



Workbook #14

Transportation Safety for Home Care Workers

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Welcome!

The Home Care Community Forum is an educational program for home care workers developed by Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc. (CHC) and funded by the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust. In recognition of all their hard work in difficult circumstances, the Forum is designed to provide education and support to home care workers.

Last year many of you participated in the widely-successful Home Care Community Forum educational series, which consisted of 12 in-service programs funded by a New York State Department of Labor grant secured by CHC. All educational material related to prior programs remains available on CHC's website (www.chcforum.org). Even though the DOL grant has finished, CHC felt strongly that similar programming should continue to be available to the home care community.

Thus, CHC is happy to announce that a series of three workbooks and related audio programs is being offered free to all participants thanks to the generosity of the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust (HCPSIT). HCPSIT is one of the largest and most successful self-insurance groups for workers' compensation in New York State. It remains a premier, cost-effective method for HCP members to obtain workers' compensation insurance and has a solid record of reducing costs to participants through safety and loss control programs that actually reduce on-the-job injuries.

The HCPSIT series of three Home Care Community Forum programs focus on worker safety and injury prevention. As in the past, this workbook is one of a series of in-service training programs for home care workers. Each workbook has been developed to accompany an hour-long audio conference on the same topic. The last pages of the workbook include a quiz to test your knowledge of the materials covered in the audio conference and workbook.

Website

www.chcforum.org is a website dedicated to the home care worker. The workbooks and the audio conferences will be made available on the CHC website shortly after they are first presented. Additional materials of interest for home care workers are also available. We invite you to visit often.



Sponsored by the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust

Transportation Safety

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this program, participants will:

1. Understand the causes of motor vehicle accidents.
2. Understand the visual habits necessary to be a safe and efficient driver.
3. Understand how to communicate with other drivers.
4. Understand how to maintain safe speeds under varying road conditions.
5. Understand how to maintain a safe margin with other vehicles.
6. Understand how to handle emergency driving situations.
7. Understand how to maintain a safe vehicle.
8. Understand one's responsibilities in the event of an accident.
9. Understand how to be a fit driver.
10. Understand how to avoid "road rage."
11. Understand the laws regarding a stopped school bus.
12. Understand how to travel safely on public transportation.
13. Understand how to travel safely when walking.

Glossary

Blind spot	Areas alongside a car that are not visible with the use of rear or side view mirrors and thus pose a potential driving hazard.
DUI	Driving Under the Influence.
DWAI	Driving While Ability Impaired.
Implied Consent	Implies that anyone operating a motor vehicle on a public highway agrees to take a chemical test if asked.
Road Rage	Irrational, aggressive, and potentially dangerous behavior by motorists in response to some driving event.

In order for home care workers to effectively do their job they must arrive at their destination safely, on time, and in an appropriate frame of mind. It is the purpose of this document to provide information that will help make this a reality.

The bulk of the material in this document has been supplied by AAA Hudson Valley's Traffic Safety Department.



I THE PROBLEMS WHEN DRIVING

A. What causes motor vehicle accidents?

- Driver negligence.
- Speeding.
- Drivers talking on cell phones.
- Inattentive or aggressive driving.
- Reckless driving.
- “Road rage.”
- Driving “under the influence.”

B. How do we deal with these potential problems?

- Don’t create undesirable situations by late starts, poor planning of your route , or poor knowledge of directions.
- Eliminate the above behaviors from ourselves.
- Anticipate actions by other drivers.
- Plan your responses to actions by other drivers.
- Alter your speed, spacing and position to avoid unexpected actions by others.
- Follow the recommendations that follow.

