

PACIF
BEST
PRACTICE



FLEET SAFETY
PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT



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1. Introduction

The operation of motor vehicles exposes your municipality to possible financial loss through damage to property, injuries to employees, and/or injuries to members of the public. Damage to public property or the public's observance of poor driving practices can also create a negative public image and can damage relations with tax payers.

Each year, injuries, property damage, and liability claims seem to increase. Most direct costs attributed to these accidents are paid by PACIF on your behalf. Taxpayers not only pay premiums and deductibles but also indirect costs that include:

- ❖ Increased cost of insurance
- ❖ Loss of vehicle use
- ❖ Vehicle replacement costs
- ❖ Loss of productivity
- ❖ Increased paperwork
- ❖ Negative public image

The key to controlling accidents is to adopt a comprehensive **Fleet Safety Program**. To be effective, the program should address:

- ❖ Driver selection
- ❖ Training & observation
- ❖ Vehicle inspection
- ❖ Vehicle maintenance
- ❖ Discipline
- ❖ Recordkeeping

2. Scope

The following information is meant to assist you in developing your municipality's own Fleet Safety Program. To be most effective, your plan should relate to **your specific operations, exposures, and hazards**. The information provided here is not intended to be all-inclusive, but a starting point for the development of your organization's Fleet Safety Program.

Fleet safety includes all mobile equipment from passenger cars to heavy equipment. Your program should apply to all persons operating any municipal vehicle or any private vehicle used for municipal business.

Since this topic involves certain elements of employment law, we suggest you have your program reviewed by your Legal and Human Resources advisors. There are several laws, standards, rules, and regulations that pertain to this topic. We suggest you consult them as well as local and state public safety officials for additional assistance.

3. Key Elements of a Fleet Safety Program

- ❖ Written policy
- ❖ Program administration (roles and responsibilities)
- ❖ Driver selection, authorization, and review
- ❖ Driver training & observation
- ❖ Driver discipline
- ❖ Drug and alcohol testing for CDL operators
- ❖ Emergency equipment
- ❖ Vehicle inspection and maintenance
- ❖ Accident reporting and investigation
- ❖ Recordkeeping

4. Program Development

Top Management is responsible for the overall results of your program. Their activities should include the following:

- ❖ Provide visible and active support
- ❖ Develop a written safety policy
- ❖ Provide reasonable resources
- ❖ Develop overall goals for the program
- ❖ Assign responsibilities and authority
- ❖ Design a system to measure performance
- ❖ Maintain a high level of employee awareness

A well-written and clearly communicated written policy should address the following:

- ❖ Program administration
- ❖ Responsibilities of drivers, department heads, and others
- ❖ Driver selection, authorization, and review
- ❖ Driver discipline (positive and negative)
- ❖ Driver training
- ❖ Required drug and alcohol testing policy
- ❖ Vehicle safety equipment inspection and use
- ❖ Vehicle inspection and maintenance
- ❖ Accident reporting, investigation, and analysis

- ❖ Policy on use of personal vehicles for municipal business
- ❖ Guidelines for volunteers and part time or seasonal drivers
- ❖ Use of personal vehicle for municipal business. Establish minimum requirements for insurance coverage
- ❖ Prohibition of, or limits on, personal use of municipal vehicles by authorized drivers and by family members and others
- ❖ Specific policies and training for operations such as police, fire, EMS, vans, buses, etc.
- ❖ The prohibition of the use of devices that cause driver distraction such as cell phones, PDAs, CD players, and laptops.

5. Program Administration: Roles and Responsibilities

Management should designate a person who has overall responsibility for program administration including:

- ❖ Overseeing development and implementation of your program.
- ❖ Obtaining Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) for employment and periodically thereafter for all operators of municipal vehicles (full-time, part-time, seasonal, and volunteers). See attachment “H” for additional information.
- ❖ Compliance with state and federal labor and transportation laws regarding vehicle operation.
- ❖ Adopting fair and responsible performance standards for all drivers. These should include disciplinary procedures that are appropriate and consistent with those for other safety and labor policies. **These must be stated clearly, written, communicated to employees with their acknowledgment, and enforced consistently.**
- ❖ Establishing acceptable driving records as a condition of employment.
- ❖ Conducting periodic procedural audits including driver observations for department compliance.

