

## SAMPLE – Vehicle Accident Investigation

Disclaimer: The specific needs, practices, form of government and other operational procedures of your governmental entity may impact whether this example is appropriate for your use. PennPRIME recommends that you review the final product before using it, and adapt it as necessary.

**Definition of Accident:** An auto accident is defined as any occurrence in which a company vehicle is in any way involved and which results in personal injury, property damage, or collision *no matter how slight* and regardless of fault.

Determining whether automobile accidents are “Preventable” or “Non-Preventable” by internal standards must be done on a *uniform and impartial* basis. Without clear guidelines, individuals or committees responsible for classifying accidents will not be consistent in their evaluation procedures. Inconsistency in handling cases may create problems with employees who feel that their accidents have been unfairly classified. Basically, there is one question which should be asked in determining avoidability:

“Did our driver take every reasonable precaution to avoid the accident?”

The following questions are organized into groups, which relate to several common accident situations. IF THE ANSWER TO ANY OF THEM IS “NO”, OUR DRIVER WAS NOT DRIVING “DEFENSIVELY” AND THE ACCIDENT SHOULD BE JUDGED “PREVENTABLE” BY INTERNAL STANDARDS, and a corrective action should be documented.

Accident Type	Yes	No	N/A	Possible Corrective Action
<b>Intersection</b>				
Did our driver approach the intersection at a controlled speed which was reasonable for the conditions?				
Was our driver prepared to stop before entering the right of way?				
Did our driver avoid entering an intersection on the amber signal?				
Did our driver follow the precautionary steps required when approaching a flashing red or yellow signal?				
At a blind corner, did our driver approach slowly, with a foot on the brake pedal?				
Did our driver make certain all other drivers were stopping for a traffic light or stop sign?				
Was our driver alert for the turns of other vehicles?				
Did our driver avoid overtaking or passing at the intersection?				
When our driver’s signal changed to green, was the driver sure all cross traffic had stopped before proceeding?				
If the view of cross traffic was blocked by vehicles beside our driver, did our driver remain at a standstill until the view was clear?				
Did our driver signal a change in direction well in advance?				
Did our driver allow oncoming traffic to clear before making a left turn?				
Before turning left, did our driver turn and look to the rear for overtaking vehicles about to pass on the left?				
Did our driver turn from the proper lane?				
If in doubt, did our driver stop?				
Did our driver avoid depending on others obeying traffic signs and signals?				
Did driver obey all traffic signs and signals?				

AccidentType	Yes	No	N/A	PossibleCorrectiveAction
<b>We Pulled From Parked Position</b>				
Did our driver look to the front and rear for approaching traffic immediately before pulling out?				
Did our driver look back, rather than depend upon the rear vision mirrors?				
Did our driver signal before pulling away from the curb?				
Did our driver start out only when an action would not require traffic to change its speed or direction in order to avoid our vehicle?				
Did our driver continue to glance back while pulling out?				
<b>We Hit Other in Rear</b>				
Did our driver adjust speed to the conditions of road, visibility and traffic?				
Was our driver maintaining a safe following distance, for conditions ( <b>a minimum of 3 seconds, more depending on weather, road condition, visibility, etc</b> ) If a vehicle pulled in front of our vehicle, did our driver drop back and re-establish the proper following distance?				
Did our driver approach the green traffic light cautiously, expecting the driver ahead to stop suddenly on a signal change?				
Did our driver allow the driver ahead adequate space, before moving away from a complete stop?				
Did our driver drive on hill and curves at a speed that would allow stopping within the seeing distance?				
Did our driver look ahead of the vehicle for possible emergencies?				
<b>We Backed</b>				
Was it necessary to back? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did our driver have to park so close to the vehicle ahead that backing was necessary when leaving the parking space?</li> <li>Was it necessary to drive into a narrow street, dead-end, alley or driveway from which backing resulted?</li> </ul>				
If our driver could not see where to back: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the driver try to get someone as a guide?</li> <li>Did the driver walk around the vehicle before getting in?</li> <li>Did the driver back immediately after walking around?</li> <li>Did the driver use the horn while backing?</li> <li>Did the driver look to the rear without depending on the rear vision mirrors?</li> </ul>				

AccidentType	Yes	No	N/A	PossibleCorrectiveAction
<b>We Backed (continued)</b>				
If our driver could not see where to back: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the distance was long, did the driver stop, get out, and look around occasionally?</li> <li>Did the driver back slowly?</li> <li>Did the driver judge his backing clearance accurately?</li> </ul>				
<b>We Skidded</b>				
Was our driver traveling at a speed safe for the conditions of weather and road?				
Was our driver keeping a safe following distance?				
Was our driver expecting ice on and under bridges, in gutters, in ruts and near curb?				
Was our driver alert for melted snow that freezes in the shade, on loose gravel, on sand, in ruts, etc.?				
Did our driver keep out of rail tracks, and cross them at a wide angle?				
Were our driver's steering and braking actions proper?				
<b>Pedestrian</b>				
Did our driver tap the horn to alert pedestrians of our vehicle approach?				
Did our driver pass through congested sections anticipating that pedestrians might step in front of the car?				
Did our driver keep as much clearance between our vehicle and parked cars as conditions permitted?				
Did our driver interpret pedestrians' next action or intention correctly before reaching "the point of no return"?				
Did our driver check the location of pedestrians before starting at a green signal?				
Did our driver give all pedestrians the right-of-way?				
Did our driver allow for pedestrians' possible inattention, indecision or defective eyesight or hearing?				
Did our driver refrain from passing vehicles that had stopped to allow pedestrians to cross?				
Did our driver refrain from passing a stopped school bus?				
Was our driver aware of groups of children and prepared to stop in the event they ran suddenly into the street?				
Did our driver account for all children before starting up?				
Did our driver avoid driving over places where children sometimes play such as piles of leaves, large cartons, etc.				
Was our driver alert for signs of children who might run into the path (balls rolling into the street, etc.)?				

Accident Type	Yes	No	N/A	Possible Corrective Action
<b>Pedestrian (continued)</b>				
Did our driver look and make allowances for pedestrians when turning?				
Did our driver expect and allow for pedestrians who might step out from behind or in front of busses?				
Was our driver certain no pedestrian was behind before backing?				
Did our driver drive at a speed that would enable stopping within the range of the headlights?				
Did our driver take the vehicle out of gear when stopped at an intersection?				
<b>Sideswipe</b>				
If there was early indication of erratic driving by an on-coming driver, did our driver immediately begin evasive action?				
Did our driver slow down and drive to the extreme right side of the road and stop?				
<b>Other Hit Us While We Were Parked or Stopped</b>				
Did our driver properly signal their intentions to stop?				
Did our driver avoid coming to a sudden stop?				
Was our driver parked on the proper side of the road?				
Was it necessary to park near an intersection?				
Did our driver have to park on the traveled portion of the highway, or curve or on a hill?				
When stopped for an emergency, did our driver warn traffic with flasher lights, flags or flares?				
Did our driver park parallel to curb (where applicable)?				
Was it necessary to park close to an alley, directly across from a driveway or near a bus stop?				