



**TLC Training Program for  
Driver Trainees  
Updated February 10, 2022**

TLC will not approve any drivers for hire without prior experience and training. Each driver screened through TLC must have at least 6 months of experience or the equivalent with an approved Truck Driving School. Some of the qualifications may vary depending on the type of tractor/trailer driven, length of training through the driving school, and the driving curriculum.

The trainer must have 5 years of over-the-road experience, and no moving violations or accidents within the previous 3 years to be considered a driver trainer.

**The *minimum* training program for new Trainees will consist of either a 4 or 8 week program as determined by the TLC Risk Management Department.** The program must be administered by our clients and must include the training as required by TLC for Injury Prevention, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration on driver qualification requirements, hours of service, driver wellness, and whistle blower protection. A copy of the driver's training certificate must be placed in the driver's personnel or qualification file.

*(Keep in mind that the process MUST be documented and signed-off and dated by the trainer and Trainee, otherwise it cannot be considered valid).*

**I. Week 1**

**1. Classroom Instruction**

**a. Injury Prevention**

Trainees must receive training on Slips, Tips and Falls, Material Handling, and Motor Vehicle Accidents. This can be achieved by watching the TLC Injury Prevention DVD and/or reading the Injury Prevention Driver Guidebook and completing the quiz.

**b. Flatbed Safety (Flatbed Carriers only)**

Instruct Trainee on how injuries occur working on and around a flatbed. This can be achieved by watching the TLC Flatbed DVD and/or reading the Flatbed Driver Guidebook and completing the quiz.

**c. Trainee qualification requirements**

Instruct Trainee on medical certification, medical examination procedures, general qualifications, responsibilities, and disqualifications based on various offenses, orders, and loss of driving privileges (Part 391, subpart B and E).

**d. Hours of service of drivers**

The limitations on driving hours, the requirement to be off-duty for certain periods of time, record of duty status preparation, and exceptions (Part 395). Fatigue countermeasures as a means to avoid crashes.

**e. Driver wellness**

Basic health maintenance including diet and exercise. The importance of avoiding excessive use of alcohol.

**f. Whistleblower protection**

The right of an employee to question the safety practices of an employer without the employee's risk of losing a job or being subject to reprisals simply for stating a safety concern(29 CFR 1978).

**2. Orientation**

- a. Perform regular trainee orientation.
- b. Introduce trainee to the trainer.

**3. Safe Operating Procedures**

- a. Trainee must know that safety is the number one priority.
- b. Trainee must know that Safety Belt usage is mandatory.
- c. No task should be done unless it can be done safely.

**4. HAZMAT (if applicable)**

- a. Provide the required HazMat training. During orientation let the trainee know of special precautions he/she may have to take *in addition to* the CDL Requirements/Training.

**5. Coupling/Uncoupling**

- a. Review coupling/uncoupling procedures.
- b. Explain any special precautions that may need to be taken at certain customer or companyloading locations.

**6. Trip Planning**

- a. Verify the trainee can properly plan trips so that their logs are correct, and loads are on time.
- b. Trainees need to take into account fuel stops, equipment service, road conditions, tolls, lengthof load and available hours of driving. The dispatchers must assist them in this process.

**7. Pre/Post Trip Inspection**

- a. Trainees must know how to complete their inspection forms.
- b. Trainees know how to and be instructed to report mechanical problems to the maintenanceemployees *in writing*.

**8. Enter/Exiting the Truck**

- a. Make sure the trainee knows the proper way to enter/exit the truck and trailer. **(Three points of contact! No exceptions)**.
- b. This must be monitored closely during the training process. The employee must always enterand exit the truck properly.

**9. Material Handling**

- a. If the Trainee handles freight, the trainee must know the proper procedures to minimize risk of injury and damage.
- b. If forklifts, hand dollies, pallet jacks, etc. are used, the trainee needs to know how

to operate them safely and correctly and receive proper training/certifications when required. Trainee CANNOT operate a forklift unless he/she is certified.

- c. If the trainee is required to do any lifting or other material movement, they must do it properly and safely. This must be monitored closely during the training process and the trainee must always lift and move materials properly.
- d. Trainee must be able to recognize overage, shorted and damaged freight, and know the procedures for reporting questionable freight.

#### **10. Dispatch**

- a. Inform the trainee who to call, when to call, and what information to have available.
- b. Provide them with a list of these phone numbers and specific company procedures.

#### **11. Customer Interaction**

- a. Inform the trainee of the right attitude and appearance when dealing with shippers, consignees, dispatch, and the public.