Department heads are responsible for compliance with the program in their department, including:

- ❖ Ensuring that all operators have the required license **for the type of vehicle** being operated and that they are current.
- ❖ Conducting or facilitating driver training for all operators.
- ❖ Ensuring that all vehicle repairs are made **before** vehicles are placed in service.
- ❖ Maintaining operation and maintenance files for each vehicle and piece of equipment.
- ❖ Ensuring that pre-trip and post-trip inspections are conducted.

Drivers are responsible for:

- ❖ Adhering to all policies and procedures governing the operation of vehicles on municipal business.
- ❖ Ensuring safe operation of all vehicles and equipment.

- ❖ Conducting and documenting required pre-trip and post-trip inspections, including defect reports.
- ❖ Submitting a copy of current driver's license and granting permission for employer to obtain the driver's Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) when requested.
- ❖ Prohibiting use of an assigned vehicle by anyone not authorized to drive it.
- ❖ Reporting all accidents and submitting accident reports promptly.
- ❖ Keeping supervisor or designee advised of changes in license or driving status.

Attachment A, Municipal Driver Pledge, can be used to verify that the operator knows and understands the municipality's policies on driving.

6. Driver Selection, Authorization, and Review

Only authorized drivers should be allowed to operate municipal vehicles. The authorization process should include **full-time employees, part-time employees, seasonal employees, and volunteers**. The process should include initial and periodic review of qualifications, operating records, and driving ability.

- ❖ When vehicle operation is a required job duty of a position, it should be stated clearly in the written job description. Safe operation should be included as a requirement.
- ❖ Authorized drivers must possess a **valid driver's license of the proper type and class** for the vehicles operated.
- ❖ Establish that an acceptable driving record is a condition of employment.
- ❖ Obtain Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) for all new employee applicants and volunteers whose duties will include driving **any vehicle** on behalf of the municipality. They should meet predetermined standards.
See Attachment "H" for additional information on how to obtain MVRs.
- ❖ Evaluation of driver qualifications should include periodic review of MVRs and observation of driver proficiency.

7. Evaluation Criteria (Sample)

We encourage each member to consider and adopt their own standards. Standards shown below should be viewed as PACIF's *recommendations only*.

Criteria, both on and off the job, which may be used to disqualify a person as an authorized driver:

- ❖ Three (3) or more moving violations in a 36-month period.
- ❖ Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the last three years.
- ❖ Hit-and-run accident.
- ❖ Failure to report an accident.
- ❖ Operating a vehicle under a suspended or revoked license.

- ❖ Homicide, assault, or a felony arising from the operation of a motor vehicle.
- ❖ Careless & Negligent (C&N) driving violation in the last three (3) years.

8. Driver Training

Initial and periodic training is a critical part of your program. It should include:

INITIAL <i>Defines the Municipal Policy</i>	PERIODIC <i>Reviews Common Driver Errors</i>
Disciplinary Procedures	Speeding
Use of Safety Devices	Intersections
Equipment Familiarization (including fire apparatus)	Improper Lane Use
Routes & Schedules	Backing
Emergency Procedures	Turning
Defensive Driving Techniques	Passing & Signaling
Local, State, and Federal Regulations	Following Distance
Techniques for Safe Loading & Lifting	Parking
Vehicle Inspection	Distracted Driving (cell phone, etc.)
Vehicle Maintenance	Driving in Work Zones

All authorized drivers should complete a defensive driving type program within the first two years of employment and at least every five years thereafter. Appropriate programs include:

- ❖ Basic Defensive Driving
- ❖ Coaching the Emergency Vehicle Operator (CEVO): Fire, Police, Ambulance
- ❖ Bus or Van Driver
- ❖ Coaching the Maintenance Vehicle Operator
- ❖ Snow Plowing Safety

9. Driver Discipline

- ❖ In addition to MVR review and accident investigation, each driver's performance should be observed on a random basis.
- ❖ Any driver who does not maintain an acceptable standard should be coached, and corrective actions should be taken as outlined in the municipal employee disciplinary process. Discipline (to change behavior) shouldn't always be negative: consider positive reinforcement through safe driving awards and the like.
- ❖ Adherence to the Fleet Safety Policy should be considered in performance reviews and other personnel decisions.

10. Drug & Alcohol Testing

- ❖ You should adopt a comprehensive Drug & Alcohol Policy prohibiting the use of such substances while operating a vehicle or equipment anywhere in the workplace.
- ❖ State and federal laws have specific requirements for drivers using a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). These include a requirement for random alcohol and drug screening.
- ❖ For additional information, contact VLCT PACIF Safety & Health Department.