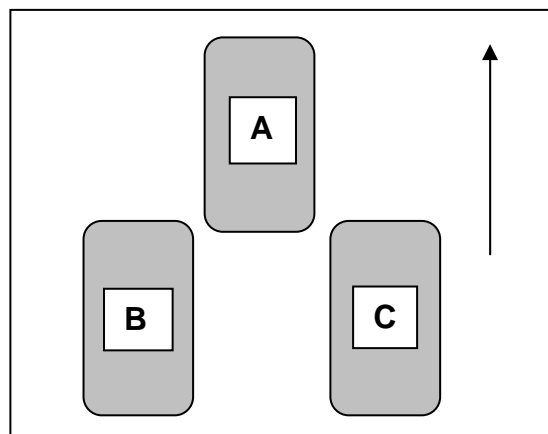
II THE SOLUTION

A. Develop good visual habits

- Look ahead – not just at the vehicle directly in front of you.
- Be aware of intersections, entry ramps, traffic signals, railroad crossings and merging traffic you are approaching.
- Be aware of crosswalks and pedestrians – they always have the right of way.
- Be aware of what is happening behind you – rapidly approaching vehicles, emergency vehicles, erratic drivers.
- Make sure windows, mirrors, headlights, and signal lights are in working order and clean.
- Adjust your seat and mirrors for best vision and to avoid any blind spots.

BLIND SPOTS

Vehicles B and C, due to their unique positions, can often not be seen in A’s side or rear view mirror.



B. Communicate with other drivers

- Use your headlights, brake lights and turn signals.
- Use your horn when appropriate – not to vent anger.
- Use flares or warning triangles when roadside repairs have to be made – make sure that these are placed far enough away to give drivers sufficient time to react.
- Use hazard lights when traveling slower than traffic or when parked on a shoulder.
- Avoid traveling in another driver’s blind spots.

C. Maintain safe speeds

- Speed limits are established to meet ideal conditions.
There are numerous conditions that you should consider:
 - darkness – headlights only illuminate to about 250 feet;
 - rain, fog, and snow all affect visibility and road conditions;
 - intersections – approaching vehicles and pedestrians are often out of view;
 - hills and curves affect braking distances and vision;
 - traffic signals;
 - shady areas;
 - glare, especially when traveling into rising or setting sun;
 - bridges and overpasses tend to freeze before the road does;
 - gravel, leaves, heat, moisture and road consistency all affect traction and stopping ability;
 - the amount of traffic and the speed at which it is traveling;
 - the condition of your tires, brakes;
 - the size, weight and type of vehicle you are driving;
 - your physical condition.

D. Maintain safe margins with other vehicles

The following chart gives approximate stopping distances at various speeds. It does not consider your reaction time, the condition of your tires or brakes, but considering that the average car is about 15 feet long you can estimate how many car lengths to leave between you and the vehicle you are following.

Speed (mph)	Overall Stopping Distance (ft)
20	40
30	75
40	120
50	175
60	240
70	315

Safe margins should also consider the type of vehicles on the road:

- school buses, mail delivery vehicles, garbage trucks make frequent stops;
- trucks and motor homes can impair your view of the road, traffic signals and signs;
- school buses and tank trucks must stop at rail crossings;
- motorcycles require special consideration;
- emergency vehicles have the right of way.

It is important to maintain safe margins in *front*, to the *side* and *behind*.

E. Handling emergency situations

- Slippery surfaces
 - Don't make abrupt changes in speed or direction.
 - Reduce speed.
- Skidding
 - If caused by hard braking, remove your foot from the brake.
 - If caused by sudden acceleration, reduce presses on the accelerator.
- Running off the road
 - Traction is often poor so keep a firm grip on the steering wheel.
 - Slow down gradually.
 - Return to the roadway under control and when it is clearly safe to do so.
- Stopping quickly
 - Press the brake pedal firmly, but avoid locking the brakes – if the brakes do lock let up slightly.
 - ABS Systems (Anti-lock braking system)
If your car is equipped with an ABS and you must stop quickly ***do not pump the brake or remove your foot from the brake pedal.***
- Protecting yourself in a collision
 - If you are about to be hit from the rear:
Apply brakes to avoid hitting the car in front of you.
Press your head against the head restraint.
Keep your arms away from the center of the steering wheel to allow the air bag to work.
 - If you are about to be hit from the side:
Try to adjust speed so that impact will be in front of the front axle or behind the rear axle.
 - If you are about to be hit from the front:
If you can't avoid the collision, attempt to be hit at an angle.

Always use your SAFETY RESTRAINT SYSTEM (seat belts) and insist that your passengers do so as well.

If you have an accident:

STOP

- Close to the scene of the accident.
- Do not impede traffic if possible.
- Do not leave the scene of an injury or fatality – it is a misdemeanor.
- Do not leave the scene of damage to property or a pet – it is a traffic infraction.

