

DEALING WITH UNASSIGNED DRIVING EVENTS

One of the most common problems carriers have with electronic logging systems is dealing with unassigned driving events. What causes these “unassigned events”? **They happen any time a vehicle with an automatic onboard recording device (AOBRD) or electronic logging device (ELD) is moved without someone being logged in as the driver.**

Before the ELD mandate went into effect, many carriers that used electronic logs simply ignored these events or dealt with them as a spare-time project. However, the ELD mandate has changed the expectations when it comes to unassigned driving time. Carriers now must either:



Assign the time to the correct driver

OR



Attach a comment explaining why it couldn't be assigned to a driver

One key point here is that there is no third option. Ignoring the event, hiding it elsewhere in the system, or deleting it is not an option. During an audit or investigation, the investigator will verify that the carrier has been either assigning or explaining all unassigned driving events.

So why are these events a focus during an audit for carriers using electronic logs? Because **failing to log in and then driving, or logging out and continuing to drive, is the most common falsification method used by drivers to “create” an 8- or 10-hour break when one does not exist, or to operate past a limit when using electronic logs.**

Ignoring unassigned driving events is **NOT AN OPTION.**

INVESTIGATING THE TIME

To investigate unassigned driving time, the carrier's log auditor (or whoever is assigned this responsibility) will need to review the unassigned driving events in the system and:

- Determine who was driving the vehicle before and after the unassigned driving event.
- Determine if the vehicle was in a position where someone other than one of those two drivers could have driven it, such as at a company yard or maintenance facility.
- Review maintenance records to see if a tow truck or a mechanic may have moved the vehicle.
- Contact the driver(s) involved if it is not clear who was driving the vehicle.

If it is clear which driver the unassigned driving time belongs to, and the driver operating the vehicle during the unassigned period was up against a limit or driving after a break that was too short, you likely have found a driver that deliberately logged out (or logged in late) to be able to drive over a limit. There will be times when a driver legitimately forgot to log in or logged out early and unexpectedly had to do more driving. **The key is determining if the driver took advantage of using the unassigned time to operate over a limit.**

DO THIS DAILY

The review and investigation of all unassigned driving time needs to be a daily function. If it's not done daily, the number of events will quickly accumulate to an unmanageable level. Also, catching and stopping unassigned events quickly is critical, even if it involves a driver that did it by accident.



If your drivers figure out that you are not watching the unassigned driving or not catching them when they log out and drive, **you may have an explosion in the number of unassigned driving events**, with many of those being false logs. The longer it takes to find and contact the drivers involved, the more convinced they will become that you are not looking, or if you are, you are only looking half-heartedly.

PREVENTION

To prevent unassigned driving time, train your drivers to:

- Always be logged in whenever operating a vehicle with a logging device
- Always “claim” unassigned driving time when it is offered to them if it is theirs
- Never move a vehicle when logged out.

The two cases with an AOB RD that lead to *unavoidable* unassigned driving time are personal use and yard movements. Both can be addressed directly by the driver if the driver is using an ELD by editing the time on the correct duty line. Therefore, when you transition to using ELDs, make sure your drivers know when and how to use the special driving categories (personal use and yard movement).



Next, you want to audit your unassigned driving events and assign them to the correct driver whenever possible. Once it has been assigned, contact and coach the driver to help prevent unassigned events in the future.

Finally, make sure anyone that might move a vehicle has a log in and insist that they use it. If this is not possible, consider having a “reporting system” for these people to use. An example would be having technicians provide a note with the vehicle number, the date, and the time whenever they move a vehicle. This way, you won’t have to spend the time investigating these movements and will know to just attach a comment to them in the system.



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