11. Emergency Equipment

- ❖ Vehicle restraint systems should be maintained in operable condition and used by all drivers and passengers.
- ❖ Each vehicle should be equipped (at minimum) with a first aid kit, an emergency signaling device, and a fire extinguisher. Drivers should be trained in the proper use of this equipment.

12. Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance

A complete Preventative Maintenance Program for vehicles and equipment should be developed. At a minimum it should meet the following criteria:

- ❖ Based on manufacturer's recommendations.
- ❖ Completed by qualified persons.
- ❖ Includes accurate record keeping of all service and repairs performed
- ❖ Includes conducting and documenting pre- and post-trip inspections, noting and reporting defects to supervisor or mechanic.
- ❖ Requires inspections including a review of all safety equipment.
- ❖ Requires mechanics and/or service providers to document completion of repairs.

Note: Refer to Attachments E and F, Fleet Program Sample Forms, for assistance.

13. Accident Reporting and Analysis

In the event of an accident, all representatives of the municipality should be guided by the following:

- ❖ **All employees and others involved in a collision should obtain appropriate medical attention.**
- ❖ The involved employee, if physically able, should call for a police officer from the local jurisdiction or the State Police. The employee should also request that all parties and property concerned remain at the scene of the accident until the accident investigation is completed by law enforcement.
- ❖ The involved employee(s) should refrain from making statements to anyone other than the investigating officer, municipal officials, or municipal insurance company representatives. Statements should be confined to factual observations.
- ❖ The involved employee(s) should follow guidelines established by the municipality for accident reporting and investigation. **VOSHA must be notified within eight (8) hours if a work related fatality is involved or if three or more employees are transported to a hospital.**
- ❖ All collisions should be reported immediately to your supervisor and the municipality's insurance contact person.
- ❖ If possible, photographs should be taken of the accident scene and vehicle. A cell phone may be used if no other camera is available.
- ❖ Department Heads or a Key Person should conduct a "fact finding" investigation to identify causes and corrective actions needed.

14. Sources of Additional Information

- ❖ VLCT Risk Management Services Department - **Safety & Health Promotion Division** at (800) 649-7915 or www.vlct.org
- ❖ VOSHA at www.vosha.gov
- ❖ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- ❖ Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards
- ❖ Vermont Motor Vehicle Statutes
- ❖ Fire Safety Administration - Emergency Vehicle Safety Initiative Publication *FA-272*

ATTACHMENT A:
Municipal Driver Pledge

Date: _____

Name: _____

Department: _____

Assigned Vehicle: _____

My signature on this pledge indicates that I understand my responsibilities as an operator of a municipal vehicle for the (Organization/City/Town) of _____.

I have received and read a copy of the **Fleet Safety Policy** and agree to fulfill all my responsibilities listed therein. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Adhering to all policies and procedures governing the operation of my assigned vehicle.
2. Maintaining a professional appearance.
3. Ensuring safe operation of all vehicle and equipment.
4. Conducting and documenting required pre-trip and post-trip inspections, including defect reports.
5. Reporting all accidents and submitting required accident reports.
6. Submitting a copy of my current driver's license and granting permission for my employer to obtain my Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) when requested.
7. Keeping the program administrator or designee advised of changes in my driving status.
8. Prohibiting use of assigned vehicle by anyone not authorized to drive the municipal vehicle.

I understand that failure to comply with the conditions listed above may result in disciplinary action including termination.

Employee's or volunteer's signature _____

Supervisor's signature _____

ATTACHMENT C:
Potential Employment Driver Road Test

A. SETTING UP THE COURSE

Road testing should include exposure to routine road hazards which the prospect will likely encounter on a day-to-day basis as a driver for your organization. This includes urban areas, back roads, alleys, highways, bridges, grades, school zones, intersections, backing, parking, left and right turning, railroad crossings. Effort should be made to include winter weather conditions

Establish a “yard test” that includes hands-on operation of the vehicle by the applicant in a controlled environment (for example, in a Public Works Yard, Parking Lot, etc.) The test should be given in the type of vehicle to be assigned.

B. ESTABLISHING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

An acceptable level of performance should be **measurable and consistent** for all applicants. You should establish “what is acceptable” well in advance of any test and grade all on a consistent basis

C. ADMINISTERING THE ROAD TEST

- ❖ Check the applicant's driver's license to determine if he/she has an appropriate license grade and endorsements
- ❖ Provide the driver with a map of the course and give instructions.
- ❖ Conduct a pre-trip inspection.
- ❖ Familiarize the driver with the vehicle.
- ❖ Conduct a yard test.
- ❖ Conduct an over-the-road test. Give directions for the route well in advance to avoid last minute maneuvers, but do not distract the driver with unnecessary conversation en route.
- ❖ Conduct a post-trip inspection.

