

Vol. 3

Transportation Safety

INSURANCE BOARD

Creating Safer Places for Ministry





Our Mission:

To support and protect churches and church ministries by offering superior property and casualty risk and insurance management services.

Dear Church Friends,

Our new Loss Control Manual is a complete revision. We hope it will serve you better in your efforts to protect your church. It is broken into major areas of activity, providing you with a working document we hope will become tattered with use. You may also download additional copies at: www.InsuranceBoard.org.

Loss control is a continuous process of research, experience, and education. Attention to loss prevention is also **part of your covenant** with all other participants in the program. Because the IB program is a risk pooling venture, each church has a responsibility to the group to:

- Insure to full value and pay a fair share of premium
- Maintain property and grounds to minimize damage and protect parishioners, employees and visitors
- Professionally manage church ministries and business affairs
- Inform the IB of changes that affect coverage and report claims timely.

To assist you in fulfilling your covenant within the IB family of churches, the Insurance Board keeps you informed. We continuously update our website to provide you current and useful information, and we provide newsletters, posters, checklists, seminars, and webinars in an effort to get pertinent information to you.

Each volume of our new Loss Control Manual contains: guidance for getting started with your safety and protection stewardship; technical information regarding specific areas of concern including People (Vol. 1), Property (Vol 2), Transportation (Vol 3), Youth Activities (Vol 4) and Management (Vol 5); resources to further develop your knowledge or aid your work; and checklists to help you manage the details.

Managing a church property and its many activities is no simple matter. We hope these manuals will make it easier.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive, appearing to read 'CJ Kotheimer', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Carl J Kotheimer, Director, Loss Control and Claims

Getting Started with Loss Control



As a steward of your church you have responsibilities in addition to work and family life. You don't have time for theory and paperwork, so we are going to try to make this as simple and as practical as it can be. In matters of risk you have a few choices:

- **Avoid** the risk – That's not always an option. Your church is committed to certain activities, so you must find a way.
- **Transfer** the risk – Sometimes you can hire it done, or transfer risk under a written contract. You might do it in a lease. Or you can buy insurance for some things.
- **Minimize** the risk – That is, reduce the likelihood that something bad can happen.
- **Mitigate** the risk – Once something bad happens, keep the "damage" to a minimum.

The better part of your stewardship responsibility will revolve around **Minimizing** and **Mitigating**. The activities and mission of your church are a given. Insurance has been purchased for major events, but it does not cover all things. Now you must manage it through.

Whether you operate in committee or individually, the major areas of risk and likely divisions of responsibility include, at least:

- Vol. 1 – Property -- Buildings and Church Property
- Vol. 2 – Protecting People -- Injury prevention and safety training
- Vol. 3 – Transportation -- Vehicle use and driver selection
- Vol. 4 – Youth Activities – Special concerns for youth centered activities
- Vol. 5 -- Management – Church operations and employee management

Some of these overlap, but we created manageable pieces so you can get something done.

Church Vehicles & Drivers: Transportation Safety



To get started, you need to think about the following steps:

- **Process** -- First, how do you get things done? Do you have a process written down or a flow chart? Who is in charge? Who has direct responsibility? How are decisions made?
- **Training** -- Are special skills or knowledge required? How is training conducted? How are records kept? Do volunteers have the needed skills and training?
- **Inspection / Audit** -- How do you make sure that all is well or what needs “fixing”? Who is checking? Who shares the result?
- **Remediation & Resolution** -- How are problems fixed? Are there budgets? Who approves the fix and the expenditure? How is the fix verified? Who shares the information?

We will review these steps in each risk category. Depending on the size and complexity of your congregation, a very simple approach may apply, or something more complex. In some cases it may be as simple as one person taking the initiative and getting approval from trustees along the way. In other cases budgets and planning will be involved. Some projects will take weeks and others will take months.

PROCESS

Transportation needs for churches and camps may range from incidental pick-up and delivery in a passenger sedan to movement of groups in a fleet of buses, and any combination in between. How do you normally get transportation? Do you...

- **Borrow it** – Do you rely on your congregation to volunteer their own vehicles?
- **Hire it** – Do you rent passenger or cargo vehicles or charter buses?
- **Own it** – Do you own vehicles? Do you provide vehicle allowances to full time employees?



Speaking of Insurance -- Laws regarding insurance vary greatly among the 50 states. Many states follow traditional rules about liability, while many states have “No Fault” statutes. When you travel from state to state, the laws apply according to the state in which the accident occurred. For this reason, how insurance responds after an accident can be very confusing. Therefore, be sure to observe the following: (1) be sure your vehicle is insured in the state of registration; (2) never admit liability or make promises to pay for damage after an accident; (3) be certain your insurance ID card is in each of your vehicles; and (4) report accidents to your insurance company immediately. Phone numbers and your policy number are always printed on your Insurance ID card.

