

**motive**

A photograph of two men sitting in the back of a vehicle. They are both wearing high-visibility jackets, one yellow and one green. The man on the left is pointing at a tablet held by the man on the right. Both are smiling. The background shows the interior of a vehicle with seats and windows.

**Your guide  
to starting  
a coaching  
program.**

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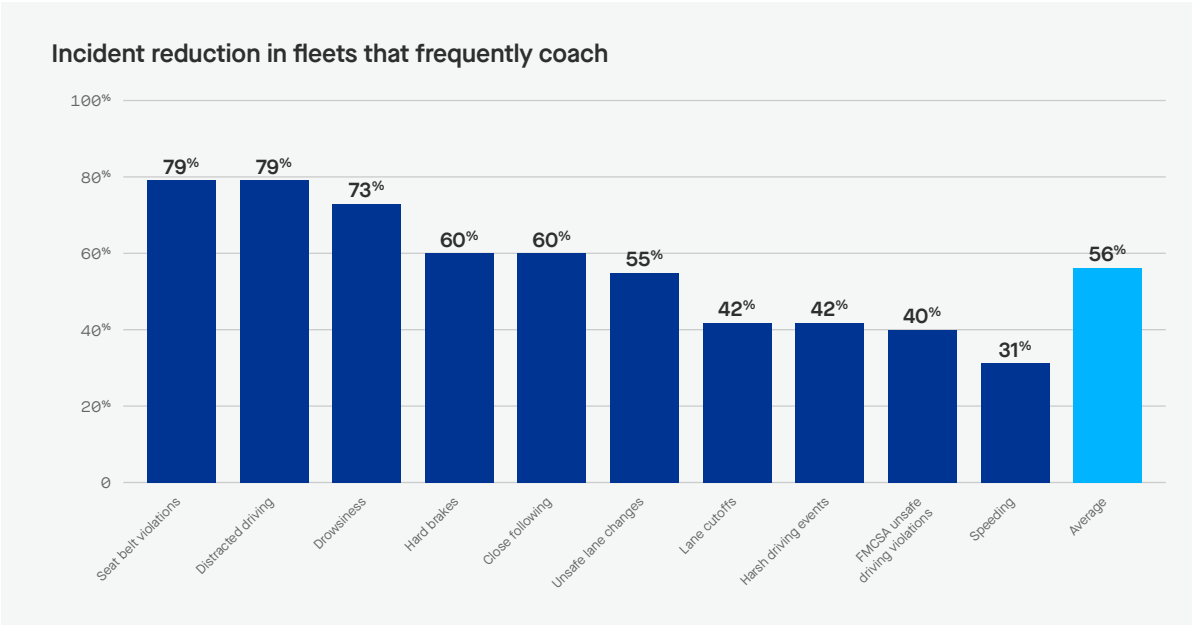
# Why invest in a coaching safety program

Insurance costs are rising, along with fuel costs. Crashes are growing more expensive, as is the cost of retaining good drivers.

Running a safe fleet has never been more critical, but how can you build an effective coaching program when you're responsible for increasing productivity, satisfying customers, and keeping things moving?

Creating and maintaining a safety program doesn't have to be a burden. Start with a dedicated coaching program that helps you connect safety with your drivers' skills, behaviors, and habits.

Investments in a coaching safety program go beyond safety and pay off in other areas. For example, Motive found that fleets using its AI-powered dash cams and frequent coaching saw, on average, 22% fewer accidents and 56% fewer unsafe driving incidents compared to those that didn't coach and use dash cams. When you account for the average cost of an accident, those fleets that invested in a safety program saw up to a 10x return on investment in their first year.



# Average cost of a large commercial vehicle crash

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**\$91,000**

Without injury/fatality

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**\$200,000**

With injury

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**\$3.6 million**

With fatality

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## What your fleet can gain from a coaching program

Over time, drivers can form bad habits: following too closely, unsafe lane changes, or distracted driving, to name a few. Sometimes drivers don't realize that they've gradually decreased their following distance or aren't being quite as careful. Many don't grasp how dangerous small distractions can be, such as eating, drinking, talking on a hands-free device, or even changing the radio station.

That's where coaching comes in.

Once you identify these behaviors or skill gaps, you can have conversations with your drivers and help them understand the ramifications of their actions. Connect their behavior with risk so they know why coaching is so important. Then you can work together to improve these behaviors and skills.

Safer fleets are more productive and profitable. Fewer crashes mean fewer delays, lower insurance costs, and less time off for injury or repairs.

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## How does Motive help coach drivers?

