

**Transportation
Safety**

**Training
ADVISOR**

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Distracted driving

Understanding and avoiding risky behaviors

**CVSA's 2020 out-of-service
criteria**

**The most frequent driving
distractions**

**Expert Help: Can drivers
wear headphones?**

Information and resources to help your drivers operate safely


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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The psychology of distracted driving

Every time a driver engages in distracted driving behaviors without a negative outcome, they are subconsciously encouraged to continue doing so.

For example, a driver who decides he'd like to remove his jacket while continuing to drive may very well be aware that the decision will put him at risk. However, if he successfully removes the jacket without any consequences, the idea that the behavior was unsafe becomes less prevalent while the idea that he can easily multitask while driving is reinforced.

Down the road (literally), this could lead to the driver taking more dangerous risks while believing he will continue to suffer no consequences.

The more often drivers stretch the limits of distracted driving safety, the more likely they are to push their limits. To avoid this increasingly dangerous behavior, it's important to remind them that just because the outcome was positive once, doesn't mean it will be the next time.



Remind your drivers—all it takes is one mistake to turn their lives and the lives of those around them upside down. ♦

Please note: In the April issue of the Transportation Safety Training Advisor, we listed the incorrect answer for question 1 in the Test Your Knowledge section. We listed the answer as C, but it should have been A. We apologize for any confusion.



Ann Potratz

Ann Potratz is an Editor at J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc. She researches and creates content for a variety of employment- and transport-related subject matters and contributes to a number of human resource and transport products, including the *Essentials of Employment Law Manual*, *Personnel Management for the Transportation Industry Manual*, *Employment Law & Regulatory Alert Newsletter*, *Transportation Safety Training Advisor Newsletter*, *Transportation Safety Training Advisor: Driver's Report*, and the *Driver Training Awareness Program*. Ann specializes in employment law issues such as discrimination and harassment, background checks, and security.



TRAINING BLUEPRINT — DISTRACTED DRIVING

Don't let your team be driven to distraction

Distracted driving is everywhere

Why? Because becoming distracted is much easier than most people realize. It happens whenever drivers take their eyes off the road, their hands off the wheel, or their minds off driving. It might be a glance at a phone, adjusting the radio, grabbing a snack, or using a navigation system. Focusing on anything other than safe driving is a distraction, and it can easily lead to a crash. All it takes is a split second for a small distraction to result in huge consequences.

TIP: Ask your drivers if they would close their eyes while driving 200 yards on a dare. The answer will probably be no. Then remind them that taking their eyes or mind off the road to do something as small as changing the radio can have the same results.

Types of distractions

Distractions can be visual, physical, mental, or a combination of the three. Any non-driving activity is a potential distraction and increases the risk of crashing.



Visual distractions take a driver's eyes away from the road. Examples include:

- Changing the radio station or other entertainment
- Looking at a passenger
- Checking a GPS device
- Taking in the scenery



Physical distractions take a driver's hands off the wheel. Examples include:

- Reaching for food or drink
- Removing or adding a layer of clothing
- Smoking a cigarette
- Adjusting mirrors, heating/cooling, or seat position



Mental distractions are thoughts or conversations that cause a driver's mind to wander. Examples include:

- Daydreaming
- Listening to an audiobook
- Having a conversation on the phone or with a passenger
- Stress or anxiety

While some obvious types of distractions are prohibited for drivers, like texting and driving, many common types are not. In fact, many of the most common examples of distracted driving behaviors are so commonplace that most drivers don't recognize them as dangerous.

TIP: Distracted driving comes in many forms. Drivers must understand how to minimize their odds of becoming distracted before they get behind the wheel.

Identifying a distracted driver

Other distracted and inattentive drivers on the road are one of your drivers' toughest challenges. Your drivers must get in the habit of playing "what if" in their heads at all times. Defensive driving means having the right attitude when driving. Your driver is the only person in charge of his or her safety.

