



PACIFIC COAST
TREE EXPERTS

Driving Safety Program

2023

Pacific Coast Tree Experts

Defensive Driving Policy

Policy Statement:

Pacific Coast Tree Expert (PCTE) is committed to ensuring the safety of all employees, contractors, and the public while operating company vehicles.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for defensive driving practices that prioritize safety, reduce accidents, and protect the well-being of employees, contractors, and the public.

Scope:

This policy applies to all individuals operating company-owned, leased, or rented vehicles, including employees, contractors, and authorized users.

Policy Guidelines:

Defensive Driving Training:

- All drivers, including new hires, shall receive comprehensive defensive driving training upon joining PCTE.
- Refresher defensive driving training shall be provided annually.

Safe Driving Practices:

- **Safe Following Distance:** Drivers shall maintain a safe following distance behind the vehicle in front of them, allowing sufficient time to react to unexpected situations.
- **Speed Limit Compliance:** Drivers shall adhere to posted speed limits and adjust their speed to road and weather conditions when necessary. It is essential to respect both posted speed limits and safe driving practices.
- **Temporary Exceedance:** Drivers may temporarily exceed posted speed limits by up to 10 MPH for a maximum of 30 seconds only when necessary for safe overtaking or maneuvering. After exceeding speed limits temporarily, drivers must promptly return to posted speed limits. Responsible and safe driving practices must always be followed.
- **Maximum Speed Limits:** The maximum allowable speed for company vehicles varies based on the type of vehicle and the posted speed limit. ***Note: the maximum allowance speeds are not negotiable, even with the temporary exceedance policy in place.***
- **Avoiding Distractions:** The use of hand-held devices, including texting or talking on the phone, is strictly prohibited while operating a company vehicle. This prohibition extends to the use of hands-free cellphones and wireless accessories, such as Bluetooth devices.

While driving a company vehicle, the following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Making and answering phone calls
 - Sending texts or emails by speaking into the device.
 - Setting up or using GPS.
 - Using other apps or programs on the device.
- **Full Stop at Stop Signs:** Drivers are required to come to a complete stop at all stop signs without exceptions. This strict adherence to the rule is fundamental, ensuring the safety of all road users and upholding full compliance with traffic laws.

Passenger Responsibilities:

- Passengers also share the responsibility for identifying and addressing any unsafe behaviors or conditions during a trip. If they observe any unsafe behavior or actions by the driver or other team members that could compromise safety, it is the passenger's duty to speak up and to apply their work stop authority. Passengers will be coached and may receive disciplinary action if they fail to report safety violations committed by the driver or any other team member.

Vehicle Maintenance:

- Drivers are responsible for ensuring that the assigned vehicle is in safe operating condition. Any defects or issues must be reported immediately for maintenance.

Vehicle Housekeeping:

- Good housekeeping is important to prevent incidents such as slips, trips, and falls.
- Vehicles should be organized and free of clutter to include: any item(s) rolling freely on the floor of the driver or crew-cab areas, dash area, trash and discarded food, empty drink cans, bottles and containers.
- A trash bag should be maintained on every vehicle.

Adherence to Traffic Laws:

- All drivers shall obey traffic laws and regulations at all times. Seat belts must be worn by all occupants of the vehicle whenever the vehicle is in motion. If the seat belt is a shoulder-type belt, occupants must wear the strap in front of their shoulder – not under their arm.

Weather Conditions:

Drivers shall exercise extreme caution and adapt their driving behaviors in response to adverse weather conditions, including but not limited to rain, snow, or fog. The safety of all road users is priority during such conditions, and responsible driving practices are essential to mitigate risks.

- **Rain:** When driving in rainy conditions, drivers should be particularly vigilant. Reduced visibility and slippery road surfaces require a significant reduction in speed. It is crucial to maintain a safe following distance from the vehicle ahead and ensure that braking and acceleration are gradual and controlled. Windshield wipers and headlights must be in proper working condition and used effectively to maintain visibility. In heavy rain, consider pulling over safely and waiting until conditions improve if visibility becomes severely compromised.

- **Snow:** Snowy conditions demand the utmost caution from drivers. Reduced traction and the potential for icy patches necessitate significantly lower speeds than posted limits. Use snow tires or chains if required, and avoid sudden maneuvers or sharp braking. Drivers should maintain extra following distance and brake early and gently. When navigating snowy or icy terrain, it's essential to anticipate potential skids and regain control with gentle steering.
- **Fog:** Fog can severely limit visibility, making it essential for drivers to slow down and exercise extreme caution. Reduce speed well below posted limits and use low-beam headlights to improve visibility while avoiding high beams, which can reflect off fog and worsen visibility. Maintain a larger following distance, as it may be challenging to see the vehicle ahead. Listen for the sounds of nearby traffic and use caution when passing or changing lanes.
- **Other Adverse Conditions:** In addition to rain, snow, and fog, drivers should be alert to other adverse weather conditions such as sleet, freezing rain, and hail. These conditions may require even further reductions in speed and heightened vigilance. Always be prepared to adapt to changing weather conditions and prioritize safety above all else.

