

LSUHSC-NO Defensive Driver Course

It is presumed that all LSUHSC-NO employees travel at least occasionally in the performance of their duties, **unless/until specifically exempted in writing by their Supervisor.** If you feel like you do not travel on state business, please click [here](#) for details on how to be removed from the driver safety requirements.

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- The **Defensive Driving** course is designed to both introduce and reinforce safe driving techniques.
- **Target Audience:** State employees whose duties may include driving State owned/rented vehicles or their own Personal Owned Vehicle (POV).
- **Prerequisites:** A properly classed and valid driver's license.
- ***Completion of this course is the first step of a three step process to become qualified to drive on state business or to renew your qualification to drive on state business.***

There are 3 steps:

1. Completing this online course or attend an equivalent classroom course.
2. Completing a Driver Authorization Form (DA 2054) and submit electronically to the LSUHSC-NO Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Department for recordation (only required for new employees).
3. Receiving a satisfactory report on review of your driving record.

- To maintain qualification to drive on official state business, employees must repeat this course every three years.
- You will be prompted by KDS (our online training system) when it is time for you to renew.

- **State (University) Business**- Any legal and lawful activity conducted/engaged in, by an employee or agent of State business, on behalf of and benefiting the state (University) in the course and scope of their duties. Some examples of State business would be if you:
 - Receive mileage reimbursement
 - Commute between campuses/hospitals/clinics during the workday
 - Run work related errands
 - Drive or rent a vehicle to attend job related conferences
- **State Vehicle**- Any licensed vehicle owned, leased and/or rented by the State of Louisiana.

- **High Risk Driver:** Individuals having three or more convictions, guilty pleas, and/or nolo contendere pleas for moving violations or individual having a single conviction, guilty plea, and/or nolo contendere plea for operating a vehicle while intoxicated, hit and run driving, vehicular negligent injury, reckless operation of a vehicle or similar violation within a one year period.

- You and several coworkers must attend a meeting in another office building. John unlocks the doors of the state vehicle and gets in the driver's seat. Mary gets in the front seat and fastens her seatbelt. Dave and you sit in the back seat.
- As John starts to back out of the parking place, his cell phone begins to ring. As John reaches for his cell phone, Mary says, "John, don't you think you ought to ..."

1. Perform a vehicle “walk-around inspection.”
2. Fasten seatbelt.
3. Ensure all passengers have fastened seatbelts.
4. Check/adjust position of all mirrors, seats, and other internal controls.
5. Verify that all passenger doors were closed and locked.
6. Turn off cell phone to prevent distractions.

- Employees are not permitted to use wireless telecommunication devices while driving in state-owned, leased, or private vehicle that is being driven on state business. This includes writing, sending, or reading a text-based communication and engaging in a call. Use of a wireless telecommunication device is permissible for passengers in such vehicles.

Exceptions:

- Report a traffic crash, medical emergency, or serious road hazard.
- Report a situation in which the person believes his/her personal safety is in jeopardy.
- Report or avert the perpetration or potential perpetration of a criminal act against the driver or another person.
- Engage in a call or write, send or read a text-based communication while the motor vehicle is lawfully parked.

- As John reaches for his cell phone, Mary says, "John, don't you think you ought to let that roll to voice mail?"
- John replies, "Well, it might be important!" as he returns his hand to the wheel.
- As Mary starts to reply, Dave interrupts her, "But John, what's more important than everyone's safety? I had a cousin who was hurt in an accident. The other driver was tailgating and wasn't paying attention. Well, she was paying attention, alright... but not to traffic. She was too busy watching the road construction work and hit my cousin so hard he was knocked into the car in front of him. Thank goodness he had his seat belt on or he would have had more than just bruises."

More than seven out of ten drivers rate themselves as better than average drivers. However, nine out of ten vehicle accidents are caused by driver error.

How do you rate yourself?

1. Outside person, object, or event
2. Adjusting the radio/CD player
3. Other passengers
4. Unknown distractions
5. Objects moving in vehicle
6. Other device or object.
7. Adjusting vehicle climate controls
8. Eating and drinking
9. Using or dialing cell phone
10. Smoking
11. Aggressive drivers

"I know about tailgating! Look at that jerk behind me. He doesn't have a clue about following the two second rule!" John grumbles.

"Two second rule? What's that?" you ask.

"The two second rule is really important and easy to remember," Mary answers. "See that shadow from the billboard over the road? When the car in front of us comes out of the shadow, start counting one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two. If our front bumper enters the shadow before we get to one-thousand-two, then John is following too closely. But that's just the rule under good driving conditions."

