



Defensive Driving – Pedestrian Interaction

Defensive driving is driving so as to prevent accidents in spite of the incorrect actions of others or adverse driving conditions, such as weather, traffic, lighting, vehicle or road condition, or the driver's physical or mental state. The defensive driver assumes that other drivers may make mistakes and is on guard in the event an error is made.

Your safety program should include defensive driver training on the proper way to interact with pedestrians. Most pedestrian accidents occur when the pedestrian walks onto a roadway and into the path of an approaching vehicle. Pedestrians often misjudge the speed and closeness of a commercial motor vehicle and assume a driver can and will slow down for them. Also, pedestrians think that because they can see the vehicle, the driver can see them. These kinds of errors in judgment are why pedestrian accidents frequently occur. Drivers should try to anticipate pedestrians making such errors and be prepared to compensate. The following are management areas that should be addressed regarding defensive driving and tips to provide your drivers to help them become defensive drivers.

Management Issues

	Yes	No
Have drivers been trained to maneuver safely near pedestrians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know if your drivers maneuver around pedestrian traffic safely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you periodically have qualified personnel ride with your drivers to assess their driving habits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do drivers properly adjust mirrors and perform a pre-trip inspection to assure that all lights and horns are functioning properly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are drivers aware of the concept of a 'preventable accident' (A preventable accident is one in which the driver failed to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the accident. This is irrespective of the extent of property damage and/or personal injury, to whom it occurred or the location of the accident.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Driver Tips

To be a defensive driver when interacting with pedestrians, your drivers should:

- Anticipate that a pedestrian may do the unexpected.
- Scan around the vehicle thoroughly when pedestrians are present.
- Adjust their driving speed to safely avoid a pedestrian. It is difficult for pedestrians to correctly judge how fast a vehicle is approaching. A pedestrian will often misjudge a vehicle's speed and enter the roadway thinking there is time to cross, especially if the vehicle is going faster than normal for the area.



- Not assume that a pedestrian will give them the right-of-way until it is obvious the pedestrian is waiting for the vehicle to pass.
- Be extra careful at night in pedestrian areas, as pedestrians may assume a driver can see them because they can see the vehicle headlights so easily.
- Remember improper trailer tracking in turns may cause a trailer to run onto the sidewalk. Drivers should turn wide enough to avoid this and go very slowly.
- Remember that pedestrians all too often walk or stand in the blind spots in front of and to the right of a vehicle.

For more information, contact your local AIG representative.

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CH-10-49 7/22/05

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