In-cab alerts from the Motive AI Dashcam provide real-time reinforcement of coaching lessons in the moment. Drivers can always view post-trip dash cam videos in the Motive Driver App.

Motive also automates the most time-intensive work for your safety department. Motive's turnkey coaching solution puts all your fleet's coachable events in a single workflow that's sortable by driver, with added context and severity. That helps you structure each coaching session around the most important events. You and your driver can review video, identify improvement areas, and build a trackable coaching history.

Motive's DRIVE risk score and reports track the impact of your coaching over time, helping you celebrate progress or take additional action.

### A strong safety culture can pay off in many ways:

- Increased driver retention.
- Increased revenue.
- Lower insurance costs.
- Reduced fuel expenses.
- Decreased vehicle downtime.
- Fewer injuries.



## Coaching best practices

Think of coaching as one tactic to bring your comprehensive safety program to life. Work with your entire team, from senior leadership to your newest driver, to build a culture where safety and coaching are a part of your everyday processes, rather than just reactions to problems. Ideal coaching opportunities include:

- Initial training (at hire).
- When the driver's role changes with new routes, equipment, etc.
- Periodic check-ins for continuous training.
- Corrective action for a specific behavior or skill.

### Designate a coach

Choose a team with the experience and authority to lead your coaching program. Ideally, they should be certified in a nationally recognized defensive driving program, such as the National Private Truck Council (NPTC) or the Smith System. They should have the support of leadership.

Your coach should be collaborative and a good listener, someone that drivers feel comfortable admitting mistakes to. They should be focused on safety, with enough time in their role to allow for coaching. Don't just add "run coaching program" onto a plate that's already full. Instead, look for automated solutions that can make a coaching program easy and efficient.

Coaches are often supervisors or managers, though a respected peer can also make a great coach. Depending on your team's size, you may need multiple coaches. You may also want to designate a backup coach in case your primary coach leaves or takes time off.

### **Make the costs of bad behaviors relatable**

Help drivers understand what their actions mean for the fleet *and* the driver. The more concrete examples you can share, the better. For example:

- Note the risks of a suspended or revoked CDL and how that affects their livelihood.
- Share statistics about the types of accidents, their prevalence, and the costs of driver convictions or nuclear verdicts.
- Explain how a safer driver is more likely to stay on the road, get profitable loads, earn a living, and get home to their family.
- Talk about your fleet's rising costs for insurance, fuel, and maintenance, and explain how safer driving helps.

### **Coaching should be both formal and informal**

Coaching should be ongoing in various settings rather than just an annual to-do. Schedule regular, formal meetings to review any dash cam footage, share new data about the costs of incidents, and so on. These could be monthly or quarterly meetings with your entire team, plus one-on-ones with each driver.

Motive can help identify when a driver needs coaching on specific behaviors, helping target your coaching sessions. And with automatic context and severity added to every dash cam video, Motive can also pinpoint coachable events. You can review the incident with your driver right away in the Motive Driver App, then document your conversation. Over time, Motive can serve as a source of truth about each driver's behavior while helping you track the impact of your coaching.

Remember, you're coaching the driver on their attitude *and* their skills. Make sure you address both.

### **Use a variety of different methods**

Everyone learns and retains information differently, so use several coaching methods to reinforce the message.

- **Formal classes or training**

The most effective, in-depth coaching tends to occur face to face. Assigning formal classes or training (in-person or online) can teach drivers while ensuring everyone receives the same training. You can also pair assessments with formal training to document that drivers have absorbed the information.

- **Quick check-ins**

In between, coaching can be as simple as a quick check-in. Use Motive's automated, aggregated workflow to identify a driver's coachable events, then have a quick phone or video chat to discuss them together. You can also task drivers to review their videos along with your notes. All this history is recorded in Motive, helping you track your actions and their results.

**Share the positive, not just the negative**

If all drivers hear is negative feedback, they may tune out the message altogether. Make sure to celebrate positive actions and accomplishments. Look for improved DRIVE risk scores, or share dash cam footage of how a driver's actions avoided a collision. Praise behavior changes after a coaching session. Sometimes a quick text with a "nice job" goes a long way.





## How to build a scalable coaching program

- 1. Establish and communicate the company expectations.**  
Put it in writing and make sure everyone knows the goals. This can be as simple as:

- Zero accidents.
- Zero incidents.
- Zero cargo claims.
- Zero violations.
- Zero citations.
- Zero injuries.

Ensure your goals are realistic and attainable, while driving the company towards improvements.

