

## EIGHT TIPS TO HELP YOUR EMPLOYEES COMBAT DISTRACTED DRIVING

**LEADERS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE** when it comes to eliminating distracted driving. After all, the leader helps set the tone in the environment. As a leader, you should do the right thing, communicate it, and enforce it. While the decision to drive while distracted is made by the driver, your organization also has a role to play in helping to end distractions while driving.

One of your roles as a leader is to help mitigate risky behavior and take a proactive approach to eliminating distracted driving. Part of that process is helping to ensure your organization has a strong and grounded safety culture that is understood and practiced by all levels of the organization – from the C-suite to the front lines.

**DISTRACTED DRIVING** is any activity that diverts attention from driving. Share these ideas with your teams to help them stay focused:

- Get organized before you drive:
  - Preset audio controls, mirrors, and climate control.
  - Program GPS – know your route.
  - Ensure vehicle interior is free of debris and loose gear.
  - Check traffic conditions.
- If you allow pets in the vehicle, require a designated riding area. No pets in the driver's lap!
- Do not text or talk while the vehicle is in motion.
- Do not multitask. If something else needs your attention, pull over.
- Avoid eating while driving – especially messy foods.
- Do not drive when you are tired or ill.
- If passengers are in the vehicle, limit communication.

**According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2020, distracted driving resulted in 3,142 fatalities. This does not account for other injuries and property damage caused by distractions.<sup>1</sup>**

Drivers are constantly faced with distractions, whether inside or outside the cab. When safety failures occur because of distracted driving, it can affect more than just the driver and the other party involved. One catastrophic incident can have irreparable damage to your company's profitability and reputation.

### EIGHT TIPS TO HELP YOUR EMPLOYEES COMBAT DISTRACTED DRIVING:



Watch *Eight Seconds*.

*One Fatal Distraction*<sup>2</sup>  
**(CLICK HERE).**

Share it with your team. Gather your team in groups to discuss the film. Create conversation.



Have your team sign a pledge to "Just Drive." Download the National Safety Council's recommended pledge or modify it and make it your own.



Ensure no one in your company calls drivers while they're driving. If you must contact a driver while they are driving, instruct them to pull over and call back when safely parked.



Don't give customers driver's cell phone numbers.



Allow drivers latitude. If they have a pressing personal situation, let them pull over.



Employ technology that detects cell phone usage.



Adopt and enforce a clear distracted driving policy.



Make it personal! Ask your team members how they would feel if their kids were driving distracted. How would they feel if a distracted driver was traveling alongside a loved one?

**DID YOU KNOW? | Using a handheld phone while operating a commercial motor vehicle in interstate commerce can lead to: Driver disqualification • \$2,750 driver fine • \$11,000 company fine.<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup><https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813309>

<sup>2</sup>Eight Seconds: One Fatal Distraction is produced by Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/driver-safety/distracted-driving/mobile-phone-restrictions-fact-sheet>

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## Sample Distracted Driving Policy

At <insert company name>, we deeply value the safety and wellbeing of all employees and are committed to ensuring a safe working environment. With the proliferation of electronic device and in-vehicle infotainment system use while driving, coupled with the myths surrounding a person's ability to multitask, we enforce the following distracted driving policy.

Hands-free is not risk free. The science is crystal clear on this fact and numerous studies have demonstrated that the use of handheld and hands-free devices while driving pose a significant safety risk to motorists, their passengers and others on the road.

<Insert company name> employees shall:

- Not use handheld or hands-free mobile electronic devices or voice features in vehicles while operating a motor vehicle.
- Turn on the "Do Not Disturb" feature on smartphones and other mobile devices. If the feature is not available, turn off or silence mobile devices to prevent distraction.
- Pull over to a safe place out of traffic lanes and put the vehicle in "Park" if a call or text must be made.
- Inform clients, associates and business partners of this company policy to explain why calls, texts or emails may not be returned immediately.
- Program any global positioning system (GPS), music device, or dashboard/voice infotainment system prior to departing. If adjustments are needed while driving, pull over to a safe place out of traffic lanes and put the vehicle in "Park" to make the appropriate adjustment.

Electronic distractions are only one type of distraction. Drivers should also refrain from eating, drinking, reading and other activities that may divert attention away from the task of driving.

<Insert company name> is committed to keeping our workers safe and holding our employees to the highest standard of safety. This is so important that violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Your signature below certifies your agreement to comply with this policy.**

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Employee Signature

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Date