

# Everyday Safety

## Tailgate Talks

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# Aggressive Drivers

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Before the outbreak of Covid-19, highway crashes were the leading cause of on-the-job fatalities, accounting for 40 percent of total fatal work injuries. The Department of Transportation estimated that aggressive driving caused two-thirds of traffic accidents. Of the 187 million drivers in the U.S., 53 percent clearly expressed anger to another driver at least twice a year. Currently, there are fewer vehicles on the road, but those that are using the roads seem to be driving more recklessly than usual. If you have employees who spend time behind the wheel, they may be at risk of becoming an aggressive driver, or a victim of one.



## CAUSES

Clogged intersections, tight schedules, and no way out of a jam can turn mere irritation into physical violence. Some common behaviors of other drivers that might elicit anger in an aggressive driver include:

- Tailgating, cutting off, failing to yield, or driving too fast or too slow.
- Distracted driving such as eating or using a cell phone while driving.
- Stealing a good parking space.
- Riding in the passing lane at a slower speed than traffic.
- And don't discount psychology. We have no way of knowing what's going on in our fellow drivers' heads. They may be driving home from a funeral or going to a court hearing.

## SOME SOLUTIONS

You and your driving employees can avoid becoming a victim of an aggressive driver by following a few tips:

- Allow enough time for the trip – it will ease the risk of stress.
- Don't cut off another driver; use your turn signal to indicate your intentions.
- Move over and let faster drivers pass you if you are in the left lane.
- Don't tailgate; allow at least a two-second space between your car and the car ahead.
- Don't make obscene gestures.
- Give aggressive drivers room – steer clear of them.
- Avoid eye contact with aggressive drivers.
- Do not give in to the challenges of an aggressive driver or allow yourself to become one.
- And finally, it never hurts to show a little compassion. Demonstrating patience, even when someone else is in the wrong, can go a long way toward making our roads safer.

### ***Resources and References:***

U.S. Department of Labor  
Bureau of Labor Statistics  
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United States Department of Transportation  
National Transportation Library  
Aggressive Driving: Three Studies  
<https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/40587>

U.S. Department of Transportation  
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