- 2. Get buy-in from your leadership.**  
To succeed, your coaching program needs support from the executive level of the organization, preferably the CEO or COO. Talk to leadership about their role in fostering a safety culture. Itemize the costs of not investing in safety, and explain how a good coaching program gets results.

Upper management should be the ones to announce new safety initiatives, whether that's your coaching program, installing a new camera system, or assigning defensive driving classes.

You can also create a safety contract or commitment letter that everyone in the company must sign to emphasize that safety is a top priority and company value.

### 3. Invest in the training.

Show your commitment to coaching by becoming certified in a nationally recognized defensive driving program, such as the Smith System or the National Safety Council DDC 4, 6, 8, or PTD

As a best practice, anyone who coaches drivers should have an instructor certification. A defensive driving certification course will give you the coaching tools needed to help your drivers operate skillfully, efficiently, and safely. You'll also learn facilitation techniques and instructional skills. Through these programs, you'll learn how to:

- Teach drivers of all skill levels.
- Identify drivers' strengths and weaknesses.
- Deliver an engaging, positive learning experience.
- Motivate drivers to be safe and responsible.

Consider incorporating the Smith System 5 Keys into your coaching. The Smith 5 Keys help drivers create **space** to maneuver away from conflict, **visibility** to detect danger, and **time** to react. They can provide a framework for helping you identify situations when a driver's behavior needs improvement.

### 4. Choose tools that give you driver-specific data.

Use the Motive AI Dashcam to identify behaviors like cell phone usage, seat belt violations, following too close, unsafe lane changes, and so on. Then use Motive's coaching solution to sort by coachable driver to prioritize your efforts and track performance. You can share the footage with drivers in their Driver App while explaining why these behaviors are dangerous. Drivers may not grasp how risky their behavior is until they see it with their own eyes. Once you've documented everything in Motive, you can monitor each driver's safety score over time.

### 5. Reinforce each driver's responsibility to operate safely.

Ensure drivers understand that they're responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle. It's their responsibility to drive defensively and to obey all traffic laws. They're responsible to meet the company safety expectations.

### 6. Document each session and set goals for improvement.

Work with each driver to set specific, actionable goals. It could be as simple as wearing their seat belts 100% of the time by the next month, or taking a defensive driving class to polish a specific skill. Establish time frames and make sure to follow up. During or after each session, note what was discussed (and agreed to), by whom, on what date. You can enter your notes directly in Motive to create a history for each driver.

**7. Incentivize and reward good safety behavior and performance.**

Monetary and non-monetary benefits work to reward positive behavior. Look to reward deserving individuals *and* teams, and make your recognition public throughout the fleet. Consider “Safest Driver of the Month” contests or other activities that can bolster some friendly competition. Remember, you don’t have to wait to reward good behaviors. The sooner you can call them out, the better.

Non-monetary incentives can include things like:

- A trophy that makes the rounds among the company’s safest drivers.
- A points system that lets drivers “buy” company swag or other gear.
- A commemorative wrap for a driver’s vehicle.

