the bus. Idling buses must be outside any building and away from fuel pumps. Engines should be shut off when students are present and loading. As a courtesy to other drivers, buses should not idle when another bus is within 10 feet. Drivers should be mindful of school air intakes and avoid bus exhaust from drifting into schools. In general, a 5-minute maximum rule should be in place for idling buses. Follow all relevant district/company policy on idling and ask a supervisor if you have questions.

***Slide 74:*** **Baggage and/or Cargo Management**

**Handling Baggage**

As a driver, you may need to handle baggage, containers, and other items as a part of your job. You may be handling baggage throughout the day or only occasionally. Baggage handling may seem like a simple task, but there are several things to be aware of, including:

* + Your employer’s baggage policies
	+ Your personal health and safety in dealing with baggage
	+ Risks to your passengers’ or the public’s safety from shifting or falling baggage, or its contents
	+ The way your vehicle may be affected by baggage

***Slide 75:*** **Your Personal Health**

Handling baggage presents certain physical risks, mostly involving musculoskeletal injuries. Common injuries include:

* + **Back** injuries from lifting with the back or twisting at the same time as lifting, pulling, or pushing
	+ **Arm and shoulder** injuries from pushing or pulling, or from overexertion or overextension
	+ **Finger and hand** injuries from getting fingers or hands caught between items

To avoid injuries while loading or assisting with the loading of baggage, always:

* + Wear gloves
	+ Use proper body positioning when pushing or pulling
	+ Get assistance to lift heavy items
	+ Lift straight up with your legs and move your body as a unit—never lift and twist

***Slide 76:*** ***Securing baggage***

Make sure baggage that is stored in a baggage compartment is placed in a way that prevents it from sliding, rolling, tipping, or falling while the vehicle is in motion—both for the sake of personal safety and to protect passengers’ belongings from damage.

Follow this guidance, depending on company policies:

* + Fill “gaps” or empty spaces with baggage rather than stacking items on top of each other. Using more of the available space allows for easier loading and unloading and prevents items from shifting in transit. With a large luggage bay, push items to the back of the bay first before filling the front. If stacking is necessary, place heavier and hard-sided baggage or boxes underneath lighter, softer items. Don’t be afraid to ask passengers if their baggage contains fragile items so it can be placed in a safer position.
	+ Lay bags flat and off their wheels when possible.
	+ Make sure the compartment door is securely closed and locked before driving.

Encourage passengers to take any needed items out of their bags—such as clothing, electronics, or medications—before storing them in the luggage compartment.

***Slide 77:*** ***Security***

Baggage should be held securely in place but also be “secured” in another way: secured against theft and malicious threats. If your employer has a security plan to prevent and respond to security breaches, follow it.

As a reminder related to baggage:

* + Keep all doors, hatches, and compartments locked when the vehicle is unattended; report any faulty latches or locks
	+ Maintain awareness of people, items, and activities around the vehicle
	+ Limit and monitor passengers’ access to baggage storage areas during rest stops
	+ Positively match bags to their owners
	+ Watch for people who abandon an item and leave the area quickly, or who grab an item that does not belong to them
	+ Report to your employer any passenger reports of theft
	+ Watch for and report passengers who openly carry weapons or prohibited or dangerous items
	+ Watch for—and take action if you see—any baggage or other items that raise suspicion or pose a security threat

**Dealing with Hazardous or Prohibited Items**

Again, one of your primary roles is to ensure the safety of your passengers, and that includes safety from any dangers present in baggage or other items on or near the vehicle.

You may need to take immediate action if you see any item that:

* + Appears to be emitting a mist, gas, vapor, or odor
	+ Seems to have seepage or leakage of a suspicious substance
	+ Is connected to wires, timers, tanks, or bottles
	+ Appears to be the source of a foreign substance that is causing people to cough, have trouble breathing, feel nauseated, lose consciousness, or have any other medical condition

Refer to your employer’s policy for a list of items that are prohibited on your vehicle—either as a carry-on, in the luggage bay, or both—such as knives, firearms, clubs, hazardous chemicals, fireworks, fuels, etc.

***Slide 78:*** ***Hazardous Materials***

The United States Department of Transportation’s (DOT’s) Hazardous Material Regulations in 49 CFR 177.870 contain certain restrictions on materials that can and cannot be transported on a passenger-carrying vehicle.

Be aware that some types of hazardous materials must be marked or labeled in a certain way to comply with DOT rules. If a passenger has a package labeled or marked as a hazardous material, don’t necessarily assume that the passenger intends any harm—they may have a legitimate reason for wanting to transport the material—but speak with the passenger about the situation and contact your employer for guidance on transporting the material.

Many types of explosives, poisonous, or radioactive materials are prohibited on passenger-carrying vehicles by the DOT, either in the seating area, the luggage compartment, or both. Exceptions exist for:

* + Small-arms ammunition and certain government munitions
	+ Emergency shipments of drugs, chemicals, and hospital supplies
	+ Small quantities of materials (less than 100 pounds)

Buses may carry small-arms ammunition labeled ORM-D, emergency hospital supplies, and drugs. You can carry small amounts of some other hazardous materials if the shipper cannot send them any other way.

**Buses must never carry**:

* Division 2.3 poison gas, liquid Class 6 poison, tear gas, irritating material.
* More than 100 pounds of solid Class6 poisons.
* Explosives in the space occupied by people, except small arms ammunition.
* Labeled radioactive materials in the pace occupied by people.
* More than 500 pounds total of allowed hazardous materials, and no more than100 pounds of any one class.

Riders sometimes board a bus with an unlabeled hazardous material. Do not allow riders to carry on common hazards such as car batteries or gasoline.

***Slide 79:*** ***Medical Oxygen***

Passengers may need to bring oxygen tanks onboard your vehicle for medical reasons. Oxygen presents a significant hazard, however, mainly because it can rapidly accelerate the burning process. The passenger carrying the oxygen may or may not know the precautions that are required on a bus or motorcoach.

Follow these precautions when transporting oxygen:

* + Follow your employer’s policies or procedures for transporting oxygen
	+ Before boarding, inspect each cylinder to make sure it’s free of cracks or leaks, including the area around the valve and pressure relief device
		- Listen for leaks; do not load leaking cylinders on the vehicle
		- Visually inspect each cylinder for dents, gouges, or pits; if you find any, do not transport the cylinder
	+ If you handle a cylinder:
		- Handle it with care—oxygen cylinders are susceptible to valve damage if they’re dropped
		- Never carry it by the valve or regulator
		- Never drag or roll it
		- Make sure your hands or gloves are not contaminated with oil or grease
	+ Make sure the cylinder is not free to move around when the vehicle is in motion
	+ Never store or secure an oxygen cylinder in the aisle
	+ Make sure no open flames are allowed anywhere near the oxygen or the passenger using it
	+ Keep oxygen tanks upright and away from heat sources or potential sparks
	+ Prohibit all smoking and open flames (such as lighters or matches) in the passenger compartment when an oxygen cylinder is present
	+ Keep a window or vent partially open if possible, regardless of the weather, because oxygen systems can release small amounts of gas over time; an open window or vent can help prevent oxygen from building up in the area immediately around the passenger using it
	+ Remove the oxygen as quickly as possible upon reaching your destination
	+ Take all steps necessary to avoid a fire in or near the vehicle; if a fire does break out, immediately remove the oxygen from the fire area; if that’s not possible, speed up your evacuation of the vehicle
	+ It is the passenger’s responsibility to make sure that he or she has enough oxygen to complete the trip; if a passenger runs low on oxygen, contact your employer or tour coordinator for instructions

For any oxygen cylinder placed in a cargo bay, make sure it is:

* + Packaged in an approved box or case
	+ Equipped with a valve protection cap
	+ Transported in an upright or horizontal position
	+ Secured against movement

Under normal circumstances, the total weight of all oxygen cylinders on a bus or coach cannot exceed 99 pounds.

***Slide 80:*** ***Securing Mobility Aids***

Under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), passengers using mobility aids like wheelchairs and walkers must have equal access to transportation services, as discussed in detail in Chapter 10. As with other large items brought on to the vehicle, you must know how to properly stow and secure such devices as:

* + Wheelchairs, whether battery powered or manual
	+ Scooters, whether battery powered or manual
	+ Walkers, with or without wheels
	+ Crutches
	+ Canes

Keep in mind that these mobility aids must not block the aisle. Also, they may injure passengers if they are not adequately secured, especially in the event of a crash or rollover.

***Slide 81:*** **Pre-Trip Safety Awareness Briefing**

The pre-trip safety awareness briefing that you provide to your passengers may take a variety of forms, depending on the type(s) of vehicles being operated and your company’s preferences.

Each company has flexibility to decide:

* + Whether to provide a safety briefing
	+ Which topics to cover, depending on how the vehicle is configured
	+ The language(s) in which to present the briefing, depending on the needs of passengers
	+ When and where to present the information
	+ How to present it, whether verbally, through printed materials, through a pre-recorded audio or video message, or using a combination of methods

***Slide 82:*** **Timing**

Ideally, each passenger will receive the safety briefing before the vehicle moves. This may be done during the boarding process (such as by handing a pamphlet to each passenger) or after boarding but before departure.

If passengers board the bus before the briefing, make sure everyone has finished boarding and that you have their attention when you begin the briefing.

If you operate a fixed-route service, you may need to present the safety information at all major stops or terminals after new passengers board.

**Introduction**

Introduce the briefing to your passengers by welcoming them aboard and explaining that:

* + Their safety is a top priority
	+ You want them to become familiar with the safety features on the vehicle and how to use them properly
	+ You need to relay important information about steps to take in an emergency—steps that could save lives

***Follow Your Lead***

Advise passengers to first look to you—the driver—for directions or instructions in the event of an emergency.

**Safety Topics**

Depending on the type of vehicle you’re operating, your safety briefing should cover the following topics and content.

***Slide 83:*** ***Emergency Exits***

Point out the location of all emergency exits—push-out windows, roof vents, and/or side doors—and explain how to operate them.

Emphasize that, whenever possible, the main vehicle door(s) through which everyone boarded should be the primary exit choice. Otherwise, the nearest exit should be used.

Encourage able-bodied passengers to assist any injured or mobility-impaired passengers during an emergency evacuation.

***Seatbelt Use***

Recommend the use of lap and shoulder seatbelts whenever passengers occupy any seat that has them.

***Emergency Contact***

Advise passengers to call 911 by cell-phone in the event of an emergency.

***Fire Extinguisher***

Point out the location of the fire extinguisher. It may be located behind the driver’s seat, beneath the front-row passenger’s seat, or in the front-most overhead compartment.

***Bag Stowage***

Inform passengers that all baggage needs to be stowed securely to ensure that:

* + There is unobstructed access to the exits
	+ No one will be injured from falling baggage
	+ Aisles remain open and accessible at all times

Tell passengers that if an item won’t fit safely and securely near their seat, you can assist with finding a safe location or store the item in the luggage bay or other storage area.

***Slide 84:*** ***Restroom Emergencies***

Tell passengers about the emergency signal device in the restroom.

***Avoiding Slips & Falls***

Warn passengers to exercise care when boarding and exiting the vehicle and to use the handrail when ascending or descending steps.

Encourage passengers to:

* + Remain seated as much as possible while the vehicle is in motion
	+ Always use handrails, seat-backs, or other supports if it becomes necessary to walk while the vehicle is moving

***Slide 85:*** ***Incapacitated or Unsafe Driver***

Advise passengers on what to do if you (the driver) become incapacitated or begin driving in an unsafe manner.

If passengers believe they are in danger, they should call 911. This may be required if the driver:

* + Seems incapacitated, fatigued, intoxicated, or otherwise impaired—including by a medical condition
	+ Is driving erratically or recklessly, including speeding or texting, and won’t listen to requests to stop
	+ Refuses to stop despite an urgent safety problem (heavy smoke, skidding, etc.)

***Slide 86:*** **Passenger Management**

**Selecting a Loading Area**

Your responsibility for safe boarding begins well before any passengers approach the vehicle. The first step is selecting a safe loading area.

Position the vehicle so that passengers have the shortest, clearest path possible to the entrance of the vehicle, without the need to:

* + Cross rough terrain
	+ Step off a curb and then up into the vehicle
	+ Cross a street or other area with traffic

Your loading point should also keep passengers away from hazards such as:

* + Dark areas
	+ Signs
	+ Poles
	+ Sewer grates
	+ Benches
	+ Other obstacles that could create a hazard during boarding

If driving a regular route with designated stopping areas, your loading/unloading areas will already be selected for you.

