Distractions inside your Vehicle Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Distractions inside your vehicle take your attention away from driving and can be broadly categorized into three types:

Visual Distractions: These distractions take your eyes off the road.

Manual Distractions: These distractions involve taking one or both hands off the steering wheel.

Cognitive Distractions: These distractions divert your mental focus away from driving.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

COMMON DISTRACTIONS THAT OCCUR INSIDE A VEHICLE

- **Using a smartphone** for texting, calling, or browsing while driving is a major distraction.
- -Adjusting the radio or interacting with touchscreen entertainment systems can divert attention from the road.
- Adjusting GPS devices can require your eyes, hands, and mental focus, leading to distraction.
- Eating and drinking while driving takes your hands off the wheel and eyes off the road.
- Personal grooming tasks can take your attention away from driving.
- Engaging in conversations with passengers can divert cognitive focus, especially during heated discussions.
- Unrestrained pets can move around the vehicle and distract the driver.
- Reaching for items in the back seat, on the floor, or in the glove compartment take eyes off the road.

- Reading maps and writing notes can all be highly distracting.
- Smoking cigarettes can take one hand off the wheel and require visual and cognitive attention.
- Engaging in **deep thought** unrelated to driving can lead to cognitive distraction.
- Adjusting climate controls and seats can lead to both visual and manual distractions.
- Focusing on external objects, even for a moment, can take your eyes off the road.
- Frequently checking yourself in the rearview mirror can divert your attention from driving.
- Using apps unrelated to driving, such as social media or games, can lead to cognitive distraction.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BEST PRACTICES AND TECHNIQUES TO PREVENT DISTRACTIONS WHILE DRIVING

Set Clear Intentions:

• Commit to prioritize safe driving and minimize distractions before you start your journey.

Put Your Phone Away:

 Place your phone in a location that's out of reach, such as the glove compartment or the backseat.

Use Voice Commands:

• Use voice commands to make calls, send messages, and use navigation apps to keep your hands on the wheel.

Minimize In-Car Activities:

- Avoid engaging in activities that take your hands off the steering wheel and your eyes off the road.
- Save eating, drinking, and personal grooming for times when you're not driving.

Plan Ahead:

- Set up your GPS, adjust mirrors, and configure climate controls before you start driving.
- Program destinations and routes before you begin your journey.

Use Distraction-Blocking Apps:

- Install apps that block incoming notifications and calls while you're driving.
- These apps can help you stay focused and avoid the temptation to check your phone.

Educate Passengers:

• Engage in conversations that don't divert your attention from the road.

Secure Loose Items:

 Ensure that items are securely stored so they don't become distractions during sudden movements.

Practice Mindfulness:

• Stay mentally present while driving. If your mind starts to wander, gently bring your focus back to the road.

Stay Calm Emotionally:

 Avoid engaging in emotional conversations or arguments, as they can take your focus away from driving.

Limit Infotainment Use:

 Adjust radio stations, music, or entertainment systems before or after driving to prevent distractions.

Use Passenger Assistance:

• If you have passengers, ask them to help with tasks like navigation or changing settings.

Practice Defensive Driving:

 Be alert to the behavior of other drivers and anticipate potential hazards.

Take Breaks on Long Trips:

 During long drives, schedule breaks to rest, stretch, and refresh yourself.

Reflect After Each Drive:

 After reaching your destination, reflect on how well you managed distractions during the trip.

Lead by Example:

■ To be a role model for others, demonstrate distraction-free driving to promote responsible habits.

Stay Informed:

 Continuously educate yourself about the risks of distractions while driving and ways to prevent them.

FINAL WORD

Preventing distractions inside your vehicle is a responsibility that ensures not only your safety but also the safety and well-being of all road users. It reflects a commitment to being a responsible and conscientious driver.