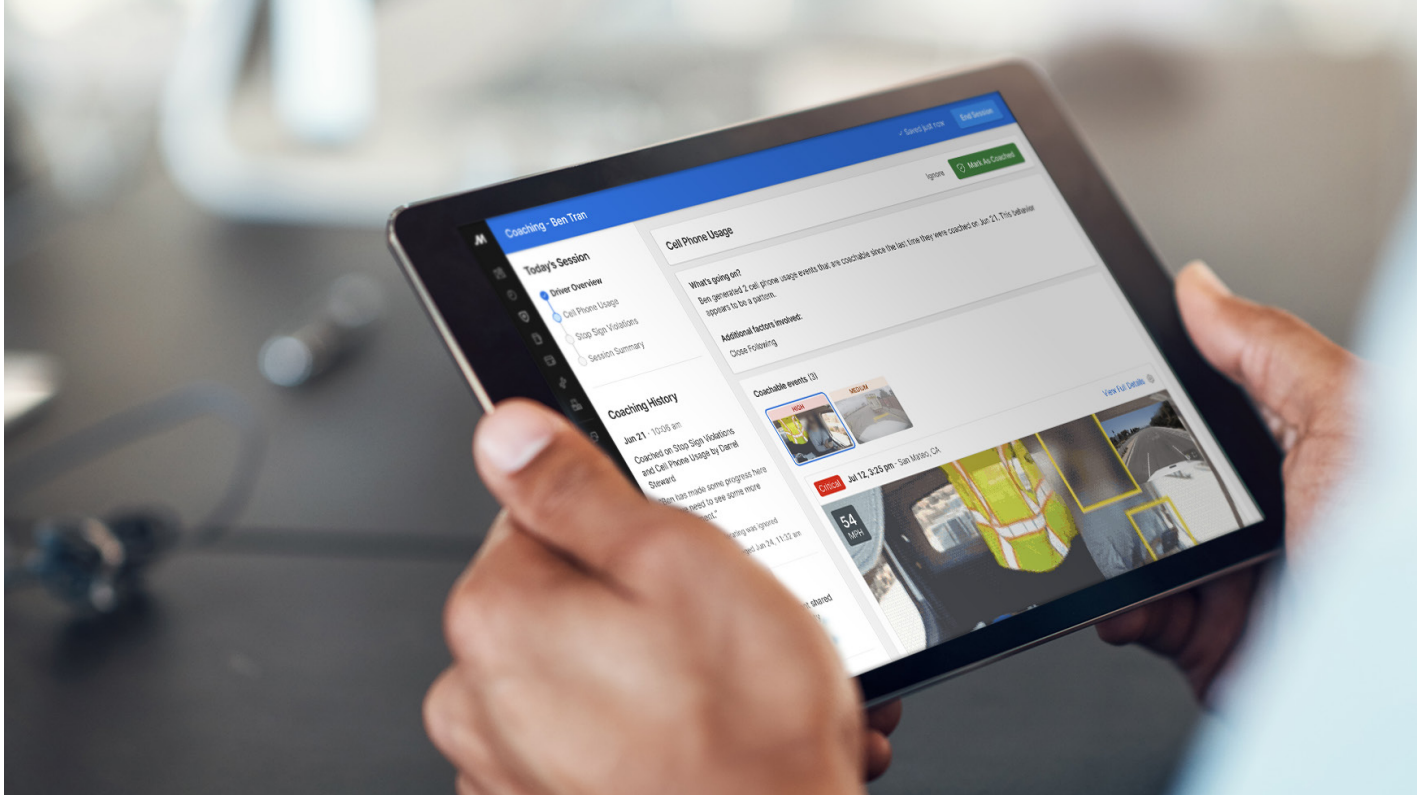
**8. Track your success.**

Establish KPIs that show the success of the coaching program.

KPIs can include:

- Number of coachable events per million miles.
- Accidents per million miles.
- Average cost per claim.
- DRIVE risk score.

Then pick a starting date to begin counting these events and behaviors. Use the reports built into Motive’s coaching solution to track your numbers while demonstrating to leadership and drivers alike that you’re making progress. Over time, these metrics should improve as the safety culture develops and the coaching program matures.



## How to conduct

### An informal coaching session

1. Review Motive's automated coaching workflow to identify coachable drivers and behaviors.
2. Confirm the behavior via dash cam footage and add your notes in the Motive Fleet Dashboard. This will be automatically shared with the driver.
3. Discuss the incident together, showing the footage as needed.
4. Ask how they might handle it differently, or reinforce that they did a great job.
5. Remind them of the company's commitment to safety.
6. Document the discussion in the Motive coaching session.

### A formal coaching session

1. Schedule a session when you can meet one-on-one, without any distractions.
2. Review the driver's goals, fleet objectives, prior coaching history, and Motive's automated coaching workflow.
3. Discuss progress towards the goals and positive or concerning incidents, showing footage to reinforce. Together, talk about adjustments to behavior and how they help the fleet meet safety goals.
4. Set goals or things to work on. Document the discussion in the Motive coaching solution and schedule the next session.
5. End on a positive note, reminding them they're a valued team member.

Motive DRIVE grades help determine how often specific drivers should spend in coaching sessions or the frequency of coaching conversations. Drivers with poor grades may require weekly conversations while excellent drivers only require a casual check-in every other month.

DRIVE Grade	Score Range	Suggested Coaching
Very Poor	0–39	At least 1x per week
Poor	40–49	1x per week
Fair	50–54	1x per month
Good	55–69	1x every 6 weeks
Excellent	70–100	1x every other month

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### Leveraging your coaching program's success with insurance providers

Rolling out a coaching program won't automatically keep your insurance costs in check. But, if your insurer may be willing to listen, you demonstrate how you're connecting your program to improved metrics, such as fewer accidents or completed training.

The key is to involve your insurance broker. Share metrics that demonstrate you're making progress, such as:

- Improved DRIVE risk scores.
- Coaching completion percentage.
- Turnaround coaching time.
- Decrease in number/frequency of collisions.
- Number of completed group training sessions, online courses, etc.