If you are going to be stopped on the roadway or in another high-traffic area, use your four-way flashers to alert other traffic. Leave the flashers on until boarding is complete and you are ready to pull away.

***Slide 87:*** **The Boarding Process**

Remain by the entrance door during loading whenever possible, so you can:

* + Control the entrance and see who goes in and out
	+ Assist any passengers who might need assistance
	+ Be in the best position to spot and prevent any safety problems, since the entranceway is typically the most hazardous area during boarding

Advise passengers on how to safely board the bus as they approach the door. Advise them to:

* + Watch their step—this is especially important if the first step is a portable step
	+ Use the handrails and all steps (that is, don’t skip steps)
	+ Watch out for any known hazards, such as slippery steps caused by snow or rain

Be willing to assist passengers with boarding as needed, especially elderly passengers and small children.

**After the Boarding Process**

Prepare the passengers for safe departure by checking the following:

* + All passengers are seated and are wearing their seatbelts, if the vehicle has them.
	+ Baggage is secured and out of the aisle, so passengers have a clear path to the exits. If necessary, overly large baggage may need to be moved to a storage compartment.
	+ No one is close to the outside of the vehicle as you prepare to pull away. Listen carefully for anyone yelling out a warning or a request.

***Slide 88:*** **Unloading Passengers**

When passengers are exiting (also known as “alighting”) from the vehicle, many of the procedures above should be repeated.

* + Select a safe location, preferably on the same side of the street as the passengers’ destination. Avoid the need for passengers to cross in front of, or behind, the vehicle and into traffic. If that is unavoidable, warn passengers to:
		- Move slowly around the vehicle
		- Use the nearest designated crosswalk
		- Check for traffic before entering the street
	+ If parked on the street, turn on your four-way flashers and keep them on the entire time you are stopped.
	+ Do not open the exit door until you have checked the exit area and verified that it will be safe for passengers to exit. If necessary, ask passengers to please remain in their seats until you complete this step.
	+ Before passengers exit the vehicle, check the area around the exit for—and warn passengers about—any rough terrain or other hazards.
	+ Stay near the door, if possible, to make sure your passengers exit safely. Remind passengers to step carefully and to use all handholds when exiting. Be willing to assist passengers who are having difficulty with the steps.
	+ Supervise and assist with the removal of luggage from the luggage compartment. Do not unlock and open the luggage compartment until you are able to supervise the removal of luggage. If your employer uses claim checks, you may need to positively match luggage to its owner.

***Slide 89:*** **Standing Passengers**

**Standee Line** No rider may stand forward of the rear of the driver's seat. Buses designed to allow standing must have a two-inch line on the floor or some other means of showing riders where they cannot stand. This is called the standee line. All standing riders must stay behind it.

Some passenger-carrying vehicles allow “standees”—passengers who ride while standing in the aisle or other designated standing area.

Do not drive the vehicle while any passengers are forward of the “standee line,” and make sure standees remain behind that line at all times while the vehicle is moving. This is required under 49 CFR Sec. 392.62.

The line is located just behind the driver’s seat, running perpendicular from one side of the vehicle to the other. The line may be marked on the floor or through some other means. If the vehicle was designed to accommodate standees, it should be equipped with a sign stating that

it’s a federal violation for the vehicle to move while persons are forward of the standee line.

If any passengers will be riding in permanent seats located forward of the standee line, do not drive the vehicle if those persons interfere with your safe operation of the vehicle.

***Slide 90:*** **Dealing with Disruptive Passengers**

Anyone who interacts with a variety of people—such as the driver of a bus or motorcoach—must be prepared to deal with confrontational, disruptive, or combative passengers.

You will need to assess the situation and act, based on your best judgment, “people skills,” and your employer’s policies. Your first step is likely to be parking the vehicle in a safe location.

Never attempt to deal with a confrontational or combative passenger while the vehicle is moving.

Every confrontational situation you encounter is going to be unique, so preparing for every possible scenario is impossible. Depending on the situation, your plan of action may first involve trying to calm the passenger using conversation. If that is unsuccessful, the situation may require physical movement.

***Slide 91:*** ***Verbal***

Determine why the passenger is upset and, if possible, try to resolve the situation verbally by:

* + Listening to the passenger
	+ Acknowledging their issue
	+ Expressing your understanding
	+ Stating that you will try to help resolve the issue
	+ Acting on any promises that you made to address the issue

Always be aware of your attitude, your language, and your physical presence, and how those are perceived by your passengers. When possible, you must avoid the following when dealing with a combative passenger:

* + Ignoring them, making them feel invisible or powerless
	+ Cornering the individual, which can make them feel threatened—and feel that a fight is the only way to escape
	+ Humiliating them, which can escalate hostility

As tension escalates, do not respond in a way that creates more tension. You need to *de-escalate* the situation. If a passenger begins to yell at you, for example, do not yell back.

Instead, respond with a calm and assertive voice and non-threatening body language that signals that you are in control of the situation.

When speaking to a combative or frustrated individual, use clear statements that:

* + Inform the passenger of the rules or the directions you expect them (and everyone else) to follow
	+ Reflect their frustrations, so they know that you heard them

For example:

* + “I understand your frustration about the high fares, but it’s my job to collect them.”
	+ “I realize we’re running out of storage space, but the aisle must remain clear for everyone’s safety.”

***Physical***

If the situation becomes physical, or if visual or verbal cues make you believe it will become physical, you will need to change your approach. Stop trying to defuse the situation. Instead, take actions to protect yourself and the other passengers.

This is also when law enforcement will need to get involved. Follow your employer’s procedures to notify your employer or call law enforcement, or make sure a passenger makes the call.

Your best protection in such situations, normally, is space. Get yourself and other passengers away from the combative individual. Do not allow the individual to take control of the vehicle if there are passengers on board, but keep in mind that the lives of your passengers are more important than the vehicle itself.

If the combative individual is near the front of the bus with you, try to encourage them to leave the bus. You may be able to accomplish this by promising to continue the discussion outside. You might say, “Let’s continue this discussion outside where we have more room to talk,” for example.

If the passenger is near the rear of the bus, you may need to start evacuating other passengers at the front of the bus.

Keep in mind: you will never be expected to have a physical fight with a combative passenger. The expectation is that you will take steps to protect yourself and your passengers, and seek help from emergency services or law enforcement when needed.

***Slide 92:*** **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act, signed into law in 1990, ensures that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. This includes the right to travel by bus. Public or private entities may not discriminate against an individual with a disability when it comes to transportation. This means that an individual with a disability—including someone using a wheelchair or service animal—is guaranteed equal access to transportation services.

The U.S. DOT enforces the ADA among transportation operations and has ADA regulations in 49 CFR Parts 27, 28, 37, 38, and 39. The regulations your employer is subject to can depend on the type(s) of transportation services it offers. For example:

* + The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) enforces Subpart H of Part 37, which applies to motor carriers that operate **over**‑**the-road buses**
	+ The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) enforces all of the DOT’s ADA regulations on public transit providers that receive funding from the FTA, including many transit bus operators

In general, passenger carriers must be able to transport a person with a disability using either the carrier’s own equipment or by bringing in another operator to provide the transportation service, at no additional charge to the person with a disability.

Many ADA requirements apply to carriers that either operate or manufacture buses. As a professional driver, many of the ADA regulations will not apply directly to you. You do, however, play a vital role in accommodating and transporting passengers with disabilities. Discuss ADA compliance with your employer

***Slide 93:*** **Treating All Customers with Respect**

All of your passengers deserve the same level of courtesy and respect, whether they have a disability or not. The following should help you achieve that standard:

* + Give passengers with disabilities the same options, choices, and information as you give other passengers. Put simply, treat them equally. This may mean, for example, that you need to provide printed copies of your pre-trip safety briefing to individuals who cannot hear an audio briefing.
	+ Don’t make assumptions about your customers’ abilities. You can ask if they need assistance, and—if the answer is yes—ask how you can help. Do not, for example, walk up to a passenger you perceive as being visually impaired and grab their arm without asking, so you can guide them to a seat—even if you mean well.
	+ When speaking to passengers with disabilities, address them directly—don’t assume you need to talk to their companion(s). Speak clearly but in a normal conversational tone, just like you would talk to anyone else, unless the customer requests otherwise.
	+ Don’t touch customers or their mobility devices or service animals unless you first get permission. Treat their belongings with the same respect as you would treat the belongings of any other passenger.
	+ Remain calm and pleasant if you are asked for help or asked if you can repeat or write down what you said. Conversely, don’t be afraid to ask a customer to repeat what he or she said.
	+ Be aware that passengers with disabilities may need extra time for boarding and/or disembarking from the vehicle. Give them that time.

Keep in mind: when speaking about persons with disabilities, the person comes first, their disability second. Instead of saying “disabled person” or “wheelchair user,” say “person with a disability” or “customer who uses a wheelchair.”

You may NOT:

* + Deny transportation to someone with a disability unless they engage in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct. You must offer transportation even if the individual’s appearance or involuntary behaviors might offend, annoy, or inconvenience other people.
	+ Ask other passengers or bystanders to help perform tasks for someone with a disability (such as boarding), unless the passenger requests or agrees to getting help from those persons.

You may need to ask other passengers to vacate seats reserved for persons with disabilities, although you are not required to enforce the request.

If your vehicle is filled to capacity, you are not required to remove other passengers in order to make room for persons with disabilities.

***Slide 94:*** ***Passengers with Visual Impairment***

Use the following tips when interacting with passengers who have a visual impairment:

* + Verbally identify yourself as the driver as you approach the passenger
	+ Ask if and how you can help the passenger; don’t assume the person is entirely blind
	+ When responding to the customer, respond verbally, not with a visual cue (e.g., don’t nod your head or give a thumb-up sign)
	+ If the passenger holds your arm for guidance, walk alongside without pushing or pulling and let the passenger know about any obstacles
	+ Once the passenger is in his or her seat, verbally orient the person to the location of key features of the vehicle (lavatory, exits, etc.)
	+ Let the passenger know exactly where you have placed any of his or her belongings
	+ Inform the passenger when you are walking away
	+ Make sure the passenger is aware of when to exit the vehicle, such as at a rest area or his or her requested stop
	+ If you perform a monetary transaction with the customer, count the money out loud

***Passengers Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing***

Use the following tips when interacting with passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing:

* + Face the passenger when speaking to him or her and make sure he or she can see you.
	+ Don’t raise your voice unless requested, because that can make lip reading difficult. Speak clearly and normally, using gestures as needed to relay your message. If needed, use written communication.
	+ Make sure the passenger is aware of any audible announcements.

***Slide 95:*** **Passengers with Cognitive Impairments**

**Cognitive impairments** can show up in a variety of ways, include a broad range of symptoms, and often go entirely unnoticed. During transportation, a person with a cognitive disability may:

* + Have trouble remembering information, including where they are, where they are going, or when or where they need to be at a location
	+ Be unable to concentrate
	+ Become anxious or stressed
	+ Have trouble understanding announcements or other communication
	+ Have a fear of falling off a step or curb

Use the following tips when interacting with passengers who have an obvious cognitive impairment that might affect their ability to use your transportation service in a safe manner:

* + Identify yourself as the driver and ask if and how you can help the passenger; don’t make assumptions about the person’s abilities
	+ Be short, precise, simple, and clear in your communications
	+ If you ask a question, make sure it only requires a short answer
	+ Be patient; you may need to repeat the same information until the person understands
	+ During en-route stops, pay attention to passengers who may lose their way or not remember what they were doing or where they were going; make sure they safely return to the vehicle before you depart
	+ Provide assistance getting on or off the vehicle, if needed

***Slide 96:*** ***Passengers Who Use Service Animals***

Passengers who use **service animals** are legally allowed to bring the animal onto the vehicle. Service animals are usually dogs, but other animals may also be trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. In some cases, a passenger may have more than one service animal.

* + Become familiar with your employer’s policies for service animals.
	+ You cannot refuse service to someone who is using a service animal unless it poses a direct threat to health and safety (fear of an animal is not considered a threat). You are not required to verify that an animal is a service animal (and the passenger is not required to have a certificate or identification for the animal). If you’re not sure, you can ask if it’s a pet or a service animal. You can also ask what types of tasks the service animal performs. “Comfort,” “companionship,” or “emotional support” does not qualify as a necessary task.
	+ The animal must stay with the owner—out of the aisle—and be kept under control at all times (usually through a leash, harness, or carrier). If the passenger leaves the vehicle at a rest stop or destination, the service animal must accompany the passenger.
	+ Never touch, talk to, or otherwise distract a service animal.
	+ If a service animal begins to bark, growl, or whine, you can question what’s causing that behavior—it may be a sign that something is wrong with the passenger.
	+ Do not take control of, or responsibility for, a service animal except in emergencies. You are not required to make sure the animal is restrained or secured during transportation.
	+ Do not allow service animals to ride on the wheelchair lift unless authorized under your employer’s policy.

