



## INTRODUCTION

If your job description involves delivering food, packages, or other items you play an important role in the community. Being a critical part of society does not make you immune to hazards. However, this lesson will cover the hazards that you should be aware of, the warning signs that could indicate an unsafe situation, as well as safe work practices.



## HAZARDS

How dangerous is it to be a delivery driver? Statistically, delivery drivers rank high on hazardous jobs lists. There are many things that can happen while driving, as well as at the delivery location. Drivers should be aware of their surroundings and be aware of incidents like:

- Slipping, tripping, or falling;
- Back injuries;
- Vehicle accidents;
- Robberies;
- Physical violence; and
- Being murdered.



## WARNING SIGNS

Sometimes it's easy to tell when someone on the road could cause an accident or be a threat to the public. Other times it's less obvious so delivery drivers should be knowledgeable about warning signs to look for in an unsafe condition, whether on the road or at the delivery location. In general, you can tell that a situation may be unsafe if:

- The address that a customer is giving is not showing up as a verified address in the company's system.
- The area where the address is located is known for high incidents of robberies.
- The address given appears on an abandoned buildings list. The list can be obtained from local law enforcement offices or the city.
- The building looks abandoned. Abandoned buildings tend to have overgrown vegetation and the appearance of the outside can be an indicator if someone is taking care of it or not.
- The address does not have any lights on upon arrival.
- A vehicle is obviously following your vehicle.

Please be mindful that this is just a small list of warning signs that could indicate a perilous situation and that there may be more warning signs that exist in your local area. If something seems wrong about an order or location, please speak with your supervisor.

## SAFE WORK PRACTICES

Knowing the warning signs can help you when making judgement calls, but remember that they can only do so much and are not a guarantee of safety. To help minimize your chances of something happening, either on the road or at a location, you can utilize the following safe work practices:



## Driving

Driving is an essential and necessary part of the delivery process. To help minimize your chances of an accident on the road, you should:

- Be sure to get plenty of rest the night before. Drowsy driving can increase your chances of an accident occurring.
- Do NOT drive while under the influences of drugs or alcohol. If you are on a prescription medication that could affect your ability to operate your vehicle safely, please speak with your supervisor.
- Conduct a pre-trip inspection of your vehicle before your shift. For this inspection, you should verify that your headlights, tail lights, and indicators lights are working properly. Additionally, check your tires to make sure they are properly inflated to the manufacturer's recommendations and that they are free of any punctures. When you finish the outside inspection, move into the interior of the vehicle and check the angle of your mirrors. And finally, make sure that you can see out of your windshield, back windows, and side windows.
- If you are driving a company vehicle, conduct inspections in accordance with your company's policies and procedures.
- Pre-program locations into your GPS system prior to getting on the road. If you need to switch or enter an address, do it before you leave for your next delivery or pull over to a safe area either on the road in a neighborhood.
- Do NOT use your cell phone while driving. If you need to call or text, pull over to a safe area either on the road or in a neighborhood.
- Obey all traffic laws.
- Do NOT speed. Remember to adjust your vehicle's speed to the flow of traffic and weather conditions.
- Practice defensive driving. This includes watching the behaviors of other drivers. If you have any questions about defensive driving practices, please speak with your supervisor or refer to our "Defensive Driving Practices" lesson.
- And, remember to use your headlights for night driving.

## Delivering to Locations

When preparing and going out for a delivery, remember to practice awareness and be safety minded at all times. You can use the following tips to help minimize your chances of being a victim:

- Keep your wallet and personal belongings at work in a secured location such as a locker. The only item that you will need should be your driver's license.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry and clothing. If you have any questions about clothing options, please speak with your supervisor. You should wear clothing in accordance with your company's policies.
- Become familiar with your delivery and route.
- Compare the address given to the address listed in your company's system. If the address cannot be verified, please speak with your supervisor.
- If that address is in a known "Hot Spot", please request that the customer charge it over the phone, or if that is not feasible for the client, request that they have exact change. Exact change will help minimize the amount of money that you carry and keep in your vehicle.
- Be aware that statistically, most robberies occur later in the afternoon and evening, typically between 4 PM and 11 PM.
- Be on alert for suspicious people who are loitering around the areas of your deliveries.
- Do NOT carry more money than is absolutely necessary for conducting business. If your company has a minimum money requirement, please carry only that specified amount.
- Keep your vehicle keys separated from all other keys that you may carry on your person.



