

Driver Selection and Qualification Necessities

Knowing how experienced, skilled, and careful your drivers are is a key factor in the selection process. Two important steps of this procedure are to implement a formal driver applicant screening process and establish qualification standards for new employees as well as existing employees who have driving duties. Many organizations face the exposure of significant loss from vehicle crashes, whether you operate a large fleet of vehicles or have a few employees who occasionally drive their own or rented vehicles for work. It pays to ensure the people who drive for you at the very least do not increase your exposure to risk. Loss linked to vehicle crashes include employee injuries, equipment and property damage, liability claims, business disruption, damaged customer relations, and more.

Driver Applicant Screening Process

Implementing a Driver Applicant Screening Process can help you ensure employees you hire are safe and experienced drivers, the following model can assist with this process:

Driver Applicant Screening Procedures	
Employment Background Check	<p>Require applicants to provide at least 3-year employment history that contains work history, driving experience, training and safety performance. Confirm this information with the applicant's previous employers. Verify an applicant's work record shows whether they'll be a reliable employee.</p> <p>For regulated commercial vehicles, background check requirements may go beyond a 3-year history and include further information. Look out for motor vehicle-related convictions or convictions for controlled substances as these show the driver isn't a safe driver or needs to go through rehab.</p>
Driving Records Check (Motor Vehicle Records)	<p>Review the applicant's driving record to verify they have an acceptable safe driving history during the past 3 years. An official record provided by your state, province, or national driver licensing agency should be obtained.</p>
Drug and Alcohol Testing	<p>Obtain a 3-year drug/alcohol violation history. It is important not to employ anyone who uses controlled substances if they will be driving.</p> <p>Pre-employment drug testing is typically required for regulated commercial vehicle drivers. A driver-applicant shall not be allowed to perform as a driver unless it is verified they had a negative controlled substances test result.</p>
Medical/Physical Qualifications Check	<p>Ensure applicants have no physical limitations or use medications that might impede their ability to operate vehicles safely.</p>
Pre-Employment Screening Ongoing and Monitoring Program	<p>Implement a special driver screening and monitoring policy. For drivers who have been employed as commercial truck and bus operators, use the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Pre-Employment Screening Program to check the applicant's roadside inspection and accident history.</p> <p>This is also useful for checking if there were/are any lapse in the applicant's licensing/certifications.</p>
Interview	<p>Interviews allow you to ask open-ended questions about the applicant's driving record. Ask about their past driving history, if the history includes violations or applicants – find out the details.</p>

Road Test Evaluation	<p>Conducting a road test can help you verify the applicant's driving abilities are adequately safe. Use a vehicle that is similar to the one they will be driving when employed, if possible. This will show you whether or not the applicant can handle the vehicle safely and if they are attentive to safe driving techniques.</p>
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Qualification Standards and Monitoring

Implementing qualification standards (experience, skill, safe driving history) and monitoring can help ensure your current and future employees are permitted to operate work vehicles. The following model can describe the most efficient industry practices:

Driver Qualification Standards and Monitoring	
Annual Inquiry and Review of Old Driving Records (Checking for Vehicle Violations, Accidents and Safety Performance)	<p>Review the driving record of each applicant to ensure they have an acceptable safe driving history the past 3 years. For existing employees, review driving records and safety performance at least as circumstances can change.</p> <p>Consider as much information about the driver's experience as reasonably available – violations, accidents, and safety performance. This information would include all known violations, whether or not they are part of an official record maintained by a State, as well as any other information that would indicate the driver has shown lack of due regard for the safety of the public.</p> <p>Ensure applicants and current employees have no more than 3 minor moving violations or minor preventable accidents during the past 3 years. Also, ensure they do not have any serious moving violations, license disqualifications, serious preventable accidents or drug- and alcohol-related offenses during the past 5 years.</p>
Driving Experience	<p>For smaller vehicles, choose someone who has at least one year of previous verifiable experience operating a similar vehicle.</p> <p>For large vehicles, commercial trucks, and specialized operations, require at least two years of previous vehicle-specific experience and training.</p>
Medical Examination/Physical Qualifications	<p>Obtain validation from a licensed, certified and registered medical examiner that the driver is physically qualified to drive (ex. Insuring the applicant is able to drive for long periods of time if needed) - also ensuring applicants and employees don't use any medications that may hinder their ability to operate vehicles safely.</p>
Licensing	<p>Ensure your driving employees and applicants possess a valid driver's license. For large commercial trucks and buses, ensure the driver has all necessary certifications and no license restrictions that limit their ability to operate the vehicle.</p> <p>Prohibit an employee from operating a vehicle on the job if any question exists about the validity of his or her driver's license.</p>
Drug and Alcohol Testing	<p>Create a drug and alcohol testing program for current employees who operate vehicles at work. The program should include that drug and alcohol tests will/can be for reasonable suspicion, post-accident, random, return-to-duty, and/or follow-up tests.</p>

References:

OSHAcademy - Fleet Safety Management, 2020

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)