

CHAPTER 8
DEFENSIVE DRIVER TRAINING

REVISED JULY 2023

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CHAPTER 8

DEFENSIVE DRIVER TRAINING

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this chapter is to address the types of driver training provided to uniformed and nonuniformed departmental employees who are required to drive on official business.

2. AUTHORITY. All employees who are frequently (once a month or more) required to drive on official business shall be trained in defensive driving techniques in accordance with State Administrative Manual (SAM), Section 0751. Varied work assignments within the Department require different driver training. Uniformed employee's driver training differs from training provided to nonuniformed employees.

3. PREREQUISITES TO DRIVING.
 - a. Initial Assessment of Driving Ability. Commanders shall conduct a pre-assessment of driving ability for any employee who will frequently be required to drive a state or private vehicle on official business.
 - (1) The employee must possess a valid California driver license, certified for the appropriate classification.

 - (2) Field Division Applicant Investigation Units shall request a driver license record check for applicants for Cadet, CHP, in accordance with Highway Patrol Manual (HPM) 10.1, Applicant Investigation Manual, Chapter 5, Conducting the Investigation: Uniformed Classifications.

 - (3) Subsequent to graduation, in accordance with General Order 10.13, Employer Pull Notice Program, the Human Resources Section shall notify the Office of Internal Affairs when an action appears on a uniformed employee's driving record.

 - (4) The command shall request a driver license record check during the initial applicant investigation of a nonuniformed driver. The requests shall be made to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) pursuant to HPM 10.1; Chapter 8, Applicant Investigation Process: Nonuniformed Classifications; and HPM 10.3, Personnel Transactions Manual; Chapter 2, Nonuniformed Hiring and Appointments. A report of a nonuniformed employee's driving record shall be obtained from DMV and reviewed annually during the performance appraisal to validate the information.

(5) An STD. 261, Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business, shall be completed for all employees who elect to drive a privately owned vehicle on official business.

(6) A qualified supervisor, as described in 5.c.(2) of this chapter, shall ride in the vehicle with an employee to assure the employee's driving ability is acceptable before authorizing the employee to drive on official business.

b. Infrequent Drivers. Employees who infrequently (less than once a month) drive on official business may operate a state or private vehicle for a limited period, provided they have successfully passed a road test as described in Paragraph 3.a.(4) above. Because these employees rarely operate motor vehicles on official business, their participation in the entire Defensive Driver Training Program cannot be justified.

4. ORIENTATION. All new employees required to drive on official business shall be given information on vehicle accident prevention from a supervisor. Employees should be encouraged to exemplify the Department's standards when driving a state or private vehicle on official business. Transferees into new locations shall be thoroughly briefed on local accident problems and specific hazards and encouraged to contribute to the local safety program.

5. TRAINING.

a. Defensive Driver Training for Uniformed Employees.

(1) Uniformed employees are trained in defensive driver techniques during cadet training at the Academy.

b. Defensive Driver Training for Nonuniformed Employees

(1) Nonuniformed employees who frequently drive on official business will be required to complete the following training every four years:

(a) The standard on-line defensive driving course developed by the Department of General Service/Office of Risk and Insurance Management (DGS/ORIM). The course is available at:
https://ddt.dgs.ca.gov/presentation_html5.html

(b) Upon successful completion of the course, employees shall print out a copy of their certificate and provide a copy to their training coordinator. The training coordinator will then place a copy of the certificate in the

employee's field folder and enter the information into the Employee Training Records System (ETRS).

c. Commentary Driver Training. Commands shall conduct annual commentary driver training for assigned uniformed employees and those nonuniformed employees who are frequently required to drive on official business.

(1) Each command shall assign instructors to conduct commentary driver training. A uniformed supervisor should be assigned; however, if no uniformed supervisor is available, the training should be assigned to a nonuniformed supervisor who received the proper training as described in 5.c.(2).

(2) Uniformed supervisors are qualified to conduct commentary driver training and are qualified to train nonuniformed supervisors to conduct commentary driver training.

(3) Uniformed employees will receive a minimum of one hour per year of commentary driver training. The annual behind-the-wheel review of driving will be conducted by a supervisor.

(4) Nonuniformed employees who frequently drive on official business will receive between 30 minutes and one hour of commentary driving from a qualified supervisor using the training guide outlined in Annex B.

6. SCHEDULING AND CONDUCTING ADDITIONAL DEFENSIVE DRIVER TRAINING.

a. Defensive Driver Training.

(1) Commands shall review their employee training records annually (in January) to determine if additional driver training is needed for nonuniformed personnel. Van driver, behind-the-wheel, and one-on-one, are all examples that require additional training.

(2) If additional training is needed, the command training coordinator will log on to the DGS Web site by utilizing the following Web address:
<https://www.training.dgs.ca.gov/classes.asp?courseig=14>.

(3) The command training coordinator will create a training coordinator user account on the DGS Web site. Once the training coordinator account is setup, the command training coordinator will schedule training for their employee(s). A driver license number and Area billing code is required for each employee's enrollment in training.

NOTE: An Area billing code is a CHP Area office's three-digit location code preceded by the numbers "08" (e.g., 08091 is the billing code for the Academy).

(4) Accessing this Web address will allow the command training coordinator to determine available course dates, times, and locations. Training classes shall be selected at the location nearest to the command.

(5) The command training coordinator will be responsible for cancellations and substitutions of personnel attending DGS courses. Substitutions can be made the day of the scheduled course, and cancellations can be made up to seven days prior to a confirmed course date(s). If a student cancels after the cancellation date, a fee of \$500.00 will be charged to the Department. Commanders shall ensure cancellation fees are not incurred.