Teach your drivers to identify the warning signs of other distracted drivers. These can include:

- **Lingering at intersections.** Drivers who fail to proceed when the signal changes are often too focused on something inside their vehicle to notice.
- **Drifting lanes.** Swerving within lanes or drifting over the center line signifies a driver whose mind is elsewhere.
- **Braking suddenly.** Distracted drivers leave themselves less time to react and often end up braking suddenly to avoid real or perceived obstacles.
- **Tailgating.** Drivers whose eyes aren't focused on the road often fail to realize how close they're getting to the vehicles in front of them.

TIP: Learning to identify distracted driving behaviors is one of the most important aspects of defensive driving. ♦





TRAINING HANDOUT — DISTRACTED DRIVING

Types of distracted driving



Visual distractions

- Changing the radio station or other entertainment
- Looking at a passenger
- Checking a GPS device
- Taking in the scenery



Physical distractions

- Reaching for food or drink
- Removing or adding a layer of clothing
- Smoking a cigarette
- Adjusting mirrors, heating/cooling, or seat position



Mental distractions

- Daydreaming
- Listening to an audiobook
- Having a conversation on the phone or with a passenger
- Stress or anxiety





TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE — DISTRACTED DRIVING

Directions: Read each statement carefully, and mark the response that best answers the question.

1. The three types of distracted driving include visual, physical, and:
 - a. Professional
 - b. Cultural
 - c. Mental
 - d. Personal

2. Daydreaming or thinking about other things does not qualify as distracted driving as long as the driver is looking at the road.
 - a. True
 - b. False

3. Examples of physical distractions for drivers include:
 - a. Reaching for food or drink
 - b. Adjusting mirrors, heating/cooling, or seat position
 - c. Smoking a cigarette
 - d. All of the above

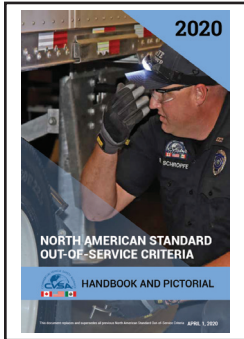
4. Signs that another driver might be distracted do not include:
 - a. Lingered at intersections
 - b. Braking suddenly
 - c. Slowing down for curves
 - d. Tailgating

5. Adjusting mirrors is not a visual distraction because it's essential to safe driving.
 - a. True
 - b. False

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____



CVSA's 2020 Out-of-Service Criteria now in use



The 2020 North American Standard Out-of-Service (OOS) Criteria was published by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) and went into effect on April 1.

The OOS criteria is the decision-making guide officers use to determine if a driver or vehicle with a violation will be allowed to leave the inspection site. If the violation is covered by the OOS criteria, the officer will require the violation to be corrected before the driver or vehicle will be allowed to continue.



Significant changes

This year's OOS criteria includes many technical changes. The following are among the most significant:

- Drivers that have a disqualifying violation listed in the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse will be placed OOS. See below for more details.
- All references to automatic on-board recording devices (AOBRDs) were removed. Drivers will be placed OOS if found using an AOBRD in place of an ELD. While this has been the case since last December, dropping all AOBRD references clearly shows ELDs are the only compliant electronic log (though drivers do have the option to use other electronic devices when allowed to use paper logs).
- Defects involving sway bars that are not involved in axle positioning are no longer an OOS violation.
- Any missing or unsecured securement devices on the manhole cover of a tank containing hazardous materials will be considered an OOS condition.

Clearinghouse specifics

When a disqualifying entry is entered in the Clearinghouse, an entry stating that the driver is prohibited from operating commercial vehicles under §382.501(a) will appear on the motor vehicle record (MVR) system that officers use. The entry will remain visible in the law enforcement MVRs until:

- The driver completes the substance abuse professional (SAP) evaluation and treatment process,
- The SAP enters the completion of the evaluation and treatment in the Clearinghouse, and
- A carrier or third-party administrator acting on the carrier's behalf makes an entry in the Clearinghouse indicating the driver has passed a return-to-duty test.

