



DRIVER SAFETY & DEALER VEHICLES: TIPS TO HELP REDUCE COLLISION LOSSES

DRIVER SAFETY MONITORING AND TEST DRIVES

Driver safety monitoring and test drive policies can help protect the employees and the owners of auto dealerships. To proactively reduce collision losses in dealer-owned vehicles, the Dealers Open Lot & Dealer Package program teams have assembled some risk management tips for auto dealerships:

Driver Safety Monitoring

Most dealer employees will be driving dealer vehicles for one reason or another. Given this fact, it is advisable to implement some of the driver safety monitoring used by trucking and livery companies:

- Obtain an MVR for each employee when hired and at least annually thereafter.
- Suspend driving privileges of any employee with repeat loss incidents or moving violations.
- When possible, provide employees with monthly stipends or vehicle leases in lieu of demonstrator vehicles.
- Require that any employee assigned a demonstrator vehicle sign a demonstrator agreement.
- Institute a driver training program for all standard incident report employees authorized for test drives and demonstrator vehicles.
- Implement the use of a standard incident report form for recording all collisions involving dealership staff and vehicles.

Test Drives

It is highly recommended that a dealer employee ride along on every demonstration and test drive. Typically, this is not an issue as the test drive is the best opportunity for a salesperson to point out the features of the vehicle. Even with the most trusted of customers, there is additional risk with having someone drive an unfamiliar car on unfamiliar streets, and the employee passenger can help the driver navigate and avoid an accident. To avoid collisions during test drives, it is advisable to have designated routes on lightly traveled roads, ideally with a circuit of right turns leading back to the dealership, but with a minimum of left turns in any event.

To help avoid accidents during test drives, follow these guidelines:

- Make sure salespeople always have control of keys to vehicles. Also, be alert to attempts to switch keys.
- Explain the vehicle's features while it is still on the lot, not while it is being driven.
- Have dealer staff drive the vehicle off the lot; some of the most common claims for insurers of dealerships arise from left turns out of the dealer lot at the start of a test drive.
- Designate a safe location for switching drivers, and turn the vehicle off completely while making the switch.
- Establish a standard route for test drives, using all right turns, if possible.



NATIONAL PROGRAMS

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