Borrowing – Having your members use their vehicles for church activities is convenient and without cost. Their insurance on their vehicles protects the church when others are injured. But if the insurance limit is not enough, the church may be exposed. Adding a “hired and non-owned automobile” endorsement to a general liability policy will close that gap. When borrowing, it is wise to verify that the vehicle is insured and the driver has a valid license. Running a Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) check is important as well.

Hiring – By far, the safest way to provide transportation is to charter a vehicle with a driver. You should expect the vehicle to be suitable and the driver vetted and trained. If you are renting a vehicle and providing your own driver, then much more will be expected. The rental agency may have *minimal* liability insurance. Again, the “non-owned and hired automobile” endorsement is needed. You must now be careful that your driver is properly licensed for the vehicle you are renting. Generally, a vehicle holding 16 passengers or more (including the driver), requires a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). You must check the laws of your state and once again, be sure to run an MVR check. (This service is available at a reduced cost through the IB. See *Safe Church Workbench* on the IB website.)



Owning – Owning and operating a vehicle is much more complicated and implies a higher duty of care in the selection and maintenance of the vehicle, and the selection and training of the driver. The level of financial responsibility assumed is very high, especially concerning children. We advise having written procedures. Be sure to detail specifics for maintenance and driver selection, which need to include minimum standards or qualifications: driving history, experience, and licensing. Be firm in enforcing your standards and run an MVR check regularly.

If you own a **15-passenger van**, additional precautions are in order. Driver selection and loading procedures are critical! These vehicles are notorious for poor handling, and require loading baggage and equipment low and forward. Dispose of this vehicle as soon as practicable, and replace it with, or rent, a small school bus. The roll-over hazard is greatly reduced in the bus, which has a wide rear track and lower center of gravity.

This vehicle, with a high center of gravity, is dangerous in the hands of an inexperienced driver, and when improperly loaded. Luggage stacked high in the rear of the vehicle makes it dangerous.



The dual rear wheels gives this vehicle a wide stance which helps reduce rollovers, and lower its center of gravity. Many 15 passenger vans can be retrofitted with dual rear wheels for safety.





Fifteen Passenger Van Operation Basics:

- Drivers are trained to understand 15-passenger van dynamics
- Load from front to back, including the passengers
- Keep weight low and forward – under seats as possible; below the window line
- Load nothing on the roof
- Carefully check tire pressures at every outing
- Demand operation within speed limits

TRAINING

When your church is providing a driver, you must never assume that experience equates to skill or knowledge of your church's standards. A CDL only provides for a certain level of training regarding the handling of large vehicles. You must communicate your standards regarding speed, use of cell phones and other technology, pre-trip inspection, vehicle loading, passenger behavior, accident reporting, alcohol use, and self-disclosure of adverse driving history. All of your drivers must acknowledge your standards, regardless of their position within your church, because in an accident, your church may be liable whether the driver is a volunteer or an employee.

INSPECTION / AUDIT

For every vehicle you own, you must keep a log book. For every regular driver, you must keep a record. It's as simple as that.

- **Log Book** -- The use of a "log book" for each vehicle permits (1) the last driver to communicate with the next, and (2) the church to plan and verify maintenance. You must set the bar for documentation and hold drivers accountable by their signature. Each driver should log in and out for each use of the vehicle. Drivers should also be expected to inspect the vehicle before and after each use to the best of their ability, and record any findings.



- **Driver Qualification** – You expect your local transportation authority to be careful about the drivers it hires. Your church is no different. Imagine your 6 o'clock news moment: "Did you know that Mr. Jones has had three DUI convictions in the last 5 years?" Especially when transporting children, there is no substitute for extreme prudence ... and an MVR check!

REMEDICATION & RESOLUTION

On tight budgets, regular vehicle maintenance can be a strain, but that's the reason to budget for maintenance! Oil changes, tune ups, tire replacement, and brake service must be a part of regular maintenance. Have a plan for each vehicle. Increase the budget and plan as the vehicle ages to allow for the increased costs associated with older vehicles. Your log book documents what is needed, and what got done, but it's not a plan.

You may have to take a vehicle out of service if its condition requires, or if you don't have a qualified driver. With good documentation you can plan ahead. You may have to rent something from time to time, but that's cheaper than the unexpected towing and repairs, or bruised reputation following an accident with injuries from a faulty vehicle in need of basic maintenance.

YOUR OPTIONS

- **Avoid** -- You can choose to avoid vehicle ownership.
- **Transfer** – You can transfer risk by having the correct insurance, and by choosing chartering over ownership.
- **Minimize** – If you must own or operate a vehicle, you will reduce the chance of loss by applying all of the supervisory steps above.
- **Mitigate** – The ultimate cost of an accident is reduced by seat belt use, and prompt notice of accidents and injury.

Checklist:

The checklist that follows is formatted so that “y” is “okay” and “n” is “not satisfactory.”