You can't do much about stop-and-go traffic, but you can stop tailgating. A pattern of "rabbiting" through traffic with sudden stops and squealing accelerations wastes ten percent of your fuel and increases wear on tires and brakes.

- **Four factors that should *increase* the time in the two second rule are:**
 - **Weather**: fog, rain, ice, sleet, snow
 - **Road conditions/construction**: potholes, debris, barricades, lane shifts, highway workers, equipment, changing road composition
 - **Lighting conditions**: day/night, glare from sunrise/sunset
 - **Poor vehicle condition**: improper use of a trailer, loose material(s) falling off vehicle

"Just let him go around you, John," Mary continues. "You never know what kind of driver he is! The newspaper recently did a series about impaired driving. Did you know that other types of driving impairments are just as dangerous as driving while drunk? One of the articles I read talked about how some over-the-counter medications could impair your driving as much as some prescription drugs.

- An impaired driver is one that is unable to effectively drive due to drugs, alcohol, sleep deprivation, or other factors.
- Every 30 minutes someone is killed by a drunk driver and every 2 minutes someone is injured.

"Yeah," you say, "you don't need to be messed up to be a dangerous driver."

"I remember when I was a student worker," said Dave. "The guy before me was fired because he got too many traffic tickets."

"Really?" you ask. "Just for too many tickets? What did he do, get a DWI?"

"No," Dave said, "he just had a lead foot. I think he got three tickets for speeding in less than six months. He was a high risk driver. When I heard about that, I started paying a lot more attention to the speed limit signs!"

Mary asks, "John, isn't that our exit up there?"

"Yeah, it is, and I need to get over," John replies while trying to change lanes.

- It is illegal to pass (or make a lane change) when:
 - There are solid lines on the roadway,
 - There is a sign prohibiting passing,
 - Traveling over hills or around curves,
- When completing a pass or merge, it is safe to change lanes when the front grill of the vehicle you are passing is visible in your rear view mirror.

- Passing and merging are similar in nature and can be two of the most dangerous maneuvers while driving. Interacting with many other vehicles and changing driving conditions can be very dangerous.
- Before considering passing, ask yourself, "***Is it worth it?***"

The exit John needs is just ahead. He is driving on a six-lane interstate in the center lane. He needs to take a right-hand exit. The first thing John needs to do prior to getting over is put his blinker on. This communicates his intentions to other drivers (and is the law in most states). Next, he should check his mirrors and be aware of blind spots. Finally, he should adjust his speed accordingly and remember to apply the two second rule.

As John takes the exit, Dave says, “I’ve always found it helpful to maintain a reasonable amount of space all around my vehicle, not just in front, sort of a safety buffer or cushion of safety. This can be done by constantly scanning my surroundings. I check my rear view mirror, watch for possible red light runners, look from side to side, and glance at the car immediately ahead and several cars in front of it.”

You speak up. "I've learned several things today about being an alert driver just by listening to y'all. There were several things that were mentioned that I'd forgotten about or wasn't aware of."

"The question I always ask myself when I'm on the road is, 'Is it really worth it?'" Dave counters. "Sometimes people think they have so much to gain from being in a hurry. After what happened to my cousin I always try to maintain a cushion of safety between me and everybody else while driving."

As John arrives at the parking lot, a pedestrian starts walking between the parked cars.

"John," Mary exclaims, "watch out for that woman! She's not paying attention to where she's going."

"I see her. She's not anywhere near the crosswalk, but she is acting like she has the right of way," John replies.

"Sounds like that cushion of safety idea applies to everything around you - including people," you say.

"You know, you're right," John says as he slows for the pedestrian and pulls into a parking place. "I never thought of it that way. I didn't think I was a bad driver, but this trip has made me realize that I can be a more defensive driver."

"Well," Mary says, "now at least you see the importance of defensive driving. After all," she says with a smile, "you did manage to get us here safely!"

- A vehicular accident is defined as any incident in which the vehicle comes in contact with another vehicle, person, object, or animal that results in death, personal injury, or property damage, regardless of: who was injured, what was damaged or to what extent, where it occurred, or who was responsible.
- In the event of accident, we are required to send documentation to the Louisiana Office of Risk Management **within 48 hours of the accident** (weekends included).