# DELIVERY DRIVER SAFETY

- Be vigilant when driving by keeping an eye out for vehicles that may be following you while you are en route to your destination.
- It is recommended that you carry a spare cell phone while out on deliveries. Even deactivated phones have the ability to call 9-1-1. Also, make sure that your cell phone is fully charged prior to starting your shift.
- Unless you are getting out of the vehicle for a delivery, it is recommended that you keep your doors locked.
- If something doesn't look or feel right, make sure you do not make the delivery. In situations like this, please call your supervisor and discuss your concerns.
- If it is dark or close to dark, and it is possible, park under a streetlight if you cannot park in an area that is close to your delivery destination. Furthermore, you should avoid parking in isolated areas.
- When you are out of your vehicle, carry yourself with authority. This means walking with your head up, back straight, and walking with confidence. Be aware of slippery or wet surfaces that could cause you slip, trip, or fall.
- Likewise, you should use a cart, dolly, or other mechanical assist to move heavy or large items to help avoid back strains and injuries. If you don't have any of these moving mechanisms, it is recommended that you make multiple trips.
- To help light up dark areas at night, do your best to shine your headlights on the door of the house or apartment building as you near your destination. It is a good idea to use a flashlight to illuminate house numbers and dark areas after you exit your vehicle.
- When you leave your vehicle, remember to take the keys and lock it before approaching the door of the building where you are delivering.
- Do NOT walk behind a dark building.
- Do NOT go to a side door.
- Do NOT go over to someone if you are being called away from plain view by anyone who may be around.
- In locations where you can, do NOT turn your back to the street and keep it against a solid object, such as a wall.
- If you see someone approaching you, keep them at an arm's distance.
- Remember that robbers are looking for easy victims, so to help minimize the chances of being a target, don't flash money during transactions.
- If you have reached the specified amount that you are allowed to carry, it is suggested that you return to your company before going to the next delivery.
- Do NOT deliver to a house or building that looks vacant. If you have doubts about the building's occupancy, please stay in your vehicle and call the customer and ask them to either meet you outside or to turn on the lights.
- If you are feeling threatened and your vehicle comes equipped with a remote alarm, activate the alarm to draw attention to yourself.
- And finally, if you are in an emergency situation, remember to call 9-1-1. If it safe to do so, remain at the scene and wait for the police to arrive.





## Robberies

Robberies are often unpredictable, intense, and frightening situations. Although you may not be able to foresee this happening to you, it is vital that you know beforehand what you can do to keep yourself safe. If find yourself the subject of a robbery, you should:

- Remain calm and cooperate with the suspect by following their directions. Remember that your personal safety comes first in these situations, all other items can be replaced.
- Always assume that the suspect is armed, even if they are not displaying weapons.
- Try to remember what the suspect's facial features and clothing are. These will help you describe the suspect to the police. If you can, try to get a look at the suspect's car, plate number, and the direction of travel after they leave.
- Once the suspect has left, it is recommended that you either return to your vehicle and lock yourself inside or go to safe place.
- Call 9-1-1 as soon as it is safe to do so. When speaking with dispatch, give them as much information as you can, including information on the suspect. You should also tell them:
  - The street address;
  - The gender of the suspect (male or female);
  - The race of the suspect (white, black, Hispanic, etc.);
  - An approximation of the height and weight;
  - Any notable facial features such as hair color and length, and any bits of facial hair such as a beard, mustache, and so on;
  - A description of clothing;
  - A description of any weapons that may have been used during the incident;
  - Direction and method of travel that the suspect used when getting away;
  - A description of any scars, tattoos, or other distinguishable marks; and
  - A description of any jewelry such as rings, necklaces, watches and so on.
- If there were any witnesses, please ask them to remain until police arrive or get their information.
- Do NOT go to your next delivery. Remain on scene to talk to the officers that have been sent to the scene.
- If you are able to do so, and you feel comfortable, it is important that you try to preserve any evidence which the suspect may have left behind or touched. This includes keeping people from picking up any dropped weapons, clothing, and so on that the robber may have left behind after fleeing the scene. If you feel that the situation is unsafe or you do not feel comfortable, please stay in your vehicle until the police arrive.
- When you have an opportunity, call your supervisor, and inform them of the situation. Alert your supervisor to any injuries that you may have.
- And finally, seek medical treatment for any injuries that you experienced during the situation.



## CONCLUSION

In summary, keep in mind that delivery drivers play an important role in the community; but could potentially be exposed to vehicle accidents or criminal activity. When driving, remember to drive defensively. Use your best judgement when making deliveries. And if you find yourself in a robbery, remember that your life comes before anything else.