Some service animals can be identified through a special tag, vest, or harness.

***Slide 97:*** ***Passengers Who Use Wheelchairs***

In many cases, you will have advance notice that you will be transporting a passenger who uses a wheelchair. This will help you to make sure the tie-down area and lift are ready for use and that you’re familiar with your employer’s policies and procedures for wheelchair securement.

* + Ask the passenger if you can help with anything. If the answer is yes, ask how you can help. It is your responsibility to assist the person onto the vehicle as needed.
	+ Don’t grab a passenger’s wheelchair or other mobility device without permission.
	+ Customers must be allowed to travel in or with their wheelchair whenever possible, if they wish to do so. If a wheelchair must be stored in a baggage compartment, you will need to help store and retrieve it. Never make assumptions about how to store or operate a wheelchair or other mobility device; instead, ask the passenger.
	+ Make sure your employer is aware of any transportation you perform for passengers who use wheelchairs.

The passenger may already be familiar with the boarding and exiting process and be able to tell you where he or she will need help.

***Passengers Who Use Other Mobility Aids***

Mobility aids include walkers, crutches, canes, knee scooters, and similar devices.

* + Try to keep mobility aids with the passengers who own them
	+ If necessary due to the size of the mobility aid and/or the configuration of your vehicle, store mobility aids in the luggage compartment and retrieve them for passengers as needed
	+ Never allow mobility aids (or anything else) to block the aisle

***Slide 98:*** **Using a Wheelchair Lift**

If your vehicle has a wheelchair lift, you should be trained by your employer on:

* + How to inspect it
	+ How to operate it, with and without power
	+ How to secure it for travel
	+ The maximum size and weight capacity of the lift
	+ Procedures for manually lifting and lowering wheelchair-bound passengers onto and off of the vehicle in an emergency
	+ Your employer’s policies for assisting customers who use mobility devices

Passengers who use walkers, crutches, canes, or braces, or who otherwise have difficulty using steps, may use a wheelchair lift standing up (or using a knee scooter or other mobility device that limits their ability to fully stand). If you receive a request to use the lift due to a difficulty with stairs, you may not ask the passenger to disclose their disability. Check the lift for any marking indicating a preferred standing position.

You may decline to carry a wheelchair and occupant if the combined weight exceeds the lift’s specifications or if carrying the wheelchair is inconsistent with legitimate safety requirements (such as a wheelchair being so large that it would block an aisle and interfere with the safe evacuation of passengers in an emergency).

***Slide 99:*** **Prior to loading**:

* + Inspect the lift before each use; check for any debris or protrusions on the deck of the lift, and make sure there are no slip hazards
	+ Only operate the lift on level ground, with no obstacles in the way of loading or unloading; if necessary, move to a better location
	+ Set the parking brake before operating the lift
	+ Make sure the roll-stops or safety flaps are working correctly and in the correct position Never allow anyone else to operate the lift
	+ Never operate the lift if anyone is standing or has their feet or other body parts in the area where the lift will be contacting the ground
	+ If a lift is not working for any reason or if you notice any other problem or defect, report it to your employer as soon as possible

***Slide 100:*** **Wheelchair Securement**

Once the passenger is on board, you will need to either:

* + Secure the wheelchair with the passenger sitting in it, or
	+ Secure the wheelchair separately, with the passenger riding in a regular seat

Follow your employer’s policies and procedures and your vehicle manufacturer’s recommendations for wheelchair securement.

You CANNOT:

* + Require that a wheelchair user transfer to a vehicle seat. That decision rests with the passenger.
	+ Require that a wheelchair user use a seatbelt or shoulder harness unless all passengers are required to use them.
	+ Deny transportation on the grounds that the wheelchair cannot be secured or restrained satisfactorily by your vehicle’s securement system. Instead, you must offer boarding assistance and the opportunity to sit in a regular vehicle seat if the passenger is not assigned to a wheelchair securement location. If the passenger is unable or unwilling to accept this offer, you are not required to provide transportation to him or her.

If the number of wheelchair users on a trip exceeds the number of securement locations on the vehicle, you will need to allocate securement locations on a first-come/first-served basis.

You are NOT required to allow wheelchairs to ride in places other than designated securement locations in the vehicle (when there are any). Otherwise, you must provide and use a securement system that ensures the wheelchair remains within the securement area.

You may NOT deny transportation to a wheelchair or its user on the grounds that the device cannot be secured or restrained satisfactorily by the vehicle’s securement system. You must offer boarding assistance and the opportunity to sit in a vehicle seat if the passenger is not assigned to a securement location.

# Securing the Wheelchair Separately

If the passenger can move from the wheelchair to a regular seat, be sure to store the wheelchair in:

* + The luggage compartment
	+ The area designated for passengers in wheelchairs—if the area is not needed by another passenger, or
	+ In an area designed for empty wheelchairs

Whenever possible (and depending on your employer’s policies and vehicle configuration), place the wheelchair in a location designed for wheelchairs and then secure it in place. You may *require* that the passenger allow his or her wheelchair to be secured.

If the passenger is not riding in his or her wheelchair, it will be your responsibility to get the wheelchair for the passenger when he or she is ready to exit the vehicle. If you are not sure how to fold or compress the wheelchair for storage, ask the passenger.

# Securing an Occupied Wheelchair

If unsure, ask the passenger the best way to secure the wheelchair. In general:

* + The wheelchair should face forward
	+ The wheelchair should be centered on any securement tracks or anchor plates
	+ The brakes on the wheelchair must be applied and the power turned off (if electric)
	+ Securement straps should be used at all four corners, positioned at a 45-degree angle from the floor, and securely tightened
	+ Make sure the battery and any other attachment components are secure
	+ Verify that the wheelchair is secure after everything is tightened
	+ If your vehicle is equipped with a shoulder and/or lap belt to secure the passenger into the wheelchair, learn how the system works and use it properly

Be aware of the following precautions:

* + Do not attach securement straps to wheels, detachable components, or components not strong enough to withstand use for securement
	+ Do not place the straps in a way that they must bend around a wheelchair component such as a wheel or a footrest
	+ Keep the straps away from sharp edges
	+ Do not use different types of straps or tensioning devices on the same end (front or back)
	+ Do not cross the securement straps, which could add undue stress to the wheelchair, potentially damaging it or causing it to collapse
	+ Use extra caution with battery-powered electric wheelchairs or scooters; if the batteries are allowed to tip or become damaged, they could potentially spill acid onto the floor, which could burn passengers’ skin or cause lung damage if vapors are inhaled

Having the passenger in a regular seat rather than the wheelchair is a safer option.

Be sure the front straps don’t restrict the passenger’s use of the wheelchair’s foot plates.

***Slide 101:*** **Stops**

When an over-the-road bus makes an **intermediate or rest stop**, any passenger with a disability (including someone using a mobility device) must be given the same opportunity to leave and return as other passengers.

* + Provide assistance as needed
	+ If possible, give the passenger information about the accessibility of the rest stop

If you’re on a trip of three hours or more with no scheduled stops and your bus has an **inaccessible restroom**, you must make an effort to provide a comfort stop upon request of any passenger with a disability who is unable to use the restroom. If you cannot make a stop, then explain to the passenger why you made that decision.

If driving a **fixed route**, you (or a recording system) must announce your stops often enough so passengers with visual impairments or other disabilities can orient themselves to their location. Make these announcements at least at:

* + Transfer points with other fixed routes
	+ Other major intersections
	+ Destination points

If an individual with a disability asks you to announce a certain stop, you (or a recording) must announce it.

If you stop at a location that serves more than one bus route, it might be difficult for a passenger with a visual impairment or other disability to find the proper vehicle to enter (or re-enter). For this reason, you must provide a way for the passenger to identify the correct vehicle, or—if the passenger will be switching vehicles—make the other driver aware that the passenger will be boarding their vehicle, so that driver can provide assistance.

***Slide 102:*** **Hours of Service (HOS) Requirements**

**Fatigue as a Safety Concern**

Fatigue is a feeling of sleepiness or drowsiness with a variety of symptoms, including reduced performance, decreased alertness and attention, and impaired judgment. Together, these symptoms can have serious consequences for a bus or motorcoach driver out on the road. Even a small decrease in your levels of alertness and watchfulness could result in a crash—or mean the difference between life or death in a crash.

**Signs of Fatigue**

Fatigue impacts many tasks that are critical to safe driving. Common signs of fatigue include:

* + Blurred vision or reduced field of vision
	+ Not being able to recall the past few miles traveled
	+ Having disconnected or wandering thoughts
	+ Loss of vigilance, such as being unable to perform your normal level of visual search
	+ Eyelids fluttering or “pausing” when blinking
	+ Feeling as though your head is heavy
	+ Drifting out of the lane, possibly driving on rumble strips
	+ Having difficulty focusing or keeping your eyes open
	+ Yawning repeatedly
	+ Accidentally tailgating other vehicles
	+ Missing traffic signs
	+ Short lapses in consciousness (microsleep)

There are several problems with becoming fatigued:

* + Your vision area becomes reduced, so you’re not as effective at spotting hazards
	+ Your decisions on speed and space management become flawed
	+ The time (and thus the distance) it takes you to perceive a hazard increases, so you’ll have a harder time making quick decisions to avoid hazards
	+ Once you do spot a hazard, your reaction time will be slower

**Two Types of Fatigue**

Your ability to fight fatigue can depend on the type of fatigue you’re suffering from. There are two different kinds of fatigue you should be aware of:

* + **Short-term (acute) fatigue.** This is the kind of momentary or “transient” fatigue that many people feel on a daily basis, even after getting a good night’s sleep. You can often overcome acute fatigue by moving around, getting some caffeine, or getting a short nap.
	+ **Long-term (chronic) fatigue.** Chronic fatigue is often due to sleep deprivation—a failure to get enough sleep over a long period of time. This can have a variety of causes, including personal or family issues, medical problems such as sleep apnea or diabetes, work schedules, and so on. Recovering from chronic fatigue may take a few nights of long, uninterrupted sleep. Preventing chronic fatigue over a long period of time may require addressing the underlying cause.

***Slide 103:*** **Preventing Fatigue**

Ideally, you will never need to “fight” fatigue while driving—you’ll avoid the fight altogether by preventing fatigue from appearing. Here are some methods to consider for avoiding fatigue:

* + Get adequate rest before beginning your shift. The hours-of-service rules require at least eight hours off duty, but that doesn’t guarantee adequate rest, especially if you’re not sleeping for that entire time.
	+ Make sure you’re getting *quality* sleep. For example, you should avoid electronic screens, caffeine, and alcohol before sleep, reduce noise and light while sleeping, and make sure your mattress and pillow are comfortable.
	+ Establish and follow a regular sleep schedule: get into a pre-sleep routine that relaxes you, and then go to bed and get up at regular times.
	+ Take advantage of opportunities to rest or nap during the workday.
	+ Stay healthy with a good diet and regular exercise.
	+ Eat small meals frequently, rather than large meals occasionally.
	+ Stop on a regular basis, if possible, so you can get up and move around.
	+ Learn to recognize the early signs of fatigue so you can counter it as early as possible.
	+ If you suffer from chronic fatigue, talk to your doctor.

**Fighting Fatigue**

If you are showing signs of fatigue, there are several things you can do to “revive” yourself, at least temporarily.

***Driving***

If you’re feeling fatigued while driving, try:

* + Stretching in the seat
	+ Changing your position
	+ Using a fan or window to get some fresh air flowing across you
	+ Drinking a caffeinated beverage

***Stopping***

If the above methods prove ineffective, you may need to stop in a safe location and get out of the vehicle. Moving around may be all you need to reverse your fatigue. Remember that the safety of you and your passengers is the primary concern. Having to make a temporary, unexpected stop to reverse fatigue is better than risking safety. If required by your employer, notify them of such a stop.

***Resting***

If the above steps don’t refresh you to the point where you feel safe to drive—the only remaining option is to stop as soon as possible so you can get some rest. Even a short “power nap” may be all you need to overcome fatigue. As a passenger-carrying driver, this option is usually not a good one, but it may be *required* under federal regulations in 49 CFR 392.3.

The regulation says you cannot begin or continue to drive if your “ability or alertness is so impaired, or so likely to become impaired, through fatigue, illness, or any other cause, as to make it unsafe” for you to drive.