WARN

- Use flares or lights to warn oncoming traffic.

NOTIFY

- Law enforcement in the event of an injury.
- Owner of damaged property if law enforcement is not present.
- Fire department if gas is leaking and clear area.
- Your insurance agent.
- Your supervisor if you will be late or unable to meet your work responsibilities.

EXCHANGE INFORMATION WITH OTHER PARTIES – IT IS THE LAW

- Motorist ID number, car license number, registration number.
- Name and address.
- Name of insurance carrier, insurance ID number and insurance agent
(your license, registration, and insurance ID card should always be with you when driving).

FOR YOUR RECORDS

- Names, addresses and phone numbers of witnesses.
- Time, date, specific location of accident.
- Photos of damage, skid marks.

ACCIDENT REPORT MV-104

- Must be completed for all accidents involving personal injury or damage over \$1000.
- It is the motorist's responsibility to complete the form.
- The form must be filed within 10 days or your license can be suspended.

HOW TO DEAL WITH VEHICLE FAILURE	
Type of Failure	Suggested Action
Brake failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pump the brake pedal. 2. Use the parking brake. 3. Shift to low gear and look for a place to stop. 4. Call for help – <i>do not</i> try to drive to a garage.
Blowout	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold the steering wheel firmly. 2. Slowly remove your foot from the gas pedal. 3. Signal and let the vehicle slow down without braking. 4. Move to a safe area off the roadway.
Power Steering Failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slow down. 2. Steer the vehicle to a safe location. 2. Stop and call for help.
Headlight Failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try using the dimmer switch. 2. Try turning the lights on and off several times. 3. Turn on parking lights. 4. Turn on emergency flashers. 5. Pull off the road leaving flashers on.
Accelerator Sticks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shift to neutral. 2. Brake, signal and move off the roadway. 3. When off the roadway, turn off the ignition.
Hood latch failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slow down 2. Try to look below the hood or out the window 3. Use any lines in the road as guides 4. Pull off the road as soon as possible

F. Maintaining a safe vehicle

- The following should be checked on a regular basis:

All lights and bulbs	Battery water level	Oil levels
Transmission fluid	Brake fluid	Brake pedal pressure
Tire pressure	Tire wear	Windshield wipers
Windshield cleaner fluid	Power steering fluid	Hose and belts
Coolant levels	Fuel level	
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for service of your vehicle.
- Know and understand your vehicle:
 - Do you have ABS?
 - How to fill windshield cleaner reservoir.
 - How to adjust seat restraints and head supports.

- How to turn on hazard lights.
- How to change a tire.
- How to light a warning flare.

G. Being a fit driver

- The ability to drive safely is affected by:
 - Alcoholic beverages – every 30 minutes, someone dies in an alcohol-related crash; last year alone over one million people were injured in alcohol-related traffic crashes.
 - Drugs (legal and illegal) – headache and allergy medicines often make one drowsy; many drugs impair judgment, vision and reaction time.
 - Vision and hearing – wear glasses if you need them; keep a spare pair in your car.
 - Alertness – cell phones, smoking, lack of sleep can affect your focus on driving.
 - Health – any health condition can affect driving; diabetes, epilepsy or a heart condition require special consideration.
 - Emotions – driving while angry, excited, worried or depressed can affect judgment.

AVOIDING ROAD RAGE

Road rage has become a major source of avoidable problems on the nation's roadways. Road rage is the irrational often violent response to a perceived or actual event while driving. Road rage can be avoided. Here are some DO's and DON'T's that should help you from being the victim or cause of road rage.

DON'T

- Make obscene gestures.
- Abuse your horn.
- Block the passing lane.
- Double park or block the right hand turn lane.
- Tailgate.
- Stop in the road to have a chat with another driver or pedestrian.
- Take another driver's mistakes personally.
- Exit the vehicle to argue or otherwise engage another motorist or pedestrian.

DO

- Use signals when switching lanes.
- Avoid eye contact with the driver trying to engage you.
- Smile and be courteous – avoid conflict at all costs.
- Avoid using the horn with an aggressive driver.
- Avoid using brake lights with a tailgater.

Remember the penalties for reckless driving, assault and other serious consequences of road rage carry can be very severe. Your car may be necessary for you to maintain your employment.