These are easy to track directly in Motive's coaching solution.

Prepare for your renewal by documenting your successes, then ask for a rate review with your next policy. You can also use your data to fight a potential rate increase.

See how Motive helps InterMountain Express [save \\$120K each year on insurance premiums](#).



## How to coach specific behaviors and skills

Once you've identified potential issues, determine whether they stem from bad behaviors or a lack of skills.

If the issue is a lack of skills, defensive driving classes or other training can fill the gaps.

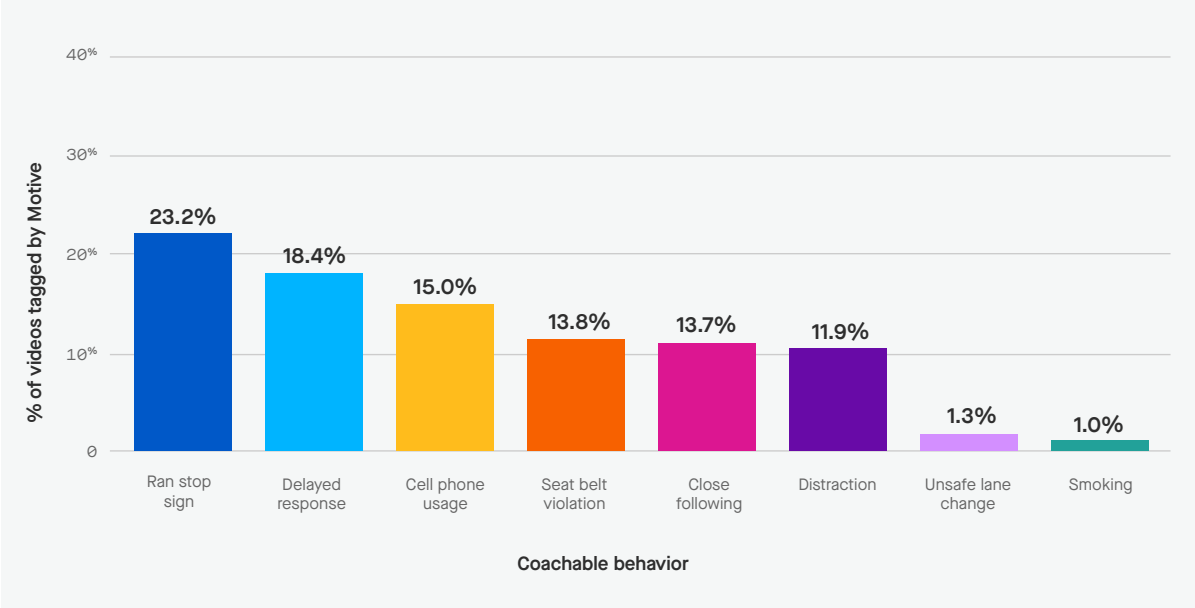
Things are more complicated with behaviors. Most long-time drivers have the skills. They know what they *should* be doing. Bad behaviors can either be habitual or one-offs. Either way, they require addressing.

For example, drivers tend to speed when they're paid by the mile or distance. They may also be anxious to return home. Family issues, load/unload delays, an angry customer, and a poor night's sleep can make a typically safe, compliant driver take chances.

To resolve troubling behaviors, start by talking to your driver. Even if it was a one-time occurrence, you need to convey that risky behaviors aren't acceptable.

The driver will often acknowledge the issue as soon as you alert them to it. Remind them of the company's expectations for safe driving. If necessary, give the driver-specific actions or prompts.

### Common coachable issues



Based on Motive data from a representative month, the most common coachable behaviors include ran stop sign, delayed response, and cell phone usage.

For each coachable issue, we've included the criteria Motive uses to tag an incident. In general, our research tells us that fleets prefer to focus on the most severe incidents. However, Motive's flexibility makes it easy to configure the AI-detected behaviors to your fleet's needs.

## Close following/tailgating

Maintaining a safe following distance between you and the vehicle ahead gives you time for perception, reaction, and braking to avoid a collision. According to the National Safety Council, a commercial motor vehicle should maintain a minimum of six seconds of following distance while driving in ideal conditions.

Drivers with a conviction for following too closely are 46 times more likely than their peers to have a future crash.

The Motive AI Dashcam detects a close following or tailgating incident when a vehicle doesn't maintain a minimum of 0.7 seconds between it and the vehicle in front of it. That's because following the industry definition of six seconds would make it difficult for fleets to focus on the most severe incidents. However, all behaviors are configurable to each fleet's requests.