The only exception to this is if there is a “grave emergency” where your passengers or other road users are put at greater risk if you were to stop right away. If that’s the case, you still have to stop driving but you can wait until you reach the nearest safe place.

Notify your employer immediately if you feel you are too fatigued to drive safely.

***Slide 104:*** **Hours-of-Service Regulations**

To help prevent fatigued driving, the FMCSA has established strict hours‑of‑service rules to require a certain amount of rest and prevent driving after working or driving for a certain number of hours. The regulations are found in 49 CFR Part 395 and consist of three key areas:

* 1. Limits on when a driver can drive a CMV
	2. Recordkeeping to show compliance with those limits
	3. Exceptions from the limits and/or recordkeeping requirements

If you violate the rules, you can be cited, fined, and/or removed from service until you get adequate rest.

**On-Duty & Off-Duty Time**

In order to comply with hours-of-service regulations, you must understand the difference between being “on duty” and “off duty.” The distinction is critical if you want to stay in compliance. The more time you spend on duty, the more likely you won’t be able to do any more driving until you take some time off duty.

**On-duty time** is defined by the federal regulations as “all time from the time a driver begins to work or is required to be in readiness to work until the time the driver is relieved from work and all responsibility for performing work.”

The definition of on-duty time includes the following activities:

* + Waiting to be dispatched
	+ Inspecting, servicing, fueling, or otherwise working on a CMV
	+ Driving (all time spent at the controls of a CMV in operation)
	+ Being in or on a CMV, other than:
		- time spent resting in or on a parked vehicle
		- time spent resting in a sleeper berth
	+ Loading or unloading passengers or baggage, or waiting to load or unload
	+ Traveling at the direction of your employer
	+ Repairing, obtaining assistance, or attending to a disabled CMV
	+ Complying with drug or alcohol testing requirements, including travel time to and from the collection site
	+ Performing any other work for a motor carrier
	+ Performing compensated work for any other employer

**Off-duty time** includes times when you are relieved of all duty and responsibility for performing work and are free to pursue activities of your own choosing. If you are not doing any work (paid or unpaid) and are under no obligations to a motor carrier, and you are not doing any paid work for anyone else, you are off duty. Note:

* + Time spent resting in a parked vehicle is off-duty time as long as you are under no obligation to perform work or remain with the vehicle
	+ Time spent resting in a sleeper berth on your vehicle is treated the same as off-duty time but must be recorded as “sleeper berth” time in your records; the berth must comply with the specifications in Sec. 393.76

***Slide 105:*** **The Limits**

The hours-of-service rules include daily and weekly limits as well as a minimum daily amount of rest before driving. As the driver of a passenger‑carrying commercial vehicle, you must keep these four rules in mind, as found in Sec. 395.5:

* + **8 hours off:** You must have 8 consecutive hours off duty and/or in a sleeper berth before your work shift, in order to earn a full allowance of driving time.
	+ **10 hours driving:** After having 8 consecutive hours off, you may drive a commercial vehicle for up to 10 hours. “Driving” includes all time spent at the controls of your vehicle in operation. If you’re stuck in traffic, you’re still driving even if you aren’t moving. Note that 10 hours of driving is the maximum allowed after 8 hours off, not the maximum per calendar day.
	+ **15 on-duty hours:** Once you start your workday after having 8 hours off, you must stop driving after accumulating 15 hours of on-duty time. This on-duty time includes all driving and working hours but does NOT include any off-duty time you take during the day. For example, if you begin your day at 7:00 a.m., work until 1:00 p.m. (6 hours), are off duty for 4 hours, and then return to duty at 5:00 p.m., you could still work another 9 hours before hitting the 15-hour limit.
	+ **60/70 hours on duty:** If you accumulate 60 hours of on‑duty time in any period of 7 consecutive days, you must stop driving for that day (the day on which you hit the 60-hour limit) and must be off duty until you “gain back” time to drive, as explained below. If your employer runs commercial vehicles seven days per week, they have the option to allow you to increase the 60-hour/7-day limit to 70 hours in 8 days. Bus and motorcoach drivers do not have the option to “restart” the weekly limit with 34 hours off duty. That option is reserved for truck drivers only.

**These limits do not impact when you can *work*,** they simply limit when you can drive a large commercial vehicle.

* + You must keep track of how many hours you’ve used and therefore how many hours you have available under each limit
	+ Once you reach the daily 10- or 15-hour limit or the weekly 60/70-hour limit, you must stop driving CMVs, even if you still have hours available under one or two of those limits
	+ You can continue to perform non-driving work for as long as needed after hitting a limit but may not drive a CMV again until you have at least 8 hours off

**Compliance with the rules does not mean you can’t be fatigued.** Don’t be fooled into thinking that having hours available means you can safely keep driving until you reach a limit. If you start feeling fatigued, you need to take fatigue countermeasures even if you still have time available to drive under the rules.

***Slide 106:*** **Recordkeeping**

Accurate recordkeeping is required to ensure compliance with the hours‑of‑service limits. Most commercial drivers must complete a daily “record of duty status,” known as a “log,” to show their time for each 24-hour period. Some drivers—especially those doing short runs or only driving intermittently—are allowed to use paper logs, but most drivers must use electronic logging devices (ELDs).

During a roadside inspection, you will need to provide logs and any supporting documentation for the current day and the prior seven consecutive days so that your compliance with the hours-of-service rules can be verified. Your employer must keep your logs for six months and provide them to government investigators upon request.

Some drivers who only do short runs are exempt from needing logs and can use basic time records instead. These records do not need to be provided during roadside inspections but having them in the vehicle may help.

***Paper or Digital Logs***

Every driver required to complete a record of duty status needs to know how to correctly fill out a paper log. Even drivers using ELDs must be capable of performing this task in the event their ELD malfunctions and they are unable to enter or recover logs from their device. Digital logs created using non-ELD logging software must comply with the same standards that apply to paper logs and must be capable of being printed on demand by you during a roadside inspection.

**Required Fields**

Log entries must be legible, filled out in duplicate, and current up to your last change of duty status. Information like the employer name and address may be pre-printed. All other required information must be completed by the driver.

The following fields are required on a typical paper log:

* 1. **Graph Grid:** The industry-standard (horizontal or vertical) graph grid on which to show your duty status for the day, including the words “Midnight” and “Noon” at the appropriate locations. If your vehicles are not equipped with sleeper berths, your employer may choose to use logs that only have three rows on the grid, without the “Sleeper Berth” row.
	2. **Date:** Today’s date.
	3. **Total Miles Driving Today:** The total number of miles you drove a CMV today.
	4. **Vehicle Number(s):** The unit number(s) of all CMVs you drove today (including any trailers).
	5. **Name of Carrier:** The name of the carrier(s) for whom you are driving.
	6. **Driver’s Signature/Certification:** Your legal signature (generally the same as it appears on your license; it cannot be preprinted or made with a rubber stamp).
	7. **24-Hour Period Starting Time:** The starting time for the 24-hour day covered by the log, usually midnight.
	8. **Main Office Address:** The carrier’s main office address. It is the principal physical place of business designated by the carrier.
	9. **Remarks:** The remarks area must show the location (usually city and state) of every change in your duty status. Your employer’s policies may require you to make additional remarks on your logs, such as noting your vehicle inspections, fueling, explaining any exceptions that you used or why you went over a limit, or indicating what you did during your on-duty time. Such remarks are not required but can be helpful.
	10. **Name of Co-Driver:** The name of your co-driver, if there is one.
	11. **Total Hours:** The total hours you spent in each duty status. The sum must equal 24 hours.
	12. **Shipping Document, Manifest Number, or Name of Shipper & Commodity:** Either a movement or trip number, to tie your log to the specific trip(s) you took that day.

**Optional Fields**

There are other fields commonly found on logs, but not required in the regulations. However, your employer may require them under its policies.

“Total Mileage Today” is not the same as “Total Miles Driving Today.” This field usually only applies to teams. Use it to show the total miles that you traveled today, whether driving or riding as a passenger.

The “Home Terminal Address” is the location where you normally report for duty, which may differ from the main office address.

**Note:** your log must *always* be based on the time standard at your home terminal, no matter where you happen to be driving. You can only switch to a different local time if your home terminal changes. This may mean that the hour shown on a wall clock may not match where you are on your log.

The “From” and “To” fields are used to show your starting location and destination or turn-around point for the day.

**Recap**

The “Recap” section found on many logs is optional but serves an important purpose. You can use it at the end of the day to keep track of where you stand on the 60- or 70-hour limit. Using the recap on a daily basis will help ensure you consistently stay under the weekly on-duty limit.

The recap provides space for you to keep a running total of your accumulated on-duty hours (the total of the “Driving” and “On Duty” lines on the grid). It tells you how many hours you’ve worked over the past 7 or 8 days. It also shows how much time you have available tomorrow before hitting the 60- or 70-hour limit.

For example, to determine where you stand on the 60-hour/7-day limit, you add up your work hours over the past *six* consecutive days and subtract the total from 60. The remainder is how many hours you have available tomorrow, the seventh day.

While recaps come in many styles, the information you write into them is usually standard and is explained within the recap.

***Slide 107:*** **Completing Your Record of Duty Status**

When using regular logs, whether paper or digital, you must start a daily log at the beginning of your workday and then update it each time there is a change in your duty status. Your duty status is chosen from one of four types:

* + **Off duty:** When you have no responsibility to your employer, vehicle, and passengers, and are free to pursue activities of your own choosing.
	+ **Sleeper berth:** When you spend time in a vehicle-mounted sleeper berth that meets the standards in Sec. 393.76. Sleeper-berth time is a type of off-duty time. The “sleeper berth” field may be absent from your logs based on your employer’s policy, if your vehicles do not have sleeper berths.
	+ **Driving:** Time spent at the controls of your commercial vehicle.
	+ **On duty (not driving):** All other time spent working for any motor carrier, as well as paid time spent working for anyone else.

The total in all four categories must add up to 24 hours.

***Slide 108:*** **Flagging:** Paper logs record your time in 15-minute increments. When your activity is less than 15 minutes, you can “flag” it. This is done by drawing a line down to the Remarks area at the appropriate time(s) and entering the amount of time you spent on the activity and the location.

For example, if you drive from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. but you stop for 6 minutes at noon to check something outside the vehicle, you can draw a continuous “driving” line from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., but at noon you draw a line down to the Remarks area and write “6 minutes, on duty,” and the location. Those 6 minutes do not have to be added to your driving time for the day (because they weren’t actually spent driving).

***Slide 109:*** ***Electronic Logging Devices (ELDs)***

You may be required to use an FMCSA‑registered ELD in place of paper or digital logs. ELDs automatically record driving time as well as certain other data at specific points throughout the day. Data captured automatically is combined with your manual entries (such as changes in duty status that don’t involve driving, corrections, trip numbers, etc.) to create your log for the day.

Your primary responsibilities when using an ELD include:

* + Logging in and out  at the appropriate time, using only your ID
	+ Continually verifying that the device is working properly
	+ Making all non-driving duty status changes as they occur, such as switching from on duty to off duty and off duty to on duty
	+ Entering comments, trip information, and equipment numbers at the appropriate time
	+ Reviewing each log before certifying and submitting it
	+ Making any corrections needed to make the log “true and correct”

Logging in to the device is critical for avoiding “unassigned drive time.” Unassigned drive time is driving time, recorded on an ELD, that is not assigned to a specific driver because the person who was driving failed to log in (or could not log in because he or she lacked an ELD account). All unassigned drive time must be assigned to a driver or must be explained.

***Slide 110:*** **In-Cab Requirements**

If your ELD includes a portable display, it must be mounted in the vehicle, within view while sitting in the driver’s seat. You cannot make entries while the vehicle is in motion, but you need to be able to see a malfunction indicator while driving so you know if the ELD is operating correctly.

You must have the following items with you whenever the vehicle is in operation:

* + Records (logs) for the current day and the previous seven days in the ELD
	+ The ELD user’s manual
	+ An instruction sheet on data transfer during roadside inspections
	+ An instruction sheet detailing malfunctions and the action to take
	+ A supply of blank paper logs (at least eight days’ worth) to be used if the device fails

**Device Malfunctions**

If the device fails or malfunctions, you must reconstruct the present day’s log and those for the previous seven days. You will need to do this using paper logs unless you have logging software available, can access the records on the ELD, or if you have (or can get) printouts. If the device cannot display or provide *any* records due to the failure or malfunction, you must complete paper or digital logs for the present day and the previous seven days and continue using paper logs until the ELD works again.

CALLOUT: If you can’t present your records in the required format *at the time of inspection*, you will be in violation of the regulations. A malfunctioning logging device is not a valid excuse for not having records. You cannot avoid a violation by requesting that your employer send the records to the inspecting officer. You need to have them in your possession at the time of inspection.

