

MANAGEMENT OF DRIVER MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS (MVRs)

Ongoing, consistent review and monitoring of new and existing driver records can reduce the frequency of a company's vehicle accidents.

The Importance of Driving Records

The process of selecting quality drivers must be thorough and consistent. This can easily be accomplished by a review of drivers' Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs). MVRs are kept on file in every state where the individual holds a valid driver's license.

An MVR will show the following:

- If a license has been suspended or revoked.
- A driver's involvement in accidents.
- Convictions for traffic violations and violations of related laws.

A commercial business operating a fleet of vehicles can usually obtain MVRs through appropriate state agencies, independent insurance agents, or their insurance company. The driver's name, date of birth, address, and driver's license number are required to obtain MVR information.

A history of accidents and traffic violations reflects driving attitudes and habits and can be indicative of a driver's future accident probability. A recent study by the California Department of Motor Vehicles concludes that drivers with poor MVRs will likely have more accidents than drivers with good records.

History of Accidents

Compared to a driver with no accidents:

- A driver with one accident in the last three years is twice as likely to have a future accident.
- Two accidents, 2.3 times as likely.
- Three accidents, 3.2 times as likely.
- Four accidents, 4 times as likely.

History of Traffic Violations

The study also concludes that drivers with traffic violations in the past three years will have more future accidents than drivers with good records.

- A driver with one conviction is 1.7 times as likely to have a future accident.
- Two convictions, 2.2 times as likely.
- Three convictions, 2.6 times as likely.
- Four convictions, 3.1 times as likely.

Evaluating Motor Vehicle Records

Evaluating MVRs should be a cornerstone of an organization's new driver selection process and existing driver qualification. When evaluating driver records, remember these two principles:

1. The frequency of accident and/or traffic convictions is more significant than their severity.
2. A recent history of accidents and/or convictions is more significant than older history.

Criteria for Qualification

Companies should develop guidelines to make objective use of MVRs for screening new drivers. These guidelines should incorporate both quantitative and qualitative factors. For instance, a typical set of MVR review guidelines may disqualify an employee from a significant driving position if any of the following appears over the past three years:

- Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) conviction.
- Serious violations, such as reckless driving, exceeding the speed limit by 15 mph, moving violation in connection with a fatal accident, and following too closely.
- Two accidents, or a combination of one accident and two violations.
- License suspension or revocation due to traffic violations.
- Two moving violations in a year.

Ongoing Review

We advise periodic monitoring of existing drivers. Record reviews are normally conducted following an accident and annually for existing drivers. Problems detected in a driving record review should be used to initiate personal counseling, remedial training, and/or reassignment to non-driving positions.