As a general rule, use one second for every 10 feet of vehicle length. Then add one more second for each of these:

- Speed above 40 mph.
- Each poor driving condition (i.e., add two seconds total for wet roads and poor visibility).
- Every two hours of driving time.
- Being tailgated.
- Driving specialty equipment or oversized loads.

That means if you're in your fourth hour of driving a 72-foot, oversized vehicle at 55 mph on wet roads, you should allow 12 seconds of following distance.



## Unsafe lane change

Lane changes are sometimes necessary, but they always come with risk. That's especially true when lane changes are coupled with following too closely, speeding, or distracted driving. Motive defines an unsafe lane change as occurring when a vehicle changes lanes without maintaining a reasonable distance between it and other vehicles.

Drivers with improper or erratic lane change convictions are 66% more likely to have a future accident.<sup>2</sup>



### To reduce your risk:

- Minimize lane changes by moving to the correct lane as soon as possible.
- Look 12 to 15 seconds ahead for brake lights, emergency vehicles, or changes in traffic.
- Use your turn signal.
- Avoid quick lane changes.
- Check your mirrors and “lean and look” several times to make sure nobody is beside you.
- Look for passers in the lane you're switching to.
- Ensure you have proper clearance ahead and behind your vehicle.

## Failure to yield

Proper yielding can help avoid collisions. Drivers with a failure to yield violation are twice as likely to have a future crash.<sup>3</sup> But do you know when you must yield?

Motive defines failure to yield as when a driver fails to slow down or come to a complete stop for another motorist or pedestrian when they have a legal obligation to do so.

### Remember:

- Through traffic always has the right of way.
- Observe and obey all traffic control devices, including yield signs, stop signs, and traffic signals.
- You must always yield to an oncoming train.
- Pedestrians have the right of way at intersections, which are always considered crosswalks, even if they're unmarked.
- When approaching a T-intersection without signs or signals, yield to the driver on the through road.
- When entering or crossing a roadway from a private road, driveway, alley, or something besides a public road, you must yield to approaching vehicles on the roadway.
- When entering an uncontrolled intersection, yield to the driver on the right, regardless of who reached the intersection first.

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## Illegal lane usage

Drivers need to stay in their lane and only change lanes when it's legal. This includes properly using turn lanes, respecting lane markings, and observing passing zones.

Drivers with an improper lane/location conviction are 72% more likely to be involved in a future crash.<sup>4</sup>

Motive tags a driver with illegal lane usage when they don't change lanes at the proper time or move into a lane where the vehicle isn't permitted.

### For example, drivers can be tagged with illegal lane usage if they:

- Use a turn lane to go straight.
- Don't consider the lines on the road.
- Enter into the opposite direction lane without reason (such as to attempt a legal pass or avoid a collision).
- Use a straight lane to turn when a turn lane is available.

## Illegal passing

Before you consider passing, ask yourself if it's necessary, safe, and legal. A driver convicted of an improper pass is 70% more likely to be involved in a future crash.<sup>5</sup>

Motive tags an incident when a driver passes in a roadway area where drivers are prohibited from using the opposite traffic lane to pass other vehicles.

Watch for No Passing signage and solid (generally yellow) dividing lines on the roadway. A dotted line painted on the roadway indicates that passing is allowed.

### No passing zones are common:

- In construction zones.
- Near schools.
- On one-lane roads.
- When you can't see far enough ahead to safely pass.
- Around curves or steep hills.

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## Delayed response

Delayed (or late) response can be both a skill *and* a behavioral issue. Recognition errors (inattention, distractions, and inadequate surveillance) cause 41% of all accidents.<sup>6</sup> Delayed response is often the result of another behavior, such as distractions, fatigue, or following too closely. Stay alert to ensure you can respond quickly enough to avoid a collision.

Motive tags a delayed response incident when a driver fails to complete any of these actions within two seconds:

- Applying brakes when a vehicle in front of the driver does so.
- Slowing down when approaching a yellow or red signal, a stopped vehicle, or another vehicle entering the lane.
- Accelerating after a light turns green.
- Changing lanes to take an exit or avoid a collision.

### Recognize potential hazards and be prepared for others' bad decisions:

- Look 12 to 15 seconds ahead to observe changing conditions before they require an emergency reaction.
- Check your mirrors every three to five seconds.
- Watch for sudden movements or braking of other vehicles.
- Inspect your vehicle before you drive and observe changes in the sound or feel.
- Look for stale green lights. Use caution and prepare to stop at yellow lights.
- Keep an eye out for bicyclists or pedestrians, especially children.