Additional Defensive Driving Guidelines for the Driver:

Intersections, Backing, Front-End, and Rear-End Collisions:

- Drivers must master safe maneuvers and maintain safe following distances to minimize the risk of collisions at intersections.
- Before operating any company vehicle, a crew member must perform a 360-degree walk-around inspection to ensure there are no hazards, persons, or objects that could lead to an incident.
- When backing up, drivers should exercise caution, especially in crowded or confined spaces, to avoid accidents. It is mandatory a spotter must be used whenever a vehicle is being backed-up, regardless of a chipper or trailer being attached. This requirement is for multi-person crews in which the second employee must always assist the driver in backing-up the vehicle.
- When there is a single person, extra caution must be used to ensure the backing operation is safe. Scan all sides and if needed, safely exit the vehicle to better scan the parking location, and then slowly back into it. After parking, a cone should be placed at the rear of the vehicle and a 360-degree walk-around must be conducted before backing out of the parking space.
- Front-end and rear-end collisions can be prevented by staying alert, maintaining safe following distances, and adjusting speed as needed to react to changing traffic conditions.

Passing, Being Passed, Changing Lanes, Railroad Grade Crossings, and Oncoming Traffic:

- When passing or being passed by other vehicles, drivers should exercise good judgment and anticipate the actions of other drivers. Changing lanes should be done safely with the use of indicators, checking blind spots, and ensuring that there's enough space to merge. Extra caution is required at railroad grade crossings to ensure there are no approaching trains and

to cross safely. Consider a train is three feet wider on both sides than the track it's traveling on. When faced with oncoming traffic, drivers must prioritize safety by yielding the right of way when necessary.

- On two-lane roadways with more than five vehicles behind our vehicles, the driver should find a safe location to pull over and allow the following traffic to pass.

Turning, Pedestrians, and Extreme Weather:

- Safe turning practices are crucial, especially at intersections. Drivers must yield to pedestrians and exercise caution to avoid accidents. During extreme weather conditions, such as heavy rain, snow, or fog, drivers should reduce speed and increase following distances to ensure safe driving. Extra vigilance is required to navigate slippery roads and maintain control of the vehicle.

Night Driving:

- **Fatigue Awareness:** Night driving presents unique challenges, and drivers must be particularly cautious. Fatigue awareness is vital, and drivers should be attentive to signs of fatigue, such as drowsiness or reduced concentration. If fatigue sets in, drivers must prioritize safety by resting promptly to avoid accidents.
- **Reduced Visibility and Poor Lighting:** Reduced visibility and poor lighting conditions at night necessitate a reduction in speed and heightened alertness to potential hazards on the road.

Road Conditions and Hazards:

- Drivers must exercise caution in various road conditions and when faced with hazards. In construction zones, drivers should follow posted signs, reduce speed, and be aware of construction equipment and workers. When encountering road hazards such as debris, potholes, or icy patches, drivers should take appropriate actions to avoid accidents. Managing one's physical and mental well-being is essential to remain alert and focused while driving.
- When an animal is observed, do not swerve the vehicle; brake in a straight direction attempting to stop before making contact.

Following Distance and Speed:

- Maintaining safe following distances is critical to prevent rear-end collisions and provide adequate reaction time in emergencies. Drivers should avoid tailgating and adhere to posted speed limits, adjusting their speed to road and weather conditions when necessary. Responsible and safe driving practices, including speed management, must always be followed to minimize accidents and ensure safety on the road.

Entering and Exiting Highways, Curves, and Turns:

- Safely entering and exiting highways requires drivers to merge and exit with caution, using turn signals and ensuring they have enough space to merge safely. Navigating curves and turns should be done cautiously, adjusting speed as needed to maintain control of the vehicle and prevent accidents.

Driver Monitoring:

As part of our commitment to a culture of safety and responsible driving practices, PCTE has integrated advanced onboard cameras and GPS systems into our company vehicles for the continuous monitoring of safe driving practices. As an integral component of our Defensive Driving Policy, we have established a alert system within our GPS technology. This alert system is designed to ensure safety by promptly notifying management when specific safety thresholds are reached. These thresholds include: Hard Cornering, Hard Acceleration, Hard Braking, and incidents of Speeding. This comprehensive approach allows us to proactively address deviations from safe driving practices, ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees, contractors, and the public.