**Data Capture**

An ELD records driving time, location, and certain duty status information *automatically*. It captures required data at vehicle startup and shutdown, at all duty status changes, once per hour while the vehicle is moving, and when starting or ending a “special driving category” as explained below.

The automatically recorded data includes:

* + Date and time
	+ Location (you may occasionally need to enter a location manually if prompted)
	+ Engine hours
	+ Vehicle miles
	+ Driver identification
	+ Vehicle identification
	+ Carrier identification

**Automatic Duty Status Changes**

There are two instances when your ELD will *automatically* change your duty status for you:

* + When your vehicle starts moving and reaches no more than 5 mph, the ELD will start recording your **driving** time unless you indicated before moving that you are using a special driving category.
	+ When you stop and your duty status changes, you will need to update the ELD with your new status. If you do not, you will be prompted to update it after being stopped for five minutes. If you don’t respond to the prompt within one minute, your status will automatically change to **on duty, not driving**.

**Special Driving Categories**

There are two “special driving categories” you may use if allowed under your employer’s policy.

* + **Personal Use:** When you are using the commercial vehicle as a personal vehicle to commute to a purely personal destination, the category **Personal Use** should be used if allowed by the carrier. The driving will be recorded by the device as **off-duty time**.
	+ **Yard Move:** When you are operating the vehicle off of the public roadway, the category **Yard Move** should be used if allowed by the carrier. The driving is captured as **on-duty time** and does not count toward your driving limit.

***Slide 111: Roadside Inspections***

During a roadside inspection, you must be able to display your logs for today plus the prior seven days. Upon request, you will also need to submit an electronic copy of your logs from your ELD to an inspecting official using one of two methods:

* + The “telematic” method involves transfer through a website or via email
	+ The “local” method involves providing the logs to the officer using either Bluetooth or a USB connection

Know which method your ELD uses so you can relay that information to the inspecting officer.

Creating and Submitting the Record

As the day progresses, your ELD will combine the automatically collected data with your manual entries to create your ELD record (your log) for the day. You’ll need to certify the accuracy of your log each day, immediately after making the final required entry. You then must submit your logs to your employer within 13 days.

# Edits

You are allowed to enter missing information and make certain edits to your ELD records, but you may not edit your automatically recorded drive time. The edit option should only be used to make corrections. Supervisors can request edits, but it’s up to you to approve (or reject) all supervisor-proposed edits. Edits must include an explanation of why the change was made and indicate which user made the change.

# Exceptions

You must use an ELD unless you qualify for an exception and your employer allows you to use the exception. You may be exempt from needing an ELD if:

* + You are exempt from needing logs (such as if you use the 150-air-mile exception)
	+ You are only required to use a regular log on 8 days or less within any 30-consecutive-day period
	+ You are operating in a driveaway-towaway operation in which the vehicle being driven is part of the shipment being delivered (such as delivering a new bus to a buyer)
	+ Your vehicle was manufactured before model year 2000

***Slide 112:*** **The Importance of Seat Belts**

Seat belt use is one of the easiest and most important means of protection against injury, both for you and your passengers. A large passenger-carrying vehicle will naturally protect its occupants better than a small car would, but the large size of your vehicle is no guarantee of safety. Studies have shown that if you’re not wearing a seat belt and you get into a crash, your chances of being hurt or killed are greatly increased.

During a crash or sudden stop, a properly worn seat belt will:

* + Move with you and lock up, holding you in the seat and protecting you from injury
	+ Keep you from being thrown from the vehicle and/or tossed around inside of the vehicle
	+ Help you keep control of the vehicle, which may save your life and that of your passengers, as well as occupants in other vehicles

In addition, wearing your seat belt projects a positive, professional image, one that says you and your employer are serious about safety.

***Slide 113:*** **Passengers**

Not all passenger-carrying vehicles have seat belts for passengers, though most newer vehicles do. Federal regulations do not require bus or motorcoach passengers to wear seat belts, but the practice is strongly encouraged whenever seat belts are available. Seat belts will help provide the same protections to passengers as they do for the driver.

If your vehicle is equipped with passenger seat belts, encourage passengers to wear them every time the vehicle is in motion.

A reminder to wear seat belts should be part of your pre-trip safety briefing.

***Slide 114:*** **Adjusting Your Seat Belt**

It is important to wear your seat belt correctly, not only for your protection but to make the seat belt as comfortable as possible.

* + Make sure the seat belt webbing is not twisted
	+ Wear the shoulder belt across your shoulder and chest, with minimal (if any) slack; never position it under your arm or behind your back, because wearing it the wrong way could cause serious internal injuries in a crash
	+ If the height of your shoulder belt can be adjusted, make sure it’s at a height where it crosses your collarbone
	+ The lap belt should be adjusted so that it is snug and lies low across your hips after fastening

***Slide 115:*** **Recognizing Driving Distractions**

Distraction occurs whenever you take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, or your mind off driving. Common distractions can be your phone, your radio, even your navigation system. Anything that you do other than focusing on driving your vehicle safely is a distraction.

Driving distractions can be visual, physical, mental, or a combination of the three. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

***Slide 116:*** ***Visual Distractions***

Visual distractions cause you to focus your attention away from driving. For example, a deer, beautiful scenery, or crash scene can all distract you. It’s natural to notice these types of visual distractions, but you can’t give them more than a brief glance while driving.

## Physical Distractions

Physical distractions trigger you to take your hands off the wheel. Physical distractions include things like eating or drinking because, in order to do it, you have to take at least one hand off the wheel.

# Mental Distractions

Mental distractions are thoughts that make your mind wander to something other than your driving. You’re still going through the motions of driving, but in your head you might be worrying about being late to a destination or daydreaming about your next vacation. It’s natural to think about something other than driving for a few seconds, but it can very quickly become a dangerous distraction if you dwell on it too long.

The act of listening can also be a mental distraction. Whether you’re having a conversation with a passenger, listening to someone on your phone, or listening to the radio or a movie playing in the background, it draws your focus away from driving.

It’s a fact that people tend to go on “auto-pilot” when performing routine activities, like driving. In this situation, you may miss seeing something, even if it’s directly in your line of sight. This is called inattention blindness, and it is one of the major causes of human error and crashes.

Equally dangerous is highway hypnosis, or the feeling of being in a trance caused by long periods of driving without any stimulation, like when you’re cruising down a long, lonely stretch of highway.

***Slide 117:*** **Distracting Technology**

Part 392, Subpart H of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) limits the use of electronic devices by drivers of commercial motor vehicles. These prohibitions exist to help in reducing and preventing bus and truck accidents, fatalities, and injuries associated with distracted driving.

***Texting***

One of the more prominent distractions for drivers is texting. Section 392.80 of the FMCSRs prohibits a driver from **texting** while driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). In this case, “driving” means operating a CMV, with the motor running, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays.

Texting while driving is prohibited because it combines all three types of distraction: visual, physical, and mental. Texting requires you to take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off driving. In fact, studies have shown that texting while driving can impair a driver as much as driving with a blood alcohol level of .08 percent.

Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for at least five seconds. At 55 mph, that’s like driving the length of an entire football field—blindfolded.

***Cell Phone Use***

Section 392.82 of the FMCSRs prohibits the driver of a CMV from using a hand-held mobile telephone while driving a CMV. This means that CMV drivers cannot reach for, hold, dial, or answer a cell phone to conduct a voice communication.

Here again, “driving” means operating a CMV on a highway, including while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device, or other momentary delays.

Though it may be prohibited under your employer’s policy, federal regulations do allow CMV drivers to use the hands-free feature on cell phones. To comply, you *must*:

* + Have your mobile telephone located where you are able to initiate, answer, or terminate a call by touching a single button
	+ Be in the seated driving position and properly restrained by a seat belt.

Drivers can also use an earpiece, the speaker-phone function, or voice-activated dialing.

Be aware that state and local laws—as well as your employer’s policies—may contain additional restrictions on the use of distracting technology.

Using a hand-held mobile telephone while driving is allowed when necessary to communicate with law enforcement officials or other emergency services.

***Slide 118:*** **Penalties**

Aside from the risk of a crash and all the consequences a crash can bring, there are serious penalties for using a handheld mobile telephone or texting while driving, including:

* + Citations, fines, and other penalties levied by the jurisdiction in which you’re driving
	+ Fines levied by the FMCSA, which could measure in the thousands of dollars for you *and* for your employer
	+ **Disqualification** for 60 days if you are convicted of two violations in a three-year period
	+ Disqualification for 120 days if you are convicted of three violations in a three-year period
	+ Enforcement action, such as a warning letter, an investigation, or an audit, taken against your employer, with the possible result of harm to your employer’s safety rating and reputation

***Slide 119:*** **Railroad (RR)Highway Grade Crossings and Drawbridges**

**The Regulations**

When operating a bus or motorcoach, federal regulations require you to stop at most railroad crossings, and state laws require you to stop at certain drawbridges. The purpose of these rules is to keep you and your passengers safe at these dangerous crossings.

A **highway-rail grade crossing** is the area where a roadway (highway, road, street) crosses a railway at the same level at the crossing point (as opposed to grade-separated overpasses or underpasses). This creates a dangerous intersection where a train could strike your vehicle. Highway-rail grade crossing regulations for commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) are addressed in Part 392 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).

A **drawbridge** is a type of movable bridge that can be raised up or drawn aside to allow a vehicle (usually boats) to pass below. Safe passage across a drawbridge is impossible when the bridge is not lowered to roadway grade level. Having any part of your vehicle on a drawbridge as it is being raised can put you and your passengers in danger.

***Slide 120:*** **Highway-Rail Grade Crossings**

If you are transporting passengers in a bus, Sec. 392.10 of the FMCSRs requires that you stop within 50 feet of, but no closer than 15 feet to, the railroad tracks. This distance is measured from the rail closest to your vehicle.

Follow these practices as you begin to stop at a railroad crossing:

* 1. Move to the right-most lane well in advance of the crossing
	2. Reduce speed gradually
	3. Put on your four-way flashers as soon as you have reduced speed to the point where you are a hazard to other traffic

When stopped at a railroad crossing, you must listen and look in each direction along the tracks for an approaching train and make certain a train is not approaching. Being able to look and listen requires you to:

* + Make sure you have an unobstructed view down both sides of the tracks; if necessary, open a door and/or window to get a clear view
	+ Be certain you can hear any approaching trains; you may need to turn off your radio and/or politely ask passengers to keep noise to a minimum

If a train does pass, make sure that another train isn’t coming from the other direction before you proceed.

Do not shift gears when crossing the tracks. Shifting gears with a manual transmission while going across this raised surface may cause the vehicle to stall on the tracks.

There are also certain instances when stopping at railroad tracks **is not** required. This includes:

* + At streetcar crossings or railroad tracks used only for industrial switching purposes within a business district
	+ Where a police officer or flagger is directing traffic
	+ If a traffic signal shows green, indicating that it is safe to cross
	+ At crossings marked as “exempt” or “abandoned”

If a stop is *not* required, you still must:

* + Slow to a speed that would allow you to stop before the tracks should a train be approaching
	+ Make certain the crossing is clear, with no trains approaching

At all railroad crossings, you must NEVER:

* + Stop on the railroad tracks
	+ Drive onto the crossing without first making sure there is enough space to drive completely through the crossing without stopping
	+ Shift gears on the crossing

As a best practice, make sure the crossing isn’t going to be too rough given your vehicle’s speed. If necessary, slow down.

***Slide 121:*** ***Bottoming Out***

Crashes involving large buses have occurred at crossings where the roadway was “humped” or sloped so much that the bus could not get through the crossing without bottoming out on the tracks and getting stuck there. Make sure you are familiar with the clearance below the vehicle and that the grade approaching and leaving the crossing is not sloped so steeply that the vehicle body will get “hung up” on the crossing. If in doubt, don’t cross!

If you do become stuck on the tracks, do not wait until you hear a train before evacuating everyone from the vehicle, moving them to safety, and calling the authorities or the railroad.

***Be Prepared***

A close call with a train is no small matter, so you should be prepared in advance:

* + If the crossing gate comes down after you’ve started to cross, keep moving forward—even if it means breaking the gate
	+ If your vehicle stalls while you’re crossing, evacuate the passengers immediately and move them a safe distance away from the vehicle as quickly as possible
	+ If your vehicle is stalled on the tracks and a train is approaching, have everyone walk *toward the train* at a 45-degree angle away from the tracks; this may seem counterintuitive, but it will put everyone as far out of harm’s way as possible

Finally, if you encounter any malfunctioning railroad signals or hazardous crossing conditions, report them immediately to the railroad and then to your employer.