D. EVALUATING THE DRIVER

- ❖ Qualified – Meets performance standards.
- ❖ Needs Improvement – Marginal performance but can be improved with training.
- ❖ Unqualified – Does not meet standard.

ATTACHMENT F:
Monthly Vehicle Maintenance Report

"✓" if Satisfactory; "X" if Unsatisfactory

Vehicle _____

Maintenance Year _____	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Crankcase Oil Level												
Radiator Fluid Level												
Brake Fluid Level												
Transmission Oil Level												
Batteries: Acid Level, Cables, Corrosion, Start Power												
Audible Warnings: Horn, Siren, Back-up Alarm												
Tires: Inflation, Cuts, Wear												
Leaf Springs: Visual Check												
Cleanliness of Vehicle												
Fan Belt/Generator Belt												
Check for: Loose Nuts, Bolts, Studs, Pins, Leaks												
Windshield Wipers: Blades, Motor, Wash Solvent												
Instruments & Gauges												
General Body Inspection												
Priming Pump Reservoir												
Pump Controls / Drain Valves												
Condition of All Nozzles												
Road Test:												
Engine Oil Pressure												
Idling Speed												
Engine Performance:												
Gear Shift Action												
Brake Performance												
Steering												
Valid Inspection Sticker												
Breathing Apparatus:												
Pressure Satisfactory at Tank												
General Condition												
Headlights: Functional												
Portable Motor Driven Equipment Operational												
Fuel Tanks												
Fuel Level												
Overall Vehicle Condition												

This information is intended to assist you in your loss control efforts. "Best Practices" are developed from available current information but may not address every possible cause of loss. We do not assume responsibility for the elimination of all hazards that could possibly cause accidents or losses. Adherence to these recommendations does not guarantee the fulfillment of your obligation under local, state, or federal laws.

ATTACHMENT G:
Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report
(Attach an additional sheet if needed)

Name of Employee: _____

Occupation: _____

Department: _____

Division: _____

Date of collision: _____ Time: _____ AM PM (circle one)

Vehicle ID No. _____

Location of collision: _____

Name of other party involved: _____

Address of other party: _____

1. Description of collision: _____

2. Did the police investigate the collision? Yes No (circle one)

3. Did our driver violate our Fleet Safety Policy or a traffic regulation? Yes No (circle one)

4. If Yes, describe: _____

5. What did our driver do (or fail to do) that caused involvement in this collision? Explain.

6. Did our driver claim that any malfunctioning or defective vehicle component(s) caused or contributed to the collision? Yes No (circle)

Explain: _____

7. In your opinion, were any of the following conditions contributing factors in the collision?

Traffic Weather Light/Dark Road Driver (circle those that apply)

Explain: _____

8. What corrective action(s) do you recommend to prevent a future occurrence of the same type of collision?

Explain: _____

9. Do you recommend additional training/coaching or disciplinary action? Yes No (circle one)

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

ATTACHMENT H:
Method for Obtaining MVRs for Municipal Drivers

Information for Municipalities:

- Go to <http://dmv.vermont.gov/safety/violations/records> and download the Record Request Form (a PDF file).
- Print and fill in the form. Be sure to include the driver's signature and to initial the line that indicates you are with a governmental agency (this assures that there is no charge for the record request).
- Generally you will be requesting the *3-year operating record (Vermont Only)* (which for CDL drivers will include violations from other states if Vermont is the home state for their license).
- Fax the completed form to 802-828-2098 or mail it to DMV at 120 State Street Montpelier. Turnaround time is approximately one week.
- For more help and information you may also contact Vermont Information Consortium directly at 802-229-4171 or the Department of Motor Vehicles at 802-828-2000.

Remember that you must have the subject driver's signature on the form before sending in the MVR request.

VLCT PACIF

is a non-profit, member-owned, self insurance pool
founded and administered through the
Vermont League of Cities and Towns.
PACIF offers its member municipalities
a range of loss control services in addition to
property, casualty, and workers' comp coverage.
For more information, please visit www.vlct.org/rms
or call 802-229-9111 and speak with a member of
our Loss Control Services team.



PACIF
PROPERTY
AND
CASUALTY
INTERMUNICIPAL
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