

Motor Vehicle Records

Motor Vehicle Record (MVR)

A driver's past driving record provides one of the best clues to his or her future performance as a safe, dependable driver. Drivers with a history of vehicle accidents and traffic violations are likely to continue that pattern. Statistics show that drivers with two or more vehicle accidents or traffic convictions in a three-year period are at least 2 1/2 times more likely to have an accident than the driver with a clear record.

Types of Violations

Violations vary in significance and are categorized as follows:

- Statutory violations may reflect moral hazards and are generally licensing or registration offenses:
 - Operating an unregistered vehicle
 - Using false registration or license
 - Driving while license is under suspension
- Major violations are serious convictions which may indicate a disregard to public safety:
 - Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
 - Reckless driving where bodily injury or property damage results
 - Hit and run
- Moving violations may reflect improper attitudes and poor driving habits
 - Speeding
 - Failure to yield right-of-way
 - Driving too fast for conditions

There is a wide variation among the states in the percentage of accidents and traffic violations reflected on MVRs. On the average, 73% of all convictions and 72% of all accidents involving an injury or a death are found on MVRs.

The fact that MVRs may not identify all accidents or convictions does not diminish their importance. You may question a clear MVR, but a bad driving record is generally an indication of poor driving habits.

How to use MVRs

A check on an applicant's driving record should always be made. Hiring only drivers who have a clear three-year record is difficult, yet this should be the goal in any driver selection program.

If it is not possible to hire an employee with a clear driving record then the number and types of violations, as well as the extent and type of driving involved, must be carefully evaluated to determine which applicants present the lowest driving risk.

Compare the driving records of applicants with the records of current employees performing similar duties. If fleet accident experience is to be improved, only applicants with better histories than those of current employees should be hired.

An applicant whose MVR reflects a major violation such as "Driving Under the Influence" should be immediately disqualified. In evaluating other violations, recent history is more important than past history. The driver who had two or three convictions three years ago, but has no recent convictions, is generally a better risk than the driver that has had convictions within the last twelve months.

MVRs: Part of a Total Program

A policy of checking MVRs of all driver-applicants is invaluable to management; however, such checks do not reduce the importance of other aspects of a driver selection program such as interviews, reference checks and testing.

MVRs should be reviewed for all drivers on an annual basis to verify they are maintaining good driving habits and remain qualified to drive.