#### **12. Weight Limits**

- a. Trainee needs to know how much weight he/she can haul legally and how to properly scale their load.
- b. Trainee needs to know who to contact when overweight and consequences for hauling overweight.
- c. Instruct trainee on the proper way to slide the 5<sup>th</sup> wheel or trailer tandems to move weight.

#### **13. Interstate Driving**

- a. Initially have the trainee do their driving on a non-congested interstate during the daylight hours.
- b. Never put the trainee in a situation where he/she feels uncomfortable.
- c. The trainee needs to practice proper space management when driving on the interstate.

## **II. Week 2**

1. Continue with previous 13 steps shown in Week One.
2. Backing Up
  - a. Start in easy locations with no trailers on either side.
3. Driving in Adverse Weather
  - a. Discuss driving in wet conditions.
  - b. Also, discuss hazards in winter conditions. The trainee might not have any experience with winter driving.
4. Defensive Driving
  - a. Explain the proper way to make left and right turns, using mirrors, and parking.
  - b. Explain the Smith System of Defensive Driving.
    - i. **Aim High in Steering**



Look 15 seconds into your future. (Don't just look at the vehicle in front of you)

**ii. Get the Big Picture**

Look for Hazards. (Other motorists, pedestrians, vehicle doors opening)

**iii. Keep your Eyes Moving**

Don't stare. (Use your peripheral vision and STOP the fixed habit stare)

**iv. Leave Yourself an Out**

Monitor the space cushion around you.

**v. Make sure They See You**

Use your signals (Directional, 4-ways, head lights, brake lights, horn, hand signals) and

*Make Eye Contact.*

**5. Increase Highway Driving Time and Responsibilities**

- a. The trainee should gradually be increasing their highway driving time as they progress.
- b. The trainee should be able to complete all paperwork, take dispatch, and plan their route for each trip.

**6. Secondary Highway Driving**

- a. Driving on two-lane roads must be reviewed in detail, and the use of these roads must be minimized as much as possible.
- b. Review passing, reduced speed in curves, slow moving vehicles, town speed limits, school crossings, bike riders, joggers, railroad crossings, road crown etc.

**7. Mountain Driving**

- a. Let the trainee watch you drive through the mountains first.
- b. Discuss proper gear selection going up and down hills. Also, talk about proper brake adjustments and usage in the mountains.
- c. Discuss how weather can change quickly, how to judge road conditions, how to get road reports, the proper use of engine retarders and the location and use of runaway truck ramps.

**8. Preventive Maintenance**

- a. Trainee must understand the preventive maintenance mileage program.
- b. Trainee must know how to write up defects of equipment and how to get repairs, either through actual use, or during pre or post trip inspections.
- c. Trainee must know break down procedures and tire policies.

**9. Blocking, Bracing, and Load Securement**

- a. Trainee must know the proper way to secure loads on each type of trailer he/she will be using.
- b. If the trainee will be securing loads on a flatbed, he/she needs to know the importance of working safely on flatbeds. This must be monitored closely during the training process, and periodically thereafter. The employee must always take their time and work safely on a flatbed trailer, especially when positioning loads and tarps,

- and with proper securement (with straps, bungee cords, etc.).
- c. If the trainee is going to be tarping loads, he/she needs to know the importance of safety while tarping. Trainees need to be thoroughly instructed and monitored closely during the training process. The employee must always work safely while tarping a load, as this causes a variety of injury types, including strains, falls and struck-by/against incidents.
  - d. Trainee must know the proper way to unsecure loads for each type of commodity hauled, especially if a crane is required for unloading.

**III. Week 3**

1. Trainee needs to take total control of the truck.
  - a. However, do not let the trainee do anything where they are not comfortable.
2. All the above procedures MUST be followed and documented.

**IV. Week 4**

1. Continued practice with the trainer.
2. The trainer must approve the Trainee.
3. A Trainee evaluation form must be completed (see attached).
4. A road test must be given by someone other than the trainer to determine the Trainee's competency on-the-road.

## **Eight-Week Driver Training Program**

### **V. Weeks 5-7**

1. Review the past 4 weeks and provide additional training on any function needing improvement.
2. Increase driving time for trainee.

### **VI. Week 8**

1. Allow Trainee to take complete control of load from pickup to delivery.
2. The trainer must approve the Trainee.
3. A Trainee evaluation form must be completed (see attached).
4. A road test must be given by someone other than the trainer to determine the Trainee's competency on-the-road.