Road Risk: Managing Work-Related Vehicle Collisions Meeting Kit

WHAT’S AT STAKE

Work-related vehicle collisions are one of the most serious risks in transportation and warehousing, where long hours on the road, unpredictable traffic, shifting schedules, and heavy loads create constant exposure to danger. A moment of fatigue, a blind spot missed during a lane change, a rushed turn in a yard, or a sudden brake on a busy route can lead to collisions that injure drivers, damage equipment, delay shipments, and impact entire supply chains.

WHAT’S THE DANGER

Driving for work exposes employees to some of the most unpredictable and fast-changing hazards on the job.

High Exposure, High Consequences

Transportation and warehousing involve long hours behind the wheel, frequent stops, tight delivery windows, and constant maneuvering around other vehicles and workers. With so much motion around you, even a small error can result in a major collision.

Blind Spots and Limited Visibility

Every vehicle – from cargo vans to box trucks to yard tractors – has blind spots that hide pedestrians, forklifts, and smaller vehicles.

Fatigue, Distraction, and Pressure

Long hours, night driving, irregular shifts, and deadline pressure reduce reaction time, slow decision-making, and increase the

chance of missing hazards. Distraction – even for a second – can be enough to cause a collision.

Changing Conditions on the Road

Weather, traffic, construction zones, road debris, sudden stops, and unpredictable drivers around you all increased risk. When conditions shift quickly, drivers who don't adjust speed or following distance are at the highest risk of impact.

Vehicle Handling and Load Weight

Heavy or uneven loads affect braking distance, steering control, and vehicle stability. A sudden turn or hard brake with a shifting load can cause skids, jackknifes, or rollovers.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Driving safely in transportation and warehousing means treating every trip – long or short – as high-risk. Conditions change fast, and even familiar routes can be unpredictable. Staying alert, controlling your pace, and planning your movements before you make them are the most important ways to prevent work-related collisions.

Slow Down and Create Space

Heavy loads, large vehicles, and busy yards all need extra braking distance. Reduce speed in tight areas, increase following distance, and leave room for unexpected stops or sudden changes in traffic. More space gives you more time to make the right decision.

Use Mirrors, Cameras, and Clear Communication

Blind spots are a major hazard in warehouses, yards, and roadways. Check mirrors often, use backup cameras when available, and always signal your intentions. Make eye contact with pedestrians and equipment operators before moving – never assume they see you.

What to Do Before Moving Any Vehicle

- Walk around the vehicle to check for people, obstacles, or equipment.
- Confirm load security and ensure weight is evenly distributed.
- Check mirrors, cameras, and blind spots before pulling out.
- Adjust seat, steering, and mirrors for full visibility.
- Eliminate distractions: no phones, no eating, no multitasking.
- Use headlights, signals, and hazard lights early when visibility is low.

Manage Fatigue and Distraction

Take breaks before you feel exhausted. Fatigue slows reaction time and increases mistakes. Avoid driving when drowsy, irritated, or unfocused — even short trips can be dangerous when your mind isn't fully engaged.

Adjust to Weather and Road Conditions

Rain, fog, snow, wind, traffic, and construction zones require reduced speed and increased caution. Slow down, increase your following distance, and expect unpredictable movement from other drivers and equipment.

FINAL WORD

Every trip — whether it's across the yard, across town, or across the country — carries real risk when you're behind the wheel for work. When you treat every movement of a vehicle with caution and respect, you protect yourself, your coworkers, and everyone sharing the road.