

Driver Education – Curriculum Inserts

Traffic incidents put lives at risk and are a major cause of congestion on our Nation's roadways. Up to 22% of wrecks happen after other crashes and can be deadly. Traffic incidents are also a major cause of unexpected delay on roadways.

Educating drivers through driver education programs about two important traffic safety laws—known as “*Steer It/Clear It*” and “*Slow Down/Move Over*” laws—can save lives and keep traffic moving on our Nation’s roadways. Most States have these traffic safety laws in place, but many driver education programs do not cover these life-saving laws.

This file provides **sample language** that can be readily inserted into a State driver manual or driver education curriculum. The language is brief and concise and conveys information about the two key laws that will keep motorists safe and moving on the roadways. The language may be tailored or customized to fit any State’s particular laws. Similar language is used by many States already in their manuals.

The role of educating drivers is shared by many organizations—State Departments of Education, Departments of Motor Vehicles and private sector driving schools. Their respective roles in driver education are described below:

- **State Departments of Education** are responsible for developing driver education manuals and supporting curricula used in secondary school programs.
- **State Departments of Motor Vehicles (DMV)** publish and make available the driver education manual. They do not have control over the content the driver education curricula used in school programs. [Note: As the cost of printing/shipping the manuals is an expense to the DMV’s, they try to make the manuals as concise as possible. Depending on the jurisdiction, a DMV may or may not be interested in adding anything additional to its driver manuals.]
- **Privately-operated driver education programs** use manuals developed by the Driving School Association of the Americas – <http://www.thedsaa.org/> – which represents private driving schools in the United States.

As you develop your outreach program to educate drivers in your State about these laws, you will want to work with each of these groups so that information about the appropriate language can be included in these manuals. As traffic incident management is important to law enforcement, it may be helpful to work closely with your local law enforcement partners as you make the case, particularly to both the DMVs and your State Department of Education, for including this language.

PROPOSED TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT DRIVER EDUCATION MANUAL/CURRICULUM INSERT LANGUAGE

Traffic incidents create unsafe situations for other people on the road, and put motorist and responder lives at risk and cause delays. Anything that disrupts the flow of traffic on a roadway can be considered a traffic incident—from a vehicle needing a tire change, to a fender bender or more serious crash. Traffic Incident Management (TIM) responders including fire, police, ambulance, and towing and recovery professionals work together to help motorists and to clear incidents safely and quickly. But these responders can't do it alone. As a driver, you must also do your part to help keep everyone safe and moving on our roadways.

Know your role:

1. If you are involved in a traffic incident, you must take certain actions to ensure safety and compliance with the law. **Move your car to a safe place – out of the travel lanes** – if you are able and there are no injuries.
2. **When you see flashing lights** (i.e., police car or ambulance, fire truck, towing or recovery truck) ahead of you or behind you, you need to **slow down and/or move over**. This applies to all types of emergency vehicles. You can be ticketed for failing to do this.
3. **Help keep your loved ones safe and avoid a ticket**. Tell your friends and family about these laws.

See below for some examples of driver manuals from a few states that have similar language in their manuals ([download excerpts from the Toolkit](#)):

- *Nevada*: www.dmvnv.com/pdfforms/dlbook.pdf: “Approaching a Stopped Emergency Vehicle,” see page 46; “What To Do in a Crash,” page 53 (date: October 2011)
- *Virginia*: www.dmv.virginia.gov/webdoc/pdf/dmv39d.pdf: “Yielding to Vehicles with Flashing Lights,” “Stopped vehicles,” “Approaching vehicles – same direction and opposite direction,” Section 3/page 3); “Traffic Crashes,” Section 3/page 24 (date: 2011)
- *Minnesota*: https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/forms-documents/Documents/Minnesota_Drivers_Manual.pdf: “Emergency Vehicles on the Freeway,” page 78; “What to Do in a Traffic Crash,” page 42 (date: Unknown)