When you observe a potential problem, know the correct defensive action. Use the “what-if” strategy as you drive to identify your options. Ask yourself, “What if that vehicle pulls out ahead of me? Do I have sufficient following distance? What would I do to avoid a collision?” Your most common defensive actions are braking, steering left or right, or using your horn to alert an errant driver or pedestrian.

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## Seat belt violation

Safety belts are your best protection against injury or death in a collision. They’ll keep you in your seat and allow you to maintain control during a collision or near-collision. And it’s the law: You must wear a seat belt whenever the vehicle is moving.

Seat belts must be worn snugly over the shoulder and across the body and remain buckled throughout the trip. Motive tags a seat belt violation when a driver and passenger(s) aren’t properly wearing their seat belts at any point during a trip at speeds above 25 mph for at least 5 seconds.

Seventy percent of insurance costs cover expenses from unbuckled motorists involved in collisions. A driver with a seat belt violation has a 33% increased risk of future crashes.<sup>7</sup>

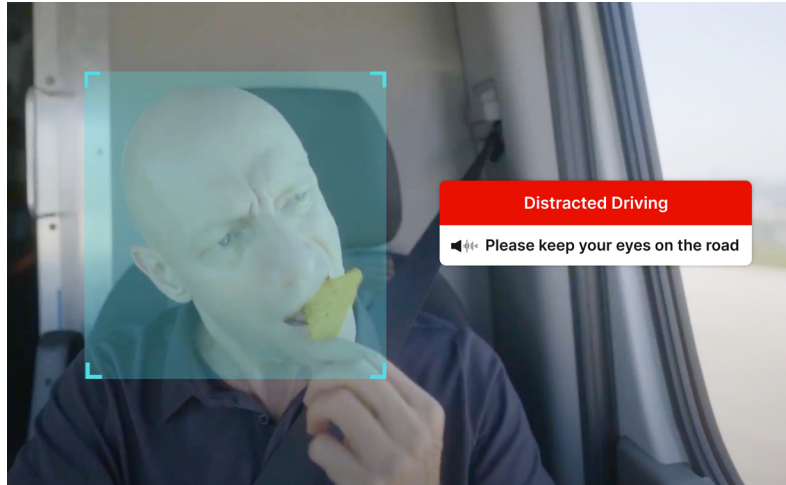


## Distraction

Your priority must always be to stay 100% focused on safely operating the vehicle. While taking your eyes off the road creates obvious risks, so do things that occupy your attention, such as eating, drinking, or smoking.

Distracted driving is a factor in 25 to 30% of all collisions.<sup>8</sup>

Motive tags distraction incidents when a driver is perceived to be distracted and may not be paying attention to the road.



### To minimize distractions:

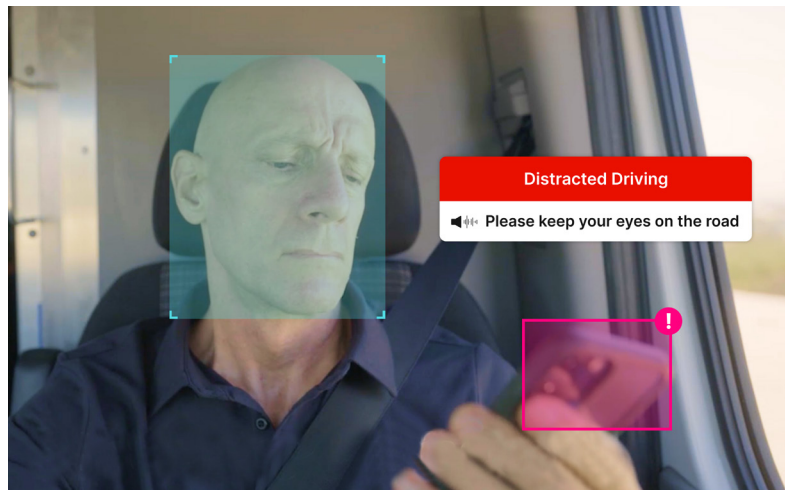
- Avoid eating, drinking, adjusting music, or smoking while in motion.
- Skip oversized cups or anything that may block your vision.
- Don't use a tablet, smartphone, or laptop while driving.

## Cell phone usage

Using a cell phone while driving combines all three kinds of distraction: visual (taking your eyes off the road), manual (taking your hands off the steering wheel), and cognitive (taking your mind off your surroundings). That's why cell phone usage is so dangerous. For example, in the five seconds it takes to glance at a text message, you'll travel the entire length of a football field at 55 mph — without looking at the road.