Unauthorized Use:

The use of Company vehicles by any non-Company or unauthorized employees is strictly prohibited. Any employee driving a Company vehicle is expected to use that vehicle only in the performance of the requirements of the job assignment. After fulfilling duties, the vehicle SHALL be parked until either emergency storm call-out or regular workday scheduling resumes duties. Any unauthorized use of company equipment is strictly prohibited.

Reporting Incidents:

All accidents, incidents, or near misses involving company vehicles must be reported promptly to supervisors or management.

Enforcement:

PCTE is dedicated to promoting a culture of safety and responsible driving. Failure to comply with the Defensive Driving Policy may result in disciplinary action, including additional training, warnings, or, in severe cases, termination of employment.

Disciplinary actions will be categorized into three levels based on the risk level posed by the violations:

- **Level 1 - Low-Risk Violations:** These violations have a low potential for causing harm and may include minor safety infractions and low-impact incidents. Disciplinary measures may include verbal warnings, counseling, additional training, or performance improvement plans.
- **Level 2 - Moderate-Risk Violations:** These violations pose a moderate risk and may encompass incidents involving safety procedures, moderate accidents with limited injuries, or repeated low-risk violations. Disciplinary measures may include written warnings, retraining, suspension of driving privileges, or performance probation.
- **Level 3 - High-Risk Violations:** These violations have a high potential for causing significant harm, including high-consequence accidents or incidents. Disciplinary measures may include suspension, extended probation, or termination, depending on the severity and impact of the violation, with a particular focus on violations associated with high-consequence accidents or incidents.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness in promoting safe driving practices. Any necessary revisions will be made to align with best practices and legal requirements.

Pacific Coast Tree Experts

Progressive Driving Discipline Policy

Purpose:

This Progressive Driving Discipline Policy establishes a structured disciplinary framework to align disciplinary measures with the level of risk posed by employee actions, with a specific focus on high-consequence accidents or incidents occurring during driving responsibilities.

Scope:

This policy applies to all company employees engaged in driving activities as part of their job responsibilities.

General Principles:

1. **Risk Proportionality:** Disciplinary measures will be proportionate to the risk posed by the violation, with a stronger emphasis on addressing violations linked to high-consequence accidents or incidents.
2. **Progressive Approach:** A progressive approach to discipline will be consistently followed, emphasizing corrective actions, preventive measures, and opportunities for improvement.
3. **Severity-Based Discipline:** Violations associated with high-consequence accidents or incidents will result in more severe disciplinary actions to mitigate future risks effectively.

Disciplinary Actions:

Disciplinary actions will be categorized into three levels based on the risk level posed by the violations:

Level 1 - Low-Risk Violations:

These violations have a low potential for causing harm and may include minor safety infractions and low-impact incidents. Disciplinary measures may include verbal warnings, counseling, additional training, or performance improvement plans.

Level 2 - Moderate-Risk Violations:

These violations pose a moderate risk and may encompass incidents involving safety procedures, moderate accidents with limited injuries, or repeated low-risk violations. Disciplinary measures may include written warnings, retraining, suspension of driving privileges, or performance probation.

Level 3 - High-Risk Violations:

These violations have a high potential for causing significant harm, including high-consequence accidents or incidents. Disciplinary measures may include suspension, extended probation, or termination, depending on the severity and impact of the violation, with a particular focus on violations associated with high-consequence accidents or incidents.

Specific Examples:

Note: The following are illustrative examples, and disciplinary measures should be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the principles and levels outlined above.

Low-Risk Violations:

Low-risk violations encompass actions that have a lower potential for causing harm but still require corrective measures. These actions may include but are not limited to the following:

- ✗ Failure to complete D.V.I.R
- ✗ Harsh driving behaviors
- ✗ Driving drowsy
- ✗ Failure to come to a complete stop
- ✗ Near collision – At-Fault
- ✗ Inadequate following distance
- ✗ Not giving the right-of-way
- ✗ Mirror use
- ✗ Failure to scan the road
- ✗ Open laptop while driving
- ✗ Distracted by a communication device
- ✗ Distracted by an electronic device
- ✗ Smoking or vaping inside company truck
- ✗ Exceeding a safe speed for the current road conditions
- ✗ Performing unsafe and unnecessary maneuvers
- ✗ Unsafe lane change
- ✗ Minor vehicle damage due to negligence
- ✗ Other distraction(s)
- ✗ Other concern(s) to driving behavior
- ✗ Other violation(s)

Low-Risk Discipline Plan	
1st Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form.
2nd Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • A mandatory 30-minute driver training video.
3rd Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • A mandatory 1-hour driver training video.
4th Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • A Ride-along assessment with the Safety Department. • Vehicle parked at the yard for a period of 30 days <i>(Applies to employees who take their vehicle home).</i>
5th Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • Vehicle parked at the yard for a period of 45 days <i>(Applies to employees who take their vehicle home).</i> • Could result in possible suspension or termination.

