

Accident Procedures

Drivers must be trained on how to properly respond in the event they are involved in an accident. This report provides recommendations for general procedures for drivers to follow after an accident, including conduct at the scene of the accident, and completing a preliminary accident report.

Introduction

The management of any motor vehicle fleet, irrespective of size or type, hopes that drivers are trained well enough to avoid becoming involved in an accident. However, as there is no way to guarantee that an accident will not occur, proper procedures to follow in the event of an accident should be established and drivers thoroughly trained as to their responsibilities.

A driver may be under extreme stress at the accident scene and, since his/her initial actions are often critical to minimizing the effects of the accident, the procedures to follow should be clear and concise. To facilitate this, an information packet containing instructions and forms for use in the event of an accident should be carried in the vehicle.

This report provides recommendations for general procedures for drivers to follow after an accident, including conduct at the scene of the accident and completing a preliminary accident report.

Driver Conduct at the Scene of an Accident

The basic steps that the driver should perform at the accident scene are as follows:

- Stop immediately and secure the vehicle (shut off the engine and set the brakes).
- Protect the area by properly placing emergency warning devices.
- Assist any injured person (the driver should never move an injured person unless they are in imminent danger).
- Notify the police (the driver should not leave the scene of the accident except in extreme emergency situations; if necessary, the driver should write down the accident location and assistance needed, and request that a bystander make the call).
- Maintain a professional demeanor, regardless of who was at fault.
- Provide his/her name, the company's name, insurance policy information, and driver's license to the other party(ies). The driver should not discuss details of the accident with anyone except his/her employer, police, or the company's insurance representative.
- Complete a preliminary accident report.
- Report the accident to the motor carrier.

Preliminary Accident Report

An accident report form for gathering preliminary information, following an accident, should be in each vehicle. The following items should be included in a preliminary accident report form:

Background

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Description of accident. The driver should include approximate speed of vehicles, weather and road conditions, and any other pertinent information.
- Diagram of accident scene. The driver should sketch the position of vehicles (e.g., direction of travel) on the form.

Other Driver(s)

- Name of driver, his/her address, driver's license number and issuing state
- Vehicle license number and issuing state, vehicle type, and make and year manufactured for any involved vehicle(s)
- Name of insurance carrier, address, and policy number of involved vehicle(s)
- Description of damage to vehicle

Damage to Property of Others

- Name and address of property owner
- Description of damage to property

Injured Person(s)

- Name and address of the injured person(s), and description of injury.

Other Information

- If there was a witness, the name and address of the witness, and notation of any comments made
- Where police respond, the name, badge number, and department location of the officer taking the report
- After completion, the driver should sign the preliminary accident report

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