- Call the local Police to report the accident and obtain a traffic accident report when available. If the accident involves an LSUHSC-owned vehicle, occurred on LSUHSC grounds, or involved an injury or death, notify University Police at 568-8999 or 568-8270.
- Complete and submit an [on-line fillable DA 2041 form](#) within 48 hours, weekends included (e.g., if the accident occurs at 4:00 P.M. on a Friday, you must submit the DA 2041 by 4:00 P.M. on Sunday). Alternatively, to expedite submittal if the DA 2041 form has been completed by hand, it may be scanned and emailed to DA2041@lsuhsc.edu and 6410StateofLouisiana@sedgwickcms.com

- Include a copy of the local police traffic accident report with the DA 2041 submission. However, if the local police traffic accident report is not immediately available, submit the DA 2041 without it and follow-up later when received. Due to the time constraints on reporting, the DA 2041 can be submitted by either the employee or the supervisor.
- To facilitate timely completion of the DA 2041, keep a hardcopy of the [Vehicle Accident Reporting Quick Guide](#) in your vehicle.
- Completion of the DA 2000 form is not required for vehicle accidents.
- ***Failure of a qualified driver to report any vehicular accident may be cause for suspension of Driver Authorization***

- The supervisor (or safety coordinator, if appropriate) may consider what corrective action(s) may be necessary for accidents.
- Agency heads, or the designee, will review the Accident Report Form, the Uniform Motor Vehicle Traffic Accident Report (police report – if one was completed), and the Driver Authorization Form (DA 2054).
- These requirements must be met whether the vehicle is government, personal or rental.

- Employees are required to immediately report any moving violation(s) or revocation of their driver's license to their supervisor, but no later than the next scheduled work day. The supervisor will then notify EH&S at jwrig9@lsuhsc.edu. Reporting violations applies whether on state or personal/private business, and whether in a state or personal vehicle. "Moving violations" require the completion of remedial driver safety training within 90 days of the violation to maintain "Qualified" driver status.
- "High Risk" violations will result in a minimum 12 month suspension of authorization to drive on official University business. EH&S will notify the individual and their department head or designated official if they require remedial training or are considered "High Risk".
- See the [High Risk Driver Policy](#) for instructions on early reinstatement of driving privileges for operational reasons.

For most employees, *qualifying* to drive on state business is a three step process. For drivers with a license from a state other than Louisiana, there is one additional step.

More information about the driver qualification process is located at:

<https://www.lsuhsca.edu/admin/pfm/ehs/docs/dap.pdf>

1. **Take the Test**- you must score an 80% to receive credit for this training. You may retake the test as many times as you wish.

2. **Electronically complete, sign, and submit the online Driver Authorization DA-2054 form (new employees only)**-

The completed form is sent electronically to the Environmental Health and Safety Department.

- Once your 2054 form is received by EH&S, they will check your driving record (ODR) to confirm that it meets our Insurer's criteria.
- When all steps are complete, the employee will receive an email from EH&S with notification that the employee is "Qualified" to drive. The employee shall provide a copy of this email to his/her supervisor.
- If you send your 2054 form to EH&S and do not receive your email notification within a month, contact Environmental Health and Safety.
- **Note that if an employee becomes designated as high risk the employee and supervisor will be notified by email that the employee is no longer qualified to drive on state business.**
- **Note that if an employee requires remedial training as the result of a moving violation(s) the employee and supervisor will be notified by email that the employee must complete remedial training within 90 days to remain qualified to drive.**

Additional Qualification Step for Out-of-State Driver License Holders

- As an out-of-state license holder, you are required to obtain a CERTIFIED copy of your Official Driving Record (ODR) from your home state and have it sent to LSUHSC EH&S.
- Once your ODR is received and checked by EH&S, you will receive a Qualification email good for 12 months. Provide a copy of this email to your supervisor.
- To maintain qualification, you must have your ODR sent to EH&S annually, 30 days prior to the expiration of your Qualification email. After your ODR is reviewed, you will receive a Qualification email good for another 12 months.

You should now be more aware of safe driving concepts and hazardous situations while driving, including:

- Distracted drivers
- The two second rule
- Tailgating
- Impaired drivers
- High risk drivers
- Merging and passing
- Cushion of safety
- Interacting safely with other vehicles and pedestrians

The next time you get in your vehicle, which one of these techniques will be the first you use?

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Their mission is to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce economic costs due to road traffic crashes, through education, research, safety standards and enforcement activity.

www.libertymutual.com

Liberty Mutual is a good example of the many insurance websites that are available. Contact your own insurer for their internet resources.

<http://responsibility.org/start-a-conversation/drinking-responsibly/virtual-bar/>

Virtual Bar

By entering your sex, weight, number and type of drinks consumed, you can quickly learn how alcohol affects your individual BAC. The Virtual Bar program tells users the blood alcohol concentration.

www.ghsa.org

Governors Highway Safety Association (GSHA)
GSHA is the state's voice on highway safety.

Contact Environmental Health and Safety at:

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