Drivers impacted by other changes

There were a number of other changes, too, including several impacting drivers:

- CVSA edited the wording related to "CDL not required vehicles" to close a loophole involving CDL-exempt drivers.
- The hours-of-service section was updated to formalize the practices related to "no ELD when required" violations. After an inspection when the driver is found to not have an ELD, the driver will be placed out of service for 10 hours. Once at the trip's destination, the driver can either move the vehicle to get an ELD or return to a company facility empty without being cited and placed out of service again.

Not a maintenance guide

While the OOS criteria is available to industry, it is not intended to be a maintenance decision-making guide. Defects that qualify as a violation under Part 393 or Appendix G must be repaired immediately. Putting off a repair because it's not discussed in the OOS criteria is ill-advised. ♦



Key to remember: The new OOS criteria, including these changes, is now in use. Carriers must remember that OOS criteria is not meant to guide their maintenance decisions.

Distracted driving by the numbers

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), hundreds of thousands of people are injured in crashes involving distracted drivers each year. When large trucks are involved, the risk of fatalities increases.

According to data compiled by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), there were **4,600** fatal crashes in 2017 involving large trucks. Of those, **5.7 percent** were the result of distracted driving. The most frequent distraction-related factors cited were:

1. **Inattention**
2. **Cell phone or personal device**
3. **Outside person or event**
4. **Eating or drinking**



Behind speeding, distracted driving is the most common driver-related factor in fatal crashes that involve large trucks. It's imperative for drivers to understand what's at stake before allowing themselves to become distracted behind the wheel. ♦

Answers to quiz on page 5:

1. C; 2. B; 3. D; 4. C; 5. B



Next Month's Topic: Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips, trips, and falls constitute some of the most common (and most avoidable) injuries in every industry, including trucking. Carriers can take a number of simple steps, from improved lighting to encouraging proper footwear, to keep drivers safe.

Expert Help: Question of the Month

Question: Is it legal for a CMV driver to wear ear buds while driving?

Answer: There are no federal DOT rules that talk about ear buds or headphones, so they are allowed as long as drivers can comply with the hearing standards under the medical qualification rules (§391.41(b)(11)). Here is a related DOT interpretation:

"Question 7: Are drivers prohibited from using CB radios and earphones?"


"Guidance: No. CB radios and earphones are not prohibited under the regulations, as long as they do not distract the driver and the driver is capable of complying with §391.41(b)(11)."

Although there are no federal prohibitions, you may run into trouble at the state level. Many states have regulations that limit the use of anything that will reduce a driver's hearing in both ears (such as headphones, ear buds, ear plugs, etc.).

Your drivers should know the rules of the states in which they are operating before choosing to wear headphones. ♦



Got a question?

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EDITOR: Ann Potratz

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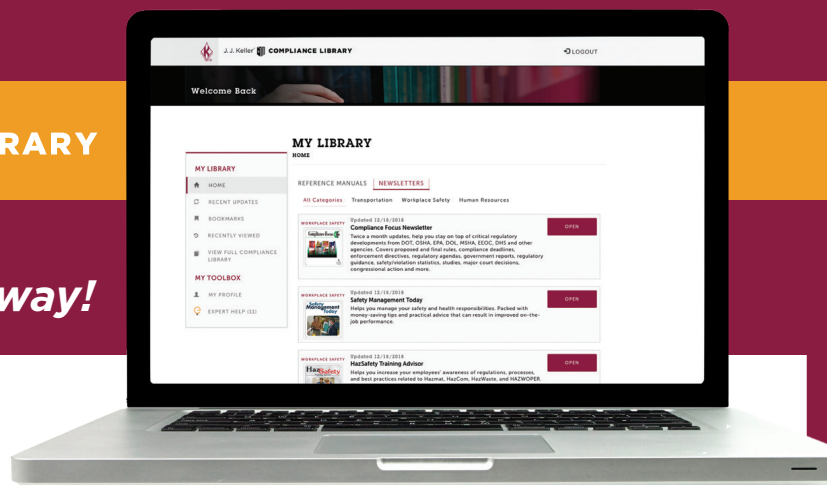
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