



## The Problem

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Taxi and delivery drivers are 60 times more likely than other workers to be murdered while on the job, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

This publication identifies risk factors that taxi and delivery drivers face along with a list of potential safety measures that might help protect them. It also describes employer responsibilities and employee rights under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act)*.

NIOSH identified a number of factors that put drivers at risk:

- working with the public;
- working with cash;
- working alone;
- working at night; and
- working in high-crime areas.

There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution. A number of measures may help reduce the risks encountered by taxi and delivery drivers. Improving safety for drivers requires the efforts and commitments of vehicle owners, drivers, service providers, law enforcement agencies, regulatory officials, and local government regulators. A number of strategies are being tried, but the deterrent effect of many of these is unknown. Some may not prevent injury, but may speed response time once an incident occurs.

## Safety Measures

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Potential safety measures include, but are not limited to:

- *Caller ID* to help trace location of fares;
- automatic vehicle location or global positioning systems (*GPS*) to locate drivers in distress;
- first-aid kits for use in emergencies;
- in-car surveillance cameras to aid in apprehending perpetrators;
- partitions or shields to protect drivers from would-be perpetrators (must be used properly to work effectively);
- protocol with police — owners and police need to track high-crime locations and perpetrator profiles;
- radios to communicate in case of emergency (e.g., “open mike switch”);
- safety training to teach drivers, dispatchers, and company owners protective measures;
- silent alarms to alert others in the event of danger — e.g., “bandit lights”; and
- use of debit/credit cards — i.e., cashless fare systems — to discourage robbers.

## Employer Responsibilities

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OSHA citations can only be issued for violations of standards, regulations, and the General Duty Clause.

Section 5(a)(1) of the *OSH Act*, or the “General Duty Clause”, provides that “Each employer shall provide each of his employees a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that may cause or is likely to cause death or serious physical harm”. This publication is not intended to create legal obligations and will not be used as the basis for an enforcement action brought under Section 5(a)(1) of the *OSH Act*. The failure to implement any potential measