

15 Minute Manager

Accidents and Incidents

Threats to drivers and passengers come in many forms. Whether accidents or incidents, the driver must act with absolute assurance and practiced knowledge of what to do.

Each threat may have a different response protocol that will be best learned with hands-on experience and mock events that allow drivers to practice what they've learned. This module will serve as a reminder to things learned in previous response trainings and is not intended to be the complete training necessary to prepare drivers to respond safely, quickly, and correctly to an accident or incident.

Accidents and incidents may arise due to:

- Acts of Nature
- Hazardous Materials
- Critical Failure of Equipment
- Criminal Activity
- Terrorism

Additionally, accidents and incidents may arise from drivers, passengers, and the actions of others.

These are often attributed to:

- Failure to be observant and responsive;
- Failure to obey traffic laws;
- Failure of other drivers to obey traffic laws;
- Passenger illness; and
- Obstructive and otherwise dangerous behavior of passengers.

Your organization's policies and protocols must address each of these. These policies should be part of your driver handbook and reviewed at least annually for every driver, dispatcher, and employees directly associated with the transit program. As part of your 15-minute Manager program, you may want to do a single overview of accident and incident policy and then do 15 minutes on each of your related policies. This will assure an thorough understanding of your organization's expectations and allow drivers and staff to ask more specific questions.

There are basic responses that apply to every type of accident or incident. Additionally, there are those that apply to only a specific accident or incident. RTAP training tool: *Emergency Procedures for Rural Transit Providers* (This tool and the associated trainers module would be a very good source for the more in-depth training.) shows the overall response mechanism for each kind of accident or incident.

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The best way to avoid an accident or incident is to prepare not to have them. Vehicle readiness, emergency equipment checks, and personal preparedness can help you avoid most accidents and incidents. Best practice includes:

Pre- Post-trip inspections – These are required and essential to the safety of drivers and passengers and must be done prior to each driver’s shift. These inspections include the wheelchair lift and any ramps and emergency equipment – These include:

- First aid kit
- Biohazard kit
- Fire Extinguisher
- Three emergency triangles
- Seatbelt cutter
- Flashlight with working batteries
- Tools
- Wheel blocks
- Water

Personal Preparedness includes:

- Alcohol and drug free
- Rested and calm
- No urgent or critical health problems
- Aware of weather forecasts and possible threats (wildfire, winter or summer storms, high winds, etc.) including information on regular passengers who require routine assistance and regular passengers who may be experiencing periods of unusual behavior patterns or signs of ill health.

Accidents are events that include a vehicle collision.

Incidents are events that generally involve people including passengers.

Critical infrastructure includes a breakdown of the vehicles or on-board technology, fuel stations or roadways.

Acts of Nature include weather conditions.

Hazardous Materials include spills or exposure (inside or outside the vehicle).