***Slide 122:*** ***Contacting the Railroad***

If you need to contact the railroad about a hazardous condition at a crossing, look for a blue and white sign close to the crossing. The sign should include:

* + The telephone number for the railroad that operates over the crossing
	+ The US Department of Transportation (DOT) number identifying that specific crossing; this is six numbers and a letter to identify the crossing’s address

Dial the number on the sign, provide the US DOT number, and follow any instructions provided.

Do not call the number until you and your passengers are safely away from the tracks.

Keep in mind that trains can extend three feet beyond the side of each rail. Stay far away from the tracks.

***Slide 123:*** **Driver Disqualification**

A conviction for any one of the following six highway-rail grade crossing offenses while operating a CMV requiring a commercial driver’s license will disqualify you from operating a CMV.

* 1. Failing to slow down and checking that the tracks are clear of an approaching train (if you **are not** required to stop at all times)
	2. Failing to stop before reaching the crossing if the tracks are not clear (if you **are not** required to stop at all times)
	3. Failing to stop before driving onto the crossing (if you **are** required to stop at all times)
	4. Failing to have sufficient space to drive completely through the crossing without stopping
	5. Failing to obey a traffic control device or the directions of an enforcement officer at the crossing
	6. Failing to clear a crossing because of insufficient undercarriage clearance

The disqualification period ranges from 60 days for the first conviction to one year for three or more convictions in a three-year period.

***Slide 124:*** **Signs & Signals**

It is important to know and understand the various signs and signals that are posted to alert you to an upcoming crossing.

**Signs**

Signs are passive warning devices. They are not electronic and do not give notice of the approach of a train. Passive devices are intended to direct the driver’s attention to the crossing, so the driver may exercise caution.

**Advance Warning Sign** — An advance warning sign is a round, yellow warning sign with a black “X” and “RR.” These signs are located alongside the highway in advance of the crossing and serve to alert motorists to the crossing. The advance warning sign is usually the first sign you see when approaching a highway-rail grade crossing.

**Pavement Markings** — The white letters “R&R” can be set into the surface of, applied to, or attached to, the pavement in advance of a crossing, to advise, warn, or guide traffic.

**Crossbuck Sign** — A crossbuck sign is one of the oldest warning devices. It is a white, regulatory, X-shaped sign with the words “Railroad Crossing” in black lettering. It is located alongside the highway prior to the railroad tracks.

In most cases, the crossbuck sign is installed on the right-hand side of a public roadway on each approach to the highway-rail grade crossing. A crossbuck sign is a passive yield sign and is considered the same as a “Yield” sign. The crossbuck sign is required at all public highway‑rail grade crossings.

**Number Sign** — At multiple-track crossings, a sign indicating the number of tracks will be on the post below the crossbuck.

**Stop Sign** — A standard, red regulatory stop sign with lettering is intended for use where motor vehicle traffic is required to stop. This sign can be added to the crossing, requiring all vehicles to come to a complete stop before crossing the railroad tracks.

**Yield Sign** — The yield sign assigns right-of-way. Vehicles controlled by a yield sign need to avoid interference with other vehicles, including trains, which are given the right-of-way.

**Exempt Sign** — This sign is placed in advance of and at crossings authorized by state law or regulation to inform placarded hazardous materials vehicles, buses, and other highway users that a stop is not required, except when a signal, train crew member, or uniformed police officer indicates that a train, locomotive, or other railroad equipment is approaching the crossing.

**Do Not Stop on Tracks Sign** — This sign is a black and white regulatory sign placed at a crossing when an engineering study or experience determines there is a high potential for vehicles stopping on the tracks.

**Tracks Out of Service Sign** — This sign is for use at a crossing in lieu of the crossbuck when a railroad track has been abandoned or its use discontinued.

**Parallel Track Sign** — This sign is a diamond-shaped yellow advance warning sign located on a roadway parallel to the railroad tracks, indicating the road ahead will cross the tracks. This sign is intended to warn motorists making a turn that there is a highway-rail grade crossing immediately after the turn.

**Low Ground Clearance Sign** — The low ground clearance sign is of particular importance to truck drivers. It’s used at railroad grade crossings where conditions are sufficiently abrupt to create hang-up of long wheelbase vehicles or trailers with low ground clearance. They are often identified as a diamond-shaped sign with a tractor-trailer crossing and lightning bolts pointing at the trailer. A rectangular yellow sign with the words “Low Ground Clearance” in black lettering will be posted below.

***Slide 125:*** **Signals**

* Signals are active warning devices. They activate automatically when a train approaches a highway-rail grade crossing and offer the greatest amount of protection against incident.
* Standard Gates — A standard gate assembly is an active traffic control device used with flashing lights and normally accompanied by a crossbuck sign, flashing light signals, and other passive warning signs. There is a drive mechanism and a fully reflectorized red and white striped gate arm with lights. When the gates are in the down position, they extend across the approaching lanes of highway traffic about four feet above the top of the pavement. The flashing light signal may be supported on the same post with the gate mechanism or separately mounted.
* When no train is approaching or occupying the crossing, the gate arm is in an upright, vertical position. When a train is detected, the flashing light signals and the lights on the gate arm are activated. The gate arm is designed to swing down not less than three seconds after the signal lights start to operate. It reaches its horizontal position before the train arrives and remains in that position as long as the train occupies the crossing. When the train clears the crossing, and no other train is approaching, the gate arm moves to its upright position.
* Standard Bell — A standard bell is a device which, when activated, provides an audible warning. It may be used with flashing light signals and gates and is most effective as a warning to pedestrians and bicyclists.
* A standard bell is designed to ring loudly when a train is approaching, to warn people in the surrounding area. When used, the bell is usually mounted on top of one of the signal support masts. The bell is usually activated whenever the flashing light signals are operating.
* Flashing Light Signal — A flashing light signal is installed on a standard mast and has flashing red lights when activated. The lights activate upon the approach or presence of a train at a highway-rail grade crossing and require a complete stop by the highway user.
* Flashing light signals are mandatory with gates. When both are activated, the gate arm light nearest the tip will be illuminated continuously and the other two lights flash alternately in unison with the flashing light signals. The typical flashing light signal assembly on a side-of-the-roadway location includes a standard crossbuck sign. Where there is more than one track, there will be an additional “number of tracks” sign. All of these indicate a highway-rail grade crossing ahead. A bell may be included in the assembly and operated in conjunction with the flashing lights.
* Flashing light signals are found at all types of public highway-rail grade crossings. They normally are placed to the right of the approaching highway traffic on all roadway approaches to a crossing.

***Slide 126:*** **Safety Tips**

Trains have the right of way 100 percent of the time. On a level road, with good surface conditions, it can take 10 or more seconds to cross tracks at low speeds.

Anytime a railroad crosses a highway, the potential for disaster exists. At these crossings, you need to be alert, and always expect a train.

The following are additional safety practices and other details that you should know and follow when it comes to railroad crossings:

* + Check for traffic behind you and make sure they know your intentions
	+ Freight trains do not travel at fixed times, and passenger train schedules can vary
	+ It is extremely difficult to judge a train’s speed as well as its distance from the crossing; if you are unsure that you can safely cross, wait until the train has passed
	+ Never race a train to the crossing
	+ Never drive around lowered gates; it is dangerous and illegal
	+ Use a **pull-out lane**, if available
	+ Turn on your flashers in traffic, if necessary
	+ If the warning lights at the crossing begin to flash after you have started to cross the tracks, keep going and don’t back up
	+ Don’t begin to cross until you are sure you can completely cross the tracks without stopping; remember, in addition to being unsafe, stopping on the tracks is illegal
	+ If the vehicle has a low ground clearance, select another route to make sure you don’t get stuck on the tracks
	+ When crossing multiple tracks, watch for a second train

***Slide 127:*** **Drawbridges**

Stop at all drawbridges that do not have a signal light or traffic control attendant.

Stop at least 50 feet before the part of the bridge that raises. Look to make sure the bridge is completely closed before crossing.

You do not need to stop, but must slow down and make sure it’s safe, when:

* + There is a traffic light showing green
	+ The bridge has an attendant or traffic officer who controls traffic whenever the bridge opens

***Slide 128:*** **Weigh Stations**

A weigh station is a facility, staffed by law enforcement, that is equipped with scales to ensure drivers and their vehicles are in compliance with the size and weight laws. Weigh stations are usually permanent facilities situated on the side of a highway (with their own exit and entrance ramps), but they may also be portable stations that can be moved from place to place.

Weigh stations are also used to conduct inspections of commercial vehicles and their drivers, to ensure compliance with safety rules and other laws and regulations. Drivers can be cited and/or placed out of service for violations, and their vehicles may need to be repaired before they can leave the weigh station.

***Slide 129:*** **The Need to Stop**

Each state has different requirements when it comes to stopping at a weigh station. Some require all commercial vehicles over 10,000 pounds to stop, for example. Some require vehicles designed for 16 or more passengers to stop, with or without passengers on board.

You and your employer will need to become familiar with the stopping requirements at weigh stations along the routes on which you operate.

States typically have signs that you will encounter before each weigh-station exit, indicating which vehicles are required to stop. If you are on an unfamiliar route, watch carefully for these signs. If you miss a sign and drive past a station where you should have stopped, it’s a violation and you or your employer could be cited and/or fined.

If in doubt about stopping, stop at the weigh station! It’s better to be safe than sorry, given the potential penalties for failing to stop.

***Slide 130:*** **Weigh Station Procedures**

Follow these procedures when you encounter a weigh station:

* 1. Pull into the station if the sign indicates you have to stop, even if you have passengers on board. If unsure, pull in.
		+ Watch for indications that the station is closed. For example, signs may indicate that the station is only open when yellow lights are flashing.
		+ If you clearly do not have to stop or if the station is closed, you may proceed without stopping.
	2. Slowly proceed to the scale unless directed otherwise.
		+ You may drive over an in-motion scale near the entrance to the facility and your weight there may dictate if you have to stop at the main scale.
		+ Obey speed-limit signs.
		+ Follow signs, lights, or arrows indicating which lane to use.
		+ Note that you may be directed to follow a lane that goes straight back to the highway if there is no need for you to stop at the main scale.
	3. As you approach the main scale, watch for instructional signs and/or lights and follow their instructions.
		+ There may be multiple sets of signs and lights, especially if there are multiple lanes at the station.
		+ The scale may require you to stop on the scale to be weighed—watch for instructional lights telling you when to stop—or it may be a “rolling” or “weigh-in-motion” scale that weighs each axle as you roll over it and allows you to proceed slowly without stopping unless instructed otherwise.
		+ You may see lighted signs indicating that you should pull further forward on the scale, stop on the scale, and/or park (in a parking lot or possibly inside a garage) for an inspection.
		+ Follow any instructions provided by enforcement personnel. If your vehicle is approached by an inspector, allow him or her to board the vehicle. Do not exit the vehicle unless directed to do so.
		+ If you have passengers on board, you should not be subject to inspection unless there’s an imminent hazard or noticeable out‑of‑service condition. This might happen if:
			- **i. You** are observed texting, using a handheld mobile phone, or speeding or driving erratically to the extent that your passengers could be in danger.
			- **ii. Your vehicle** is emitting smoke or has a flat tire, broken headlights at night, broken stop lamps, or other serious safety violations.
		+ If you have no passengers on board, you may be asked to park for an inspection.
	4. If you or your vehicle are placed out of service—meaning you cannot leave the weigh station until an unsafe condition is fixed, either with you or your vehicle—you must not drive until the condition is fixed. Immediately contact your employer for further instructions. Violating an out-of-service order is subject to hefty fines and penalties, including disqualification.
		+ When directed to do so, proceed out of the scale location and merge back onto the highway.

***Slide 131:*** **Security and Crime**

**The Risk of Being a Driver**

Driving a bus or other passenger-carrying vehicle is generally a safe and rewarding experience. Any activity that involves large groups of people (and their possessions), however, is not immune from the risk of crime.

As the saying goes, crime happens when there is “a motive, a means, and an opportunity.” While you cannot fully control someone’s motivation to commit a crime or cause physical harm, you can try to de-escalate a tense situation, possibly disrupt their plans, and/or eliminate the opportuity to cause harm. You should also be prepared to deal with the aftermath of a crime if it cannot be prevented.

Studies have shown that some things can put you and your passengers at higher risk for being the victim of a crime or violence:

* + Direct interaction between people, especially any passengers who are intoxicated, have mental illness, or who might be frustrated by ticket prices, travel delays, etc.
	+ Being alone or isolated on the vehicle
	+ Driving or stopping in isolated or high-crime areas
	+ Driving at night or early in the morning
	+ Handling money or fares
	+ Displaying valuable possessions out in the open
	+ Having few routes of escape from the vehicle
	+ Your role as the “captain” of the vehicle

Most of these risk factors are out of your control, so you must be prepared to respond to any criminal activity that might arise.

Different types of bus drivers face different levels of crime risk. School bus drivers or motorcoach tour drivers might face little risk while urban transit bus drivers might face significantly more risk. All bus drivers, however, must be prepared to deal with criminal activity.

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***Slide 132:*** **Protections at Your Organization**

Depending on where you work as a driver, your employer, organization, or union may have a variety of strategies to combat crime. You will need to learn about those strategies, which might include such options as:

* + Audio/video recording (surveillance) systems
	+ Emergency communication or alarm systems (panic buttons)
	+ Barriers or shields around the driver’s seat
	+ Vehicle tracking
	+ Remote shutdown
	+ En-route emergency signage
	+ Codes of conduct posted on the vehicle
	+ Access control systems
	+ Security lighting, gates, fencing, and other facility security
	+ Enforcement/patrol officers
	+ Periodic driver training

During vehicle inspections, make sure all available protective features on your vehicle are working properly, and never fail to take advantage of them when necessary.

You will also need to learn which types of safety and security incidents need to be reported to your organization, and to whom. Be sure to report every incident as required, because it might help prevent future incidents.

***Slide 133:*** **Dealing with Dangerous Areas**

Some areas of the country are simply more dangerous than others. Careful trip planning can help you avoid these “problem areas” when possible, but if you need to drive in a high-crime or otherwise dangerous area, some basic precautions will help keep you and your passengers safe, especially when picking up or dropping off passengers.

* + Stay on the vehicle whenever possible and maintain control of the door
	+ Park in high-visibility/high-traffic areas
	+ Be aware of your surroundings and any individuals who may be approaching you
	+ Minimize the amount of time you are in the risky area
	+ Lock the vehicle and any baggage or storage compartments if you must leave the vehicle
	+ Be suspicious of anyone trying to get you to pull over or get your attention
	+ If possible, and after securing the entrance, walk around the vehicle before leaving the area to make sure the vehicle was not broken into, nothing suspicious has been placed on the vehicle, etc.

If you observe or suspect criminal activity, contact law enforcement—or have a passenger do so—as quickly as possible.

***Slide 134:*** **Identifying Threats**

As a professional driver in charge of passenger safety, you must be observant on and off the road. Criminal activity can occur while you are driving or at a stop. The safety of your passengers is always the most important aspect of your job. Unfortunately, there are many types of illegal activities that can affect you and others in your care.

These are some ways you can identify criminal activity on or around your vehicle:

* + **Thieves** can work alone or in a group. Pickpockets frequently act out behaviors repeatedly, circling their target. Watching closely may reveal that they are not enjoying the sights or behaving like other passengers. Open theft is often quick and suspicious. Look for people who are focused on the belongings of others. They may be a little too close to someone else and waiting for an opportunity to grab something before moving away.
	+ **Drug dealers** work in some unlikely places. Be alert for strangers talking in code with passengers on and off the vehicle. They may conduct business with handshakes that hide money and drugs. If these behaviors occur often, it may be a sign that your vehicle, or the area around it, is being used to deal drugs.
	+ **Human traffickers** force others into some type of slave labor. They control other people through fear. Forced prostitution is one example. Others include forced labor and domestic servitude. Victims may not be allowed to speak for themselves, avoid eye contact, are fearful or submissive, or could make sexual comments inappropriate for their age.

Anyone willing to conduct a crime on or around your vehicle could respond with physical violence if they are confronted. A thief may be caught in the act or accused of stealing.

Weapons can be hidden or openly displayed to create fear. Shouting or shoving can explode into violence if it isn’t dealt with quickly and appropriately.

If you *suspect* someone of conducting criminal activity, you may need to refuse their access to the vehicle and your passengers. Follow your employer’s policies and procedures for refusing to allow individuals to board the vehicle.

If you *observe* criminal activity outside of your vehicle, such as at a bus stop or terminal, you will quickly need to assess the situation and respond—in compliance with established procedures at your organization.

***Slide 135:*** **Minimizing Threats**

As discussed in Chapter 2, your response to potential criminal activity can be broken down into three steps:

* 1. **Assess the situation.** How many people are involved? Who or what is the apparent target of the crime? How serious is the threat? Is someone likely to get injured? Is there an escape route?
	2. **Plan your response.** Can you do something to defuse or calm the situation? Does someone need to call 911 immediately, or contact your call center/dispatcher? Do you need to stop or can you continue driving, if only to a safe parking area? Is your assistance or intervention needed, or do passengers have the situation under control? Do you need to modify your route, such as to get to a hospital?
	3. **Take action.** Follow through on your action plan, based on your training, your employer’s policies and procedures, and the guidance outlined below.

You may be in the best position to help those being affected, but you also cannot put yourself or your passengers at risk. Do not invite crime onto the vehicle. If in doubt, stay on board, keep the doors secured, and keep moving.

* + If it appears that someone is in danger or is injured, call 911 or your call center immediately, or make sure a passenger calls 911.
	+ If the activity presents a danger to your vehicle or passengers, don’t stop driving if you haven’t already. Proceed to a safe location and call emergency services.
	+ If allowing a victim onto your bus is their best chance at being protected, you will need to decide whether to allow them to board. Quickly secure the door after they board and proceed to a safe location. Never risk yourself or passengers by allowing a dangerous suspect onto the vehicle.

When dealing with combative individuals, you will need to assess the situation and act. Your first step is likely to be parking the vehicle in as safe a location as possible, without risking harm to passengers or other motorists. You should not attempt to deal with a confrontational or combative passenger while the vehicle is moving.

***Slide 136:*** **Always be aware**

of your attitude, your language, and your physical presence, and how those are perceived by your passengers. When possible, you must avoid the following when dealing with a combative passenger:

* + Ignoring them, making them feel invisible or powerless
	+ Cornering the individual, which can make them feel threatened—and feel that a fight is the only way to escape
	+ Humiliating them, which can escalate hostility

As tension escalates, do not respond in a way that creates more tension. You need to *de-escalate* the situation. If someone begins to yell at you, for example, do not yell back. Instead, respond with a calm and assertive voice and non-threatening body language that signals that you are in control of the situation.

***Slide 137:*** **Responding to Injuries**

If someone is injured as a result of criminal activity, take steps to protect yourself and others:

* + Attempt to secure the injured person on your vehicle, if it’s safe to do so
	+ Perform first aid, if you have been trained, to prevent further harm
	+ Call 911 to request an ambulance and notify law enforcement

Get help from passengers who are willing to aid in securing the vehicle, providing first aid, or calling 911. Try to stay calm and keep the threat away from your vehicle and passengers while waiting for emergency services to arrive.

When you are able, take notes of anything that will help with an investigation:

* + Description of the criminal suspect(s)
	+ How many people were involved in the confrontation
	+ Identification of any weapons seen, e.g., guns, knives, etc.
	+ Description of any vehicles that may have been involved
	+ Approximate time of the incident

***Slide 138:*** **Roadside Inspection Basics**

Roadside inspections are conducted by law enforcement officers who are trained and certified by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

Typically, these inspections are conducted at destinations (amusement parks, casinos, convention centers, etc.) but may also be done at weigh stations, roadside, or at a motor carrier facility.

The selection of drivers and vehicles to be inspected, as well as the inspection procedures that must be followed, are specific and uniform across North America. In other words, a roadside inspection in Vermont should be conducted in the same way as an inspection in New Mexico.

These inspections can involve the entire vehicle and the driver, a walk-around driver/vehicle inspection, or the vehicle only. Passenger-carrying vehicle inspections typically involve two inspectors, one for the interior of the vehicle and one for the exterior of the vehicle. One inspector is designated as the lead inspector.

Inspections performed at a company facility will usually focus only on vehicles, not drivers.

***Slide 139:*** ***Types of Passenger-Carrier Inspections***

While truck inspections can occur at almost any time or place, the options for inspection of passenger-carrying vehicles are limited to three types:

**En-Route Inspections** — You and your vehicle may be inspected along your route if there are no passengers on board. The en-route inspection of a bus or motorcoach **carrying passengers** is prohibited, however, unless an imminent or obvious safety hazard is observed, such as:

* + Smoke or other indication of a fire
	+ The vehicle being operated in an unsafe manner
	+ Obvious safety defects such as a flat or under-inflated tire or inoperative brake lights

This policy applies to all types of CVSA inspections, and includes inspections done at weigh stations and portable scales.

***Slide 140:*** **Types of Inspections**

There are eight different levels of inspection you may be subject to:

**Level I**, which is a complete inspection of the driver and vehicle, is the most thorough. First, an inspector will conduct a basic interview with you, asking you questions about your trip. He or she will review your driver’s license and **record of duty status** and ask for your vehicle’s periodic (annual) inspection documentation as well as other paperwork related to your trip.

The inspector(s) will then conduct a thorough inspection of your vehicle. He or she will look around and under your vehicle, inspecting certain vehicle components. A Level I inspection can take as long as an hour to complete.

**Level II** is like Level I except the officer(s) won’t get under the vehicle. Level II inspections typically happen during bad weather, at portable inspection sites, during traffic stops, or when conducting a Level I inspection is not practical. This inspection usually lasts about 30 minutes.

**Level III** is an examination of driver documents and

**Level III** is an examination of driver documents and credentials only, including your:

* + Commercial driver’s license (CDL)
	+ Record of duty status and supporting documents
	+ Trip records
	+ Vehicle “cab card” (vehicle’s registration) and fuel license (paper or electronic)
	+ Annual vehicle inspection documentation (i.e., the inspection form or a sticker on the vehicle)

**Level IV** inspections are usually a one-time check of a specific piece of equipment, like air brakes. During a Level IV Inspection, officers are collecting data on specific equipment as part of a study or special enforcement activity.

**Level V** inspections are focused on your vehicle. It’s the same process as the vehicle portion of a Level I Inspection. Level V Inspections are often completed at your carrier’s terminal as part of a compliance review or after a crash when the driver is not available for various reasons.

**Level VI** inspections are not conducted on passenger-carrying vehicles because they focus on vehicles hauling radioactive materials.

**Level VII** inspections are conducted when the requirements of the other levels of inspection do not apply. They may be directed at school buses, taxis, shuttles, and other intrastate/intra-provincial operations. Details are determined by the jurisdiction.

**Level VIII** inspections occur while a vehicle is in motion. It is an electronic inspection of the driver and vehicle as it rolls through the inspection facility, if the vehicle and facility are equipped with the right technology to perform such an inspection. There is no direct interaction with an enforcement officer.

***Slide 141:*** **Record of Duty Status**

Your hours-of-service records will usually be an important part of any inspection. You must keep your record of duty status (log) current to your last change of duty status. This will include today’s log and those for the previous seven consecutive days, which must be in your possession and available for inspection while on duty. You must also present any supporting documents that you have in the vehicle.

If you are exempt from needing logs, be prepared to explain why. For example, you might be using the 150-air-mile exception or operating as a non‑business PMCP.

If you are using an electronic logging device (ELD), you must be able to share your logs with an inspector in two ways:

* + An electronic display or printout showing today’s log and those for the prior seven days
	+ An electronic transfer of your logs to the inspector’s device via either a telematic transfer method (using wireless web services and email) or a local transfer method (using Bluetooth and USB)

The officer will verify that the device is mounted properly. If your ELD has a portable display, it must be mounted where you can see it while driving.

You must know how to transfer your logs to the inspector and how to display or print them, especially if the transfer does not work.

If you are using an ELD, you must have:

* + The user’s manual for the ELD
	+ An instruction sheet describing the data transfer mechanisms supported by the ELD
	+ An instruction sheet describing what to do when an ELD malfunctions
	+ Step-by-step instructions to produce and transfer the required hours‑of-service records to an authorized safety official

Lastly, plan to maintain a positive attitude and be ready to cooperate with officers. Acting courteously and professionally will help you pass the inspection, make the process go more smoothly, and make future inspections less likely.

***Slide 142:*** **The Roadside Inspection Process**

Roadside inspections will focus primarily on three separate components: the driver, the vehicle, and required documentation. If you are chosen for an inspection, you may be directed to park your vehicle in a designated inspection area where the inspector will chock the rear wheels in preparation for the inspection.

The inspector(s) will greet you by introducing themselves and explaining the type of inspection they intend to perform. If you have passengers on board, the inspector(s) will instruct the passengers on whether they need to exit the vehicle for the inspection.