7. DOCUMENTATION.

a. Department of Motor Vehicle Response. The most current print out from the DMV regarding an employee's driver license shall be maintained in the employee's field folder and updated annually.

b. STD. 261, Authorization to Use Privately Owned Vehicles on State Business. An STD. 261 shall be kept on file in the employee's field folder and updated during the annual performance appraisal process. The completed STD. 261 shall be retained in the employee's field folder for three years after the date of the most recent renewal.

c. Recording of Defensive Driver Training. For nonuniformed personnel, the command training coordinator shall ensure completion of the Defensive Driver Training on-line course is documented in the ETRS.

ANNEX A

COMMENTARY DRIVING GUIDE

Commentary driving is a means of supplementing the defensive driving requirement and will provide appropriate departmental employees with annual behind-the-wheel training. When conducted properly, it will reinforce and strengthen an individual's defensive driving tactics and attitudes. A conscious awareness of routine driving tasks and potential hazards encountered on the highway is expanded by this method of training.

Commentary driving is not solely an evaluation process. It is primarily a training technique. The role of the instructor should be one of teaching in areas of identified need, not that of a "Ride-Along Checklist Examiner." Every effort should be made to place the students in a relaxed atmosphere so their normal driving habits can be recognized.

Commentary driving instructors need not be expert, professional driving instructors. Training is accomplished, to a great extent, through group participation. The instructor should possess the ability to communicate on an instructional basis, have a sincere interest in driver improvement, and be knowledgeable in various techniques of collision avoidance.

Ideally, one instructor should handle three students per session. Having more than three students makes it overcrowded and uncomfortable within the vehicle, while having fewer than three inhibits the group exchange of information necessary to the success of the training session.

Prior to actual training, instructors should receive their students' past driving records and training. This review may provide ideas on training needs and areas of necessary concentration. This can be done either during informal pre-driving conversation with the students or by requesting information contained in their CHP 442, Individual Accident, Injury and Safety Recognition Record.

Training begins with the instructor driving first, demonstrating commentary driving by verbally announcing each movement and hazard or potential hazard observed. Care should be taken to confine verbalization to significant actions and anticipations. Constant chatter on meaningless points is distracting and detracts from the value of the program.

ANNEX A

COMMENTARY DRIVING GUIDE (*continued*)

Following an adequate demonstration period, the students begin driving. Routes selected should be varied. Instructors should point out gross errors but otherwise make mental notes of general driving habits. After a period of time, the instructor should invite the other students to make suggestions or to note hazards the driver may have missed. The other students gain by group participation. The length of time driven is dependent upon the individual student's skills. Generally, the time will run from 30 minutes to an hour.

At the conclusion of the training session, an evaluation of each student's performance is to be prepared in narrative memo form. The information contained in the evaluation should be essentially the same as that discussed with the student. The purpose of the evaluation is to record driver improvement and identify areas for possible future reinforcement. This information will be of value to the instructor the following year. Appropriate entries should be made on the CHP 442 and returned, along with the memorandum, to the employee's field folder for three years plus the current year.

Annex B lists collision avoidance tactics to serve as a pre-training refresher for the instructor. It should not be used as an evaluation "checklist" during the training session.

ANNEX B

COLLISION AVOIDANCE TACTICS CHECKLIST

1. Pre-Driving.

- Visually checks around vehicle to any hazards.
- Adjusts seat and mirrors.
- Fastens seat belt and assures that passengers fasten theirs.
- Checks lights, brakes, and gauges.
- Release parking brake.

2. General Driving Habits.

- Maintains good posture and hand position.
- Makes intentions known to other drivers.
- Accelerates smoothly.
- Watches well ahead in traffic.
- Prepares for hazards.
- Drives at safe speed for conditions (flows with traffic).
- Uses adequate space cushion.
- Advocates two second rule.
- Keeps all sides clear when possible.
- Maintains safe distance when stopped in traffic.
- Does not wander within lane.
 - (1) Distracted or confused drivers and pedestrians.
 - Gets eye contact.
 - Taps horn when in doubt.

ANNEX B

COLLISION AVOIDANCE TACTICS CHECKLIST (*continued*)

(2) Traffic and roadway conditions.

- Is aware of active construction zones.
- Reduces speed in inclement weather.
- Turns on headlights in reduced visibility.

3. Intersections.

- Is cautious at intersections.
- Anticipates "stale" green lights.
- "Clears" intersection before crossing.
- Leaves intersection quickly when clear.
- Checks mirrors frequently.
- Is aware of traffic advisory signs.
- Looks over shoulder before backing.

4. Freeway Driving.

- Merges at proper speed.
- Drives in lane with fewer potential hazards.
- Minimizes lane changing.
- Does not rely totally on mirrors while changing lanes or merging (glances over shoulder).
- Avoids blind spots.
- Anticipates movements of overtaken traffic.
- Provides an "in" for merging traffic.
- Prepares for exits well in advance.

ANNEX B

COLLISION AVOIDANCE TACTICS CHECKLIST (*continued*)

5. Conclusion Driving.

- Selects safe area to stop.
- Makes intention to stop unknown to other drivers well in advance.
- Sets parking brake.
- Is cautious when opening door.

4. Attitudes.

- Observes traffic laws.
- Is courteous to other drivers and pedestrians.
- Stays calm in annoying situations.
- Resists urge to "experiment" with horsepower.
- Accepts advice and criticism in a constructive manner.

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