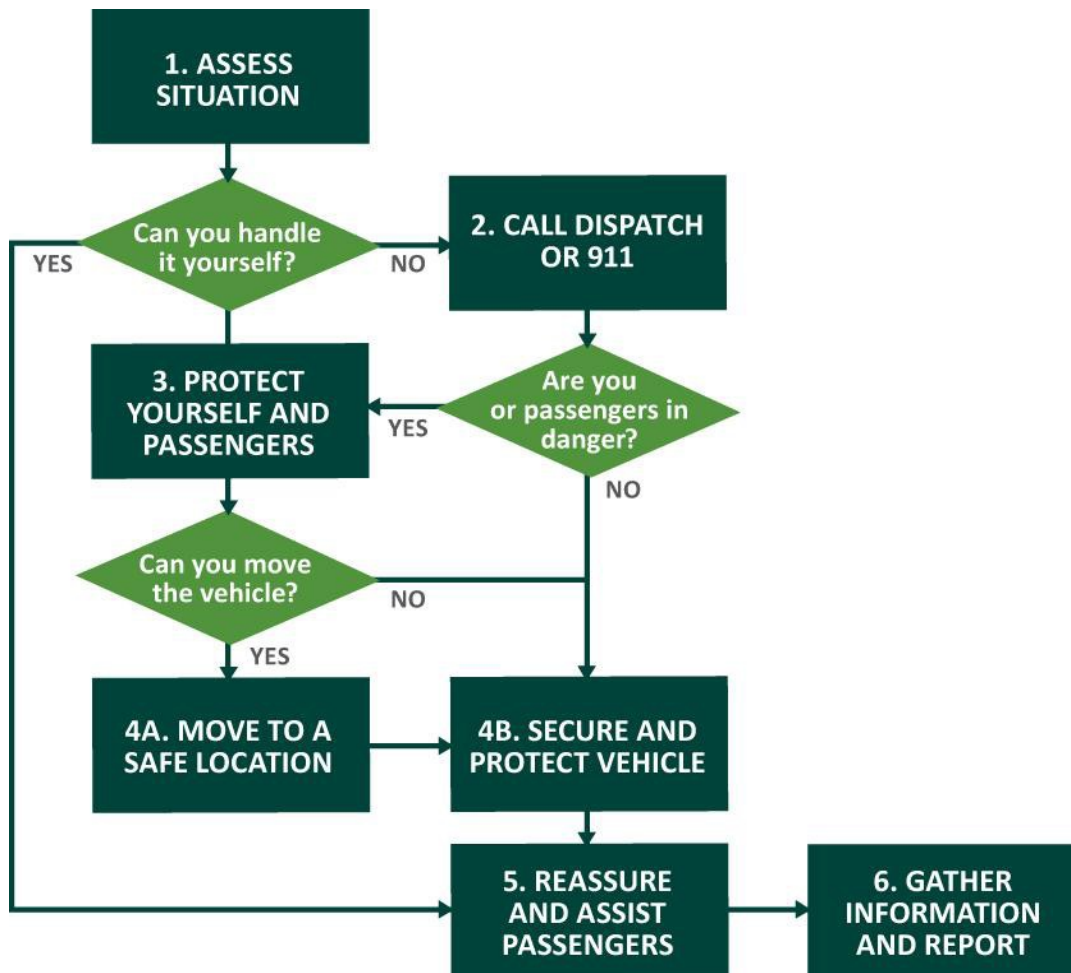
Ask employees to relay any accident or incident stories they experienced while working for the organization. The purpose is to recall the type of incident and how it was handled.

Ask the employee to describe the event, what they were feeling when it happened, and how they reacted. Assure employees this is not a time to judge but rather to have a real-life experience to discuss. Collect one or two stories. If none are offered use one you are aware of or make up a scenario.

At every accident and incident, we must already know the steps we need to take to safely, quickly, and correctly respond.

The seven steps to take in response to threats of all kinds and that each person must be completely familiar with and act on instinctively are:

- Protect yourself;
- Assess the situation;
- Notify dispatcher/request first-aid;
- Protect and assist others;
- Secure the vehicle
- Gather incident information, pictures, and witness reports.
- Complete post-incident report.



Accident Reporting

Handout copies of your accident/incident report policy forms and review with those in attendance. Be sure and cover both policies and each page of each form. You may want to also include sample report forms that have been filled out. Discuss the scenarios and indicate how each entry is important to the

report. Discuss your policy with regard to alerting dispatch, reporting accidents/incidents to law-enforcement (i.e. admit no guilt, taking pictures, etc.) getting passenger statements, and your policy with regard to speaking to media representatives and/or journalists.

The handout should include a cover page that each employee will read and sign stating they've received this training, will read the policies, and have been informed on how to use the forms. Receipts will be collected and kept in training file and employee file.

Resources: RTAP [Emergency Procedures for Rural Providers](#) This resource also comes with a trainer guide. See also: [Incident Management](#)