

SAFE DRIVING IS SERIOUS BUSINESS



Circle of Safety

Safe driving starts before you get in your vehicle. Have you ever wondered why utility vehicles place a cone in the front and rear of their vehicle? Is it to make sure approaching vehicles see them parked there? No, it is for the *Circle of Safety*. When a driver picks up the cones they are required to walk around the vehicle at which time they look to make sure everything is clear and good.

A utility company crew in Arkansas found this young child in the wheel well of their vehicle while conducting a *Circle of Safety* before moving the vehicle. I hate to think what could have happened if the employee had entered the vehicle and drove off without performing the *Circle of Safety*.



Dial in to the task at hand: Driving

Safe drivers frequently scan the area around them and react quickly to what is happening ahead of them. Distracted driving prevents them from performing these essential tasks.

In 2015, 3,477 people died during crashes involving distracted drivers and 14% of these crashes were reported to have involved **cell phone** use as a distraction. However, these numbers are probably low as police rely on information provided by drivers at the scene. The National Safety Council estimates that 27% of all crashes in 2013 involved the use of hand-held or hands-free cell phones.

Risk Level 1 – Listening to the radio (minimal cognitive distraction)

Risk Level 2 – Talking on hand-held or hands-free phone (moderate/significant cognitive distraction)

Risk Level 3 – Using a speech-to-text application (High level of cognitive distraction)

Is there a Disconnect?

In spite of all the research showing any form of mobile phone use is not safe while driving, a large **AAA** survey of drivers showed:



2/3 say using a hand-held phone is unacceptable.



2/3 say using a hands-free phone is acceptable.

7 Action Steps against Distraction

- **Avoid temptation** to talk or text on the phone. Turn off the phone or stow it so it is out of sight and out of mind.
- **Vary your route**, if possible, so everyday routes do not become routine and mundane.
- **Keep your eyes moving**. Every 5-6 seconds make a full mirror sweep with your eyes to ward off mind wandering and stay alert.
- **Keep a safe following distance**. Driver training experts suggest you follow a distance of 3-4 seconds behind the car in front in good weather and more during inclement weather. This rule increases visibility and gives you more time to react

to the traffic in front of you, reducing risk to you, your passenger(s) and the person in front.

- **Clear your mind.** If your mind is on family pressure, your to-do-list or work, you cannot focus on driving. Before you drive, take a moment to focus your mind on the task of driving and getting to your destination safely.
- **Have a plan.** Become familiar with your route and driving plan before you begin to drive and set navigation devices with voice directions before you start driving.
- **Help others help themselves.** When you call someone on their cell phone ask if they are driving. If they say “yes”, tell them you will call them back later or ask them to return your call once they are at their destination. Never text someone you know is driving.

Distracted driving is not a new issue. However, with the ever increasing number of in-vehicle technologies and the growing capabilities of smart phones and other smart devices, today’s drivers are tempted more than ever to take their minds off their driving. The danger increases when drivers take their eyes off the road to text or look at their smartwatch.



Driver’s Safety Program

The State of Arkansas is so concerned with this issue that the Authorization to Operate form now requires you to initial the following statement so UAMS has added the statement to our form:

___ I pledge to end distracted driving, including but not limited to, use of any communication device while driving.

The Driving Safety Tips include:

- **Cellular Devices** – *The use of cellular phones by the driver while the vehicle is in motion is “not allowed”. A.C.A. § 27-51-1504. This includes “hands free” equipment and smartwatches. Communicating on the phone takes your*

attention away from driving, making you less likely to notice hazardous situations.

Attachment 2

UAMS VEHICLE SAFETY PROGRAM
AUTHORIZATION TO OPERATE

UAMS VEHICLES AND PRIVATE VEHICLES ON UAMS BUSINESS

THE FOLLOWING MUST BE COMPLETED AND SIGNED BEFORE AUTHORIZATION TO DRIVE ON UAMS BUSINESS WILL BE GIVEN

Agency Code 129 Department _____ Slot _____

Driver's Name _____ Supervisor _____
(As it appears on your driver's license) (Supervisor's Full Name)

Date of Birth _____/_____/_____
Driver's License Number _____ State Issued _____

Category Vehicle Use: (Check all that apply.)

Permanent car assigned (01)
 Employee drives departmental vehicle (02)
 Employee drives motor pool vehicles (03)
 Employee drives private car on UAMS business (04)
 Employee drives rental vehicle on UAMS business (05)
 Student driving any vehicle on UAMS business (06)

INITIAL Each of the following:
(Forms will be returned if not initialed. Check marks and "X" will not be accepted.)

____ I understand that, as permitted by Arkansas Code Ann. §27-50-906 (6)(A), the Office of Driver Services will notify my employer each time a new violation is added to my driving record. I also understand that my employer has access to my driving record through the SVS System (State of Arkansas Vehicle through Information Network of Arkansas).

____ I understand that because of my driving record I may not be permitted to drive on State business.

____ I will participate in all required Defensive Driving Classes.

____ I will report all accidents that occur on State business to my employer 1) within 24 Hours of the occurrence or by the next working day if the accident occurs in a State vehicle and 2) within 7 working days if the accident occurs in a private vehicle.

____ Have read the Driving Safety Tips handout provided by my employer.

____ I understand that I must maintain liability coverage, as required by State law, on my private vehicle(s) that I drive on State business.

____ I pledge to end distracted driving, including but not limited to, use of any communication device while driving.

You are hereby authorized to obtain my Traffic Violation Record from the Office of Driver Services as permitted by A.C.A. § 27-50-906 and A.C.A. § 27-50-908. This record shall include material normally excluded by A.C.A. § 27-50-802.

Signature of individual appearing below shall constitute consent for the release of such records to the State agency named on this form.

Employee Signature Date

(Email completed form to OHSDriversSafetyProgram@uams.edu or mail to OHS, Slot 617.)

Attachment 2

UAMS VEHICLE SAFETY PROGRAM
DRIVING SAFETY TIPS

▼ **Observe Speed Limits and Traffic Laws** Allow sufficient time to reach your destination without violating speed limits or traffic laws.

▼ **Seat Belts** Each driver and all passengers in any motor vehicle operated on State official business are required by law to wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat belt. Statute: § 27-37-702

▼ **Cellular Devices** The use of cellular phones by the driver while the vehicle is in motion is **"not allowed"**. A.C.A. § 27-51-1504. This includes "hands free" equipment and smartwatches. Communicating on the phone takes your attention away from driving, making you less likely to notice hazardous situations.

▼ **Backing Crashes** Most backing accidents are preventable. Whenever possible, park your vehicle where backing is not required. Know what is feasible and behind your vehicle before you begin to back. Back slowly and check both sides as well as the rear as you back. Continue to look to the rear until the vehicle has come to a complete stop.

▼ **Intersection Crashes** When approaching and entering intersections, be prepared to avoid crashes that other drivers may cause. Take precautions to allow for the lack of skill or improper driving habits of other drivers. Potentially dangerous acts include, but are not limited to, speeding, improper turn movements, and failure to yield the right of way.

▼ **Weather Related Crashes** Rain, snow, fog, sleet or icy pavement increase the hazards of driving. Slow down and be especially alert when driving in adverse conditions. Discontinue use of cruise control in wet or icy road conditions.

▼ **Passing Crashes** When you pass another vehicle, look in all directions, check your blind spots, and use your signal. As a general rule, only pass one vehicle at a time.

▼ **Rear-End Crashes** The driver can prevent rear-end collisions in spite of abrupt or unexpected stops of the vehicle ahead by maintaining a safe following distance at all times. Most crashes can be avoided by maintaining the "four second rule" and following the vehicle ahead at a distance that spans at least four seconds. The following distance should be increased when driving in adverse conditions.

▼ **Security** State vehicles **shall** be locked whenever they are unoccupied.

▼ **Engines** The engine of a State vehicle **shall** always be turned off before the driver exits the vehicle.

If you drive on UAMS business and have not completed the above form, please go to http://www.uams.edu/campusop/depts/ohs/docs/forms/uams_vehicle_safety_program_s_ignup.pdf to complete the form. Whether you drive a person vehicle, a company vehicle or a rental car you have to be in the program if you are driving on UAMS business.

<https://trafficsafety.org/?s=safe+driving+is+serious+business>