Moderate-Risk Violations:

Moderate-risk violations present a significant potential for safety concerns and may include but are not limited to the following actions:

- ✗ Mobile device - Handheld
- ✗ Falling asleep
- ✗ Failure to use a spotter – when 2 or more employees in vehicle
- ✗ Distracted driving
- ✗ Failure to stop at a red traffic light
- ✗ Failure to stop at a stop sign
- ✗ Failure to wear a seatbelt properly
- ✗ Exceeding the posted speed limit by 10mph or more
- ✗ Sleeping in the truck while on company time
- ✗ Collision – At-Fault (vehicle drivable)
- ✗ Animal strike – At-Fault
- ✗ Moderate vehicle damage due to negligence
- ✗ Moderate accident without severe injuries.
- ✗ Repeated safety procedure violations.
- ✗ Continued low-risk violations after Level 1 - Low-Risk Discipline interventions

Medium-Risk Discipline Plan	
1st Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • A mandatory 30-minute driver training video. • Consideration of Ride-along assessment with the Safety Department.
2nd Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • A mandatory 1-hour driver training video. • Vehicle parked at the yard for a period of 30 days <i>(Applies to employees who take their vehicle home)</i>.
3rd Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • A 3-day Suspension. • Vehicle parked at the yard for a period of 45 days <i>(Applies to employees who take their vehicle home)</i>. • A face-to-face meeting with the District Manager and Safety Director, Vice President, or higher. • Possible demotion or termination.
4th Offense (Same Offense)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termination. Those who are terminated may reapply after a mandatory waiting period of 90 days.

High-Risk Violations:

High-risk violations present a substantial potential for severe harm, including high-consequence accidents or incidents. These violations demand the most rigorous disciplinary actions to safeguard the safety of all road users and mitigate future risks effectively. High-risk violations include but are not limited to:

- ✗ Speeding at or over 85mph
- ✗ At-Fault collision resulting in the vehicle being undrivable and towed away
- ✗ Failure to wear a seatbelt while operating the vehicle
- ✗ Unauthorized non-company personnel in the vehicle
- ✗ Violations that directly result in high-consequence accidents or incidents.

High-Risk Discipline Plan	
1st Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a Coaching Form. • Issuance of a Performance Notice. • Filing an Incident Report to record the violation. • Suspension while the violation is under review by Senior Leadership. • Completion of a comprehensive 4-hour driver training video. • Vehicle parked at the yard for a period of 60 days (Applies to employees who take their vehicle home). • A face-to-face meeting with the District Manager and Safety Director, Vice President, or higher. • A Ride-along assessment with the Safety Department to evaluate and address areas of concern. • Possible termination, contingent on the outcome of the review and meeting.
2nd Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated occurrences of high-risk violations will result in the same disciplinary actions as the 1st offense, possible demotion or termination. • Those who are terminated may reapply after a mandatory waiting period of 90 days.

Reporting and Investigation:

All incidents or violations must be promptly reported and thoroughly investigated. The investigation will assess the severity of the violation and its potential risk, especially in cases of high-consequence accidents or incidents.

Appeals Process:

Employees have the right to appeal disciplinary actions. Appeals will be reviewed by a designated authority to ensure fairness and adherence to policy guidelines.

Policy Review:

This policy will undergo periodic reviews to maintain alignment with evolving safety standards and organizational needs, with a specific focus on addressing lessons learned from high-consequence incidents and enhancing risk mitigation strategies.

Communication:

This policy will be effectively communicated to all relevant employees, and necessary training or guidance will be provided to ensure a clear understanding.

Employee Coaching Form

Employee Information

Name: _____

Date of Coaching: _____

Supervisor/Coach Information

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Coaching Session Details

Nature of Coaching: [Driving Behavior / Safety Violation / Performance Issue / Other]

Date and Time of Incident: [if applicable] _____

Description of the Issue

Observations: (Please provide specific observations related to the issue.)

Impact and Consequences: (Explain how the issue impacts safety, performance, or the organization.)

Coaching and Recommendations: (Provide guidance and recommendations for improvement. Offer specific actions or steps the employee can take to address the issue.)

Follow-Up Plan: (If applicable, outline any follow-up actions, deadlines, or future coaching sessions.)

Employee Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received coaching on the issue discussed above. I understand the impact of my actions and the expectations for improvement.

Employee's Signature: _____

Date: _____