H. Dealing with a stopped school bus

Section 1174 of the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law prohibits vehicles from passing a stopped school bus.

Persons convicted of this crime are subject to a fine of not less than \$250, or imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both. For a conviction of a second violation within a 36-month period, a fine of not less than \$600, or imprisonment for not more than 180 days, or both, may be given.

- You may not pass a stopped school bus if the stop signs are displayed and the red lights are flashing.
 - You may not pass in either direction.
 - You may not pass if you are turning.
 - You may not pass even if the roadway is more than one lane in each direction.
- Knowing bus routes and the location of schools can help you avoid problems.
- Plan for delays if your route to work is likely to include school bus traffic.

III DEALING WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

A. What do we need to know?

- Schedules.
- Where the stops are located.
- How long the trip will take.
- How inclement weather will affect travel.
- What the choices are in the event of a breakdown.
- What the cost is – is exact change required.
- Are stops located in safe, well lighted areas - is assistance or a phone available.

B. What should we do?

- Plan routes carefully – get advice about safety, reliability.
- Assume that schedules will not be met – an earlier start may be in order.
- Carry spare change to be used only in an emergency – a taxi, a phone call may be necessary.
- Let someone know your route.

IV WALKING TO WORK

A. Where do we walk?

- Sidewalks.
- Country roads.

- Side streets.
- In large apartment complexes.

B. How should we deal with any walking we must do?

- Plan routes carefully.
- Face traffic when walking in a roadway.
- Wear light colored or reflective clothing to assist motorists in seeing you.
- Try to stay in well lighted areas.
- Plan for alternate routes – weather, accidents, repair work, roadway or sidewalk damage. pedestrian traffic can all affect your travel.
- Plan for emergencies – is assistance or a phone available.
- Wear appropriate clothing especially shoes.
- Carry a flashlight.
- Pay attention to weather forecasts and plan accordingly.
- Get advice about the neighborhoods you will pass through and determine how to avoid potential problem areas.

QUIZ

True or False

1. ____ The blind spot is only a problem for drivers who wear glasses.
2. ____ It is legal to make a turn in front of a stopped school bus.
3. ____ Antilock brakes should not be pumped.
4. ____ Alcohol is a major cause of motor vehicle accidents.
5. ____ Allergy medications can affect your ability to drive safely.
6. ____ It is illegal to leave the scene of a car accident in which there is an injury.
7. ____ If a driver cuts you off, the best approach is to teach them a lesson by cutting them off.
8. ____ Seatbelts should be worn only when traveling at high speeds.
9. ____ When traveling by car or on foot to a client, planning the best route is important.
10. ____ Pedestrians in crosswalks always have the right of way.

Choose the best answer

11. The following **should not** be used when driving.
 - a. alcohol
 - b. cold pills
 - c. marijuana
 - d. all of the above
12. The overall stopping distance of a car traveling 60 mph is approximately
 - a. 50 feet
 - b. 105 feet
 - c. 240 feet
 - d. 610 feet
13. When driving you should have
 - a. your license
 - b. your registration
 - c. your insurance ID
 - d. all of the above
14. To avoid road rage do not
 - a. make obscene gestures
 - b. block the passing lane
 - c. tailgate
 - d. all of the above
15. If the accelerator pedal sticks while driving
 - a. shift to neutral
 - b. brake, signal and move off road
 - c. get off the road and turn off the ignition
 - d. all of the above
16. It's safe to drive in another driver's blind spot
 - a. if you have a bright colored car
 - b. on a four lane highway
 - c. during daylight hours
 - d. never
17. The following systems should be checked regularly
 - a. brakes
 - b. cooling
 - c. exhaust
 - d. all of the above
18. Conditions that require special care when driving are
 - a. wet roads
 - b. icy roads
 - c. winding roads
 - d. all of the above
19. When a school bus is stopped with its red light flashing, you must stop if
 - a. you are driving behind the bus
 - b. you are driving toward the bus
 - c. you plan to turn in front of the bus
 - d. all of the above
20. Things that are good ideas when walking
 - a. plan your route
 - b. face the traffic when walking in a roadway
 - c. try to stay in well-lit areas
 - d. all of the above