



Distracted Driving: Model Company Policy B

This model policy may be used as a guideline for companies that wish to prohibit the use of all electronic communications while vehicles are in motion and does not constitute an endorsement by the sponsoring organizations.

Purpose, Background and Applicability

[The company] recognizes that distracted driving can impair safe driving and contribute to crashes. Distracted driving comes in many forms. It is the company's mission to not contribute to this problem. All employees and drivers, including non-commercial drivers, and sales and management personnel, will adhere to the following policy guidelines while working under the direction of [this company], no matter the type of vehicle being operated. These policy guidelines also apply to independent contractors operating their own equipment under a lease or owner-operator agreement.

Policy

For the purposes of this policy, a distraction shall be defined as any activity that causes the driver to take his/her mind off the task of driving safely. Any activity that would cause drivers to take both hands off the wheel at the same time, or their mind entirely off the driving responsibilities is prohibited. Certain specific types of distractions are specifically prohibited and listed in the next section. This policy is intended to eliminate distracted driving among all employees of [this company] and to help them safely operate company equipment or perform work for [the company]. Driving distractions include devices inside the cab, such as a cell phone, television, laptop computer, navigation devices, PDAs and other communication devices, etc. Distractions may also be caused by animated, argumentative or contentious conversations. Objects or occurrences outside the cab, such as electronic signs, billboards, "rubber-necking," etc., can also be a sources of distractions.

Specific Prohibitions

To minimize the possibility of driving while distracted, [the company] strictly prohibits the following activities by a driver while the vehicle is in motion:

- Use of a cell phone, either handheld or hands-free
- Reading or responding to e-mails or text messages on any type of communication device
- Use of a PDA or any other type of communication device
- Watching televisions or listening to CDs
- Use of radio or stereo headphones
- Playing electronic games
- Eating or drinking
- Writing or handling paperwork
- Reading a map or road atlas
- Engaging in argumentative or contentious conversations either in the cab or over the CB radio
- Use of any device in violation of any applicable local ordinance, state or federal statute



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Suggested Practices

Do not make mobile phone calls until you are safely and legally parked off the main traveled portion of the roadway. This also applies where the need exists to make an emergency call (911). Do the same thing to answer PDAs or other types of communication-device messages.

Minimize the use of the CB. Use it only for communication that enhances your ability to drive the vehicle safely and efficiently, or to gather valuable information from other drivers about road, traffic and weather conditions.

Other suggested ways to minimize distractions:

- Direct all phone calls to voicemail
- Eat and/or drink only when you are taking your break
- Pre-select radio stations
- If conversing with a passenger or co-driver, keep your eyes focused on the road ahead
- Do not look at the person with whom you are speaking
- Avoid any conversation that is contentious or causes you to lose focus on your driving responsibilities
- Never write or handle paperwork while the vehicle is in motion
- Study your map and directions while parked
- Pre-program your GPS with origin and destination points before moving your vehicle

Consequences for Violating Policy

If a driver is involved in an accident, and a significant causal factor of the accident is driving while distracted, the driver will be subject to retraining and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination. An employee who is observed engaging in any specifically prohibited conduct will be subject to retraining and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

It is important to understand that Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations 49CFR Part 390.17 prohibits texting while driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) and violation of this regulation may result in steep fines.

Model company policies governing distracted driving are part of a Defeating Distracted Driving commercial driver curriculum that also includes a video, brochure, handouts and a PowerPoint presentation. For more information on the complete curriculum and how to use them in driver safety meetings, visit www.operationsafedriver.org.

Defeating Distracted Driving was developed in partnership with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and a coalition of commercial truck and bus companies, federal agencies, truck and bus safety organizations, driver education entities and other partners.