Texting while driving doubles the risk of being in an accident.<sup>9</sup> In fact, drivers who are writing a text message react 35% slower than a sober driver – and 23% slower than an intoxicated driver.<sup>10</sup>

Motive tags cell phone usage when a driver is holding a cell phone, using a cell phone, talking/texting on a cell phone, or watching something on a cell phone for more than two seconds continuously or more than two times intermittently.



### To stay safe:

- Place and receive calls only when safely stopped.
- Do not text while driving.
- Avoid using any apps while in motion.

## Ran red light/stop sign violation

You or your loved ones are more likely to be injured due to a red light-related crash than any other type of collision. Everyday, signalized intersections in the US see an average of seven fatal crashes and over 1,000 injury crashes, adding up to nearly 9,000 deaths in the last decade.<sup>11</sup> And drivers with a violation for failure to obey traffic controls are 30% more likely to have a future crash.<sup>12</sup>

Motive tags these incidents when a driver doesn't make a complete stop at a stop sign or red light (typically less than three seconds).



### To avoid stop sign and red light violations:

- Always look 12 to 15 seconds ahead while driving for stop signs and traffic lights.
- Watch for “stale” green lights that are about to turn yellow.
- Slow down for yellow lights rather than rushing to get through them.
- Come to a complete stop before proceeding.

## Speeding

Higher speeds require more time/distance to react, which can increase the likelihood of crashes. And collisions at higher speeds result in more fatalities and severe injuries. Drivers with a speeding violation are 45% more likely to have a future crash.<sup>13</sup>

However, crash likelihood can also increase when a vehicle is moving much slower than surrounding traffic.

Motive tags speeding when a vehicle is moving at 5 mph above the posted speed limit for one minute. Companies can adjust these parameters to align with their fleet's needs.

In 2019, there were 9,478 speeding-related fatalities in the U.S., or 26% of all traffic fatalities for the year.<sup>14</sup>



### To keep your speed in check:

- Always obey the posted speed limit.
- Be aware of the free-flow traffic speed.
- Stay alert for changing speed limits, especially when crossing state lines or approaching cities/towns.
- Slow down in construction zones, even when workers aren't present.
- Pay attention to weather, traffic, and other conditions that may require reduced speed.
- If hauling a permitted over-dimensional load, read your permits: They may require lower speeds than otherwise posted.



## Drowsiness

Driving while fatigued impairs judgment, slows reaction time, decreases awareness, and contributes to other risky behaviors, such as following too closely and speeding. Every year, about 328,000 drowsy-driving crashes cause about 109,000 injuries and nearly 6,400 fatalities.<sup>15</sup>

Driving after being awake for more than 20 hours is the equivalent of driving with a blood-alcohol concentration of 0.08%, the U.S. legal limit.<sup>16</sup>

Motive tags drowsiness incidents when the driver is yawning and appears to be sleepy, resulting in inattentive driving and lack of focus.



### Start recognizing the signs of fatigue:

- Can't focus or keep your eyes open.
- Trouble keeping your head up, or "nodding off."
- Constant yawning.
- Itchy, watery eyes.
- Wandering thoughts or the inability to remember the last few miles.
- Drifting out of your lane or missing road signs or turns.

As soon as you recognize these signs, find a safe, legal place to park and get some sleep.

## Conclusion

A coaching program can help you implement and reinforce your company's safety policies, no matter how many drivers you have. You can help your driver's polish their skills, improve their behaviors, and become safer drivers, through one-on-one and team coaching. Your company will benefit from fewer accidents, increased productivity, and more profitability. And you'll be building a better working relationship with your team that can boost retention and satisfaction.

Motive's coaching solution automates the process, identifying coachable events by driver while making it easy to track the details of your conversations and improved DRIVE risk scores. Learn how you can start using Motive's turnkey coaching solution without any configuration or extra cost today.

## End notes

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# Unlock Potential



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**About Motive**

Motive builds technology to improve the safety, productivity, and profitability of businesses that power the physical economy. The Motive Automated Operations Platform combines IoT hardware with AI-powered applications to automate vehicle and equipment tracking, driver safety, compliance, maintenance, spend management, and more. Motive serves more than 120,000 businesses, across a wide range of industries including trucking and logistics, construction, oil and gas, food and beverages, field services, agriculture, passenger transit, and delivery. Visit [gomotive.com](https://gomotive.com) to learn more.