One of the first things the inspector will check is whether you are wearing your seat belt.

***Slide 143:*** ***Driver***

Whenever you are the focus of an inspection, be prepared to hand over documents and credentials and answer questions from the inspector. The inspector will:

* + Request your current commercial driver’s license
	+ Review your charter order or trip itinerary and any applicable interline/interchange or lease agreement, which in part will determine which regulations apply and who is responsible for compliance if your vehicle’s markings are different from the employer for which you are working
	+ Verify that you are using the proper type of record of duty status (logs), if required
	+ Ask for your logs and supporting documents so they can be audited for compliance
	+ Review your vehicle’s periodic inspection documentation (form or sticker), to make sure the vehicle passed an inspection within the past 12 months
	+ Ask about any hazardous materials or dangerous goods on the vehicle, along with documentation for such materials
	+ Review any other paperwork related to your trip

***Driver Out of Service***

As a result of the inspection, you can be placed out of service for some of the following reasons:

* + Hours-of-service violations
		- Operating over hours
		- Keeping a false record of duty status
		- Having the incorrect type of record of duty status
		- Operating without a record of duty status when required
	+ Driving while sick or fatigued
	+ Driving with an invalid license
	+ Driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
	+ Not being medically qualified

***Slide 144:*** **Vehicle**

Inspectors check your vehicle for mechanical problems, unsafe wear and tear, and anything else that violates the rules or could cause a crash. Inspectors will issue citations for any violations of federal standards in 49 CFR Part 393. They can also place a vehicle out of service if it has a defect that is considered so unsafe that continued operation could result in a breakdown or crash.

Some areas of focus during a bus or motorcoach inspection include:

* + **Tires:** Recapped, regrooved, or retreaded tires are not allowed on the front axle
	+ **Cargo bays:** Inspectors check for any unsafe conditions such as the presence of hazardous chemicals, or cracks in the monocoque body
	+ **Exhaust system:** With a gasoline engine, the exhaust must discharge at or within 6 inches forward of the rearmost part of the bus.; with a diesel engine, the discharge must be either
		- At or within 15 inches forward of the rearmost part of the vehicle, or
		- To the rear of all doors or windows designed to be open, except emergency exits
	+ **Interior:** The interior inspection typically includes:
		- The standee line and sign for vehicles designed to have standing passengers
		- Loose or broken seats, holes in the floor, and the general condition of the interior
		- The security of the overhead storage bins
		- The presence of obstructions in the aisle
		- Objects being used as temporary seating
		- Restrooms, checked for undisclosed passengers or unsafe conditions
		- The driver’s knowledge of how to use the emergency exits
		- Fire extinguisher (present, secure, and charged)
		- Driver’s seat belt, seat, mirrors, and emergency equipment
		- The ability of the driver to view any passenger video systems from the driver’s seat (which is prohibited)
		- Operation of the driver’s foot pedal(s)

The list of possible violations is extensive, but the list of defects that can result in your vehicle being placed out of service is limited to these areas:

* + Brake system
	+ Exhaust and fuel system
	+ Lighting system
	+ Steering mechanism
	+ Suspension
	+ Frame and trailer bodies
	+ Tires, wheels, rims, and hubs
	+ Windshield wipers
	+ Coupling devices

Common reasons that passenger-carrying vehicles are placed out of service include:

* + Defective or missing emergency exits
	+ The driver failing to have a CDL, a passenger endorsement, and/or a medical certificate
	+ Defective lights or brakes
	+ Failing to have operating authority

Sometimes, you can fix an out-of-serve defect during the inspection, but it will still be recorded on the inspection report as out of service. For problems with electrical systems, brakes, wheels, or other major mechanical defects, you will have to contact your carrier for a service call.

Refer to the CVSA North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria for a complete listing of all out-of-service (OOS) criteria.

***Slide 145:*** **Roadside Inspection Report & Results**

At the end of your roadside inspection, the inspector will give you a report and explain any violations or defects.

**Inspection Report**

You will get an inspection report even if no problems were found. If you are not given a report, politely ask the inspector to provide you with a copy. If you do not get one, contact your supervisor or other carrier official for instructions before leaving the inspection site.

You are required to turn in this report to your carrier when you get to the next terminal or facility. If you are not going to be at your carrier’s facility within the next 24 hours, you will need to send it to them by mail or other means (i.e., fax, scan and email, etc.).

***Slide 146:*** ***Inspection Outcomes: With Violations***

If the inspector finds minor violations, you may be allowed to continue driving even if you receive a citation and fine. You will not, however, receive a CVSA decal.

Keep in mind, any violations you receive could have serious consequences. Violations for tire defects or operating beyond the hours-of-service limits have high severity points in the **Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA)** program. They will have an immediate impact on you and the carrier.

***Inspection Outcomes: Out of Service***

If an inspector finds major safety problems, you or the vehicle will be placed out of service. This means that you won’t be able to drive your vehicle again until the problems have been addressed. For example, if had a serious hours‑of-service violation, you will likely be placed out of service for eight hours.

***Slide 147:*** **Citations and Fines**

If you’re the target of a traffic stop or if a safety violation is discovered during a roadside inspection or after a crash, the most immediate consequence will likely take the form of a warning or citation and possibly a fine.

* + A **warning** is just that—a warning that you are in violation of a law or regulation. A warning may be verbal or written. A written warning that appears on a roadside inspection report will affect your scores in the Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) system and may appear on your driving record as well. A verbal warning will generally not be recorded.
	+ A **citation** or **ticket** is a summons to appear in court due to a violation. If you receive a citation, you will generally have the option to settle the matter out of court by paying a fine (which results in a conviction).
	+ A **fine** is a monetary penalty that you must pay to the enforcing jurisdiction for the violation. The amount will vary depending on the jurisdiction. In some cases, your employer may be willing to pay the fine on your behalf.

If you pay a fine, are found guilty in court, or plead “no contest” to a charge, you will have a **conviction** on your record. Convictions may affect your driving privileges (as discussed below) and must be reported to your employer within 30 days (see Sec. 383.31). Your employer’s policies may contain additional consequences for any convictions.

Another immediate consequence of a violation could be you or your vehicle being placed **out of service** until the problem is corrected. Driving *before* the problem is corrected can have serious consequences for you and your employer. See Chapter 17, and below, for details.

If your violations and/or a crash are serious enough, **criminal charges** could be levied against you or you could receive an “**imminent hazard out-of-service order**” from the FMCSA, which could put an end to your professional driving career.

Most safety violations will be reported to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and go into your and your employer’s safety record.

***Slide 148:*** **Safety Records**

To help keep unsafe drivers and motor carriers off the road, the FMCSA and state enforcement agencies collect and retain a variety of data about commercial drivers and motor carriers, including violations, crash data, licensing information, audit and investigation results, and so on. The data is not nameless or anonymous—it is tied directly to you and the motor carrier for whom you work, and it is retained for years. Much of the data is also made public.

The data can be used in several important ways:

* + Enforcement agencies can use the data to decide where to focus their limited resources. If a motor carrier or individual driver accumulates enough violations or crashes, the driver or motor carrier may be targeted for enforcement.
	+ Customers and brokers can access violation and crash data to decide if they want to use a particular motor carrier—or take their business elsewhere.
	+ Insurance companies can review safety data when setting rates.
	+ Attorneys can use safety records to help or hurt a driver or carrier during litigation.
	+ Potential employers can review your personal safety record before hiring you, to decide if you’re a safe driver … or not worth the risk.

As you can see, your personal compliance record can harm you *and* your employer.

***Slide 149:*** **Pre-employment Screening Program**

Another way your safety record can impact you is through the Pre‑Employment Screening Program (PSP). The PSP is an online database of:

* + Your roadside violations for the past three years
	+ Your reportable CMV crashes for the past five years

If you apply for a driving position with a motor carrier, the carrier can purchase your PSP report (after getting your written consent). The carrier can then use the report to make a more informed hiring decision. If there are violations or crashes on your record, it may affect your ability to find employment.

***Slide 150:*** **Financial Penalties**

If the FMCSA launches an investigation into your safety record or that of your employer (such as during an audit or a post-crash investigation), they can levy fines for any serious violations they find. These fines are known as **civil penalties**, and they can quickly add up as more violations are discovered.

In most cases, *each instance* of a violation *each day* counts as a separate offense and can carry its own fine. Multiple drivers committing the same violation again and again, over time, can result in massive penalties for the motor carrier, as well as for individual drivers.

The maximum civil penalties are found in the regulations under 49 CFR Part 386, Appendices A and B. The amounts are adjusted for inflation annually, but some potential fines at the time of this writing are shown below:

***Slide 151:*** **Driver Disqualification**

For any professional driver, disqualification is a serious issue. A driver holding a commercial learner’s permit (CLP) or CDL can be disqualified from driving a CMV if convicted of certain offenses while driving any type of vehicle—even a personal vehicle. (See Sec. 383.51 of the FMCSRs.)

**Major Offenses**

You are disqualified from operating a CMV if convicted of any of the following major offenses while driving a CMV *or non-CMV*:

* + Being under the influence of alcohol as prescribed by state law
	+ Being under the influence of a controlled substance
	+ Refusing to take an alcohol test as requested by a state or jurisdiction under its implied consent laws or regulations
	+ Leaving the scene of an accident
	+ Using a vehicle to commit a felony
	+ Using a vehicle in the commission of a felony involving the manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing of a controlled substance

You are disqualified from operating a CMV if convicted of any of the following major offenses while driving a CMV:

* + Having an alcohol concentration of 0.04 or greater
	+ Driving a CMV when, as a result of prior violations committed operating a CMV, your CDL is revoked, suspended, or cancelled, or you are disqualified from operating a CMV
	+ Causing a fatality through the negligent operation of a CMV
	+ Committing a felony involving certain forms of human trafficking

The disqualification period is:

First conviction

* + 1 year

Second conviction

* + Life (may be eligible for reinstatement in 10 years)

Using a vehicle in the commission of a felony involving the manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing of a controlled substance

* + Life (not eligible for reinstatement)

Even one DUI/DWI on your off time can prevent you from operating a CMV for one year.

***Slide 152:*** **Serious Traffic Violations**

You are disqualified from operating a CMV if convicted of any combination of **two or more** of the following serious traffic violations while operating any vehicle (CMV or non-CMV):

* + Excessive speeding, 15 mph or more above the posted speed limit
	+ Reckless driving
	+ Making improper or erratic traffic lane changes
	+ Following the vehicle ahead too closely
	+ Violating a state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control (other than a parking violation) arising in connection with a fatal accident

You are disqualified from operating a CMV if convicted of any combination of **two or more** of the following serious traffic violations while operating a CMV:

* + Driving a CMV without obtaining a CLP or CDL
	+ Driving a CMV without a CLP or CDL in your possession
	+ Driving a CMV without the proper class of CLP or CDL and/or endorsements for the specific vehicle being operated or for the passengers or type of cargo being transported
	+ Violating a state or local law or ordinance on motor vehicle traffic control prohibiting texting while driving a CMV
	+ Violating a state or local law or ordinance on motor vehicle traffic control restricting or prohibiting the use of a hand-held mobile telephone while driving a CMV

The disqualification period is:

Two serious traffic violations in separate incidents during any three-year period

* + 60 days

Three serious traffic violations in separate incidents during any three-year period

* + 120 days

***Note:*** A driver convicted of two or more serious traffic violations while operating a non-CMV is disqualified only if the conviction results in the revocation, cancellation, or suspension of the driver’s driving privileges.

***Slide 153:*** **Out-of-Service Violations**

During a trip, you may be placed out of service by an enforcement officer for a certain period of time or until a given problem has been corrected. Conviction for violating such an out-of-service order subjects you to a fine and disqualification period. The disqualification period is as follows:

First violation

* + 180 days to 2 years

Second or more violations (within a 10-year period)

* + 3 years to 5 years

***Slide 154:*** **Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing Violations**

You are disqualified from driving if you are convicted of operating a vehicle requiring a CDL in violation of a federal, state, or local law or regulation pertaining to one of the following six offenses at a railroad-highway grade crossing.

* + Failing to slow down and check that tracks are clear of an approaching train (when not required to stop)
	+ Not stopping before reaching the crossing, if the tracks are not clear (when not required to stop)
	+ Failing to stop before driving onto the crossing (when always required to stop)
	+ Not having sufficient space to drive completely through the crossing without stopping
	+ Not obeying a traffic control device or the directions of an enforcement official at the crossing
	+ Failing to negotiate a crossing because of insufficient undercarriage clearance