PROCESS & MANAGEMENT	Y	N	N/A
Hired and Non-owned Automobiles			
Do you have written procedures for use of volunteer vehicles during church activities, including driver qualifications?			
Do you inspect driver's licenses and insurance cards?			
Do you conduct Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) checks?			
If you have vehicles with a capacity of 16 passenger (or more, with driver), do drivers have a CDL?			
Do you have written procedures on vehicle use, restrictions and safety (ie. cell phones & seat belt)?			
Do you have a "hired and non-owned automobile" endorsement on your insurance policy?			
Owned Automobiles – additional requirements			
Do you maintain individual vehicle log books?			
Do you have written procedures on maintenance?			
Do you have a budget for maintenance?			
Do you have written procedures on driver qualification and training?			
Are drivers required to acknowledge policies and procedures in writing?			
If your insurer requires scheduling of drivers, has driver information been reported to your agent?			
Are drivers required to self-disclose traffic violations?			
Are vehicles equipped with emergency supplies? (ie. first aid kit, fire extinguisher, flares, warning triangles and basic tools)			
TRAINING			
Are National Safety Council Defensive Driving courses provided for regular drivers?			
Is a driver orientation conducted prior to "convoy" trips?			
If 15 passenger vans are owned/hired, is training provided re: the hazards of these vehicles?			
If 15 passenger vans are owned/hired, are instructions given for the proper loading of passengers and luggage?			
Are regular drivers First Aid and CPR/AED trained?			
INSPECTION			
Are operators recording pre-operation checks in vehicle log books?			
Are corrections, repairs, and maintenance consistently recorded in the vehicle log books?			
REMEDATION			
Are there procedures for driver suspension/counseling/training after an accident or adverse MVR?			
Are procedures in place to take a vehicle found to be in an unsafe condition out of service?			
RESOLUTION			
Are lines of authority clear in regard to driver screening, selection, and discipline?			
Are lines of authority clear in regard to vehicle selection and service condition?			

Vehicle Log



Titled Owner / License No.					
Vehicle Year / Make / Model / VIN#					
Maintenance Contact & Phone					
Date Vehicle Put in Service: _____		Mileage Vehicle in Service: _____		Drivers Note: All vehicle defects are to be noted whether found at the beginning or end of daily operation.	
Date	Mileage Start	Mileage End	Tire Press F/R	Defects: Lights, signals, brakes, doors, battery, oil, coolant, suspension, steering, tire wear, A/C, windshield, blades, cleanliness. Corrections: Indicate repair and maintenance including addition of fluids, air, and fuel.	Initials

Accident Report Form



Keep this 2 part (see back page) form in all vehicles. Make double-sided copies. Take all information available at the scene. Express concern for the well-being of other parties, but DO NOT admit fault or responsibility or offer to "take care of damages" under any circumstances to any party.

INSURED VEHICLE									
Year				Make				Model	
State		Lic No.		Policy No.					
CHURCH Contact:					DRIVER Contact:				
Organization:					Name:				
					Lic. No:				
Name:					Street Address:				
Mail address:					City:				
City:					State:		Zip code:		
State:		Zip code:			E-mail address:				
Telephone:					Phone:				
E-mail address:					Date of Birth:				
Damage description:									
(names, phone numbers, ages of passengers, and phone numbers of witnesses):								Injury (Y/N)	
Passenger 1									
Passenger 2									
Passenger 3									
Witnesses:									
ACCIDENT DESCRIPTION									
Date:				Time:				City:	
Responding Police:						Report No:			
Location:									
Description: Who, what, where, when, how?									

OTHER PARTY'S VEHICLE												
Year				Make				Model				
State			Lic No.				Policy No.					
OWNER Contact:						DRIVER Contact:						
						Name:						
						Lic. No:						
Name:						Street Address:						
Mail address:						City:						
City:						State:				Zip code:		
State:				Zip code:				E-mail address:				
Telephone:						Phone:						
E-mail address:						Date of Birth:						
Damage description:												
(names, phone numbers, ages of passengers, and phone numbers of witnesses):										Injury (Y/N)		
Passenger 1												
Passenger 2												
Passenger 3												
Witnesses:												
Prepared By:								Date:				

References and Resources

- MVR's & Background Checks "Safe Church Workbench" at www.InsuranceBoard.org
- CDL Requirements by State <http://www.cdl-course.com>
- <http://www.nts.gov>



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The information presented is for educational purposes to assist churches in developing an organized, comprehensive approach to loss prevention and loss control. This material is limited in scope and does not apply in every case or circumstance. It consists of general guidelines or suggestions, rather than specific advice, does not replace any legal requirements, and should not be considered as legal guidance. Because it is necessary to apply principles or concepts to specific facts, always consult professional counsel before using this material as the basis for specific action or adopting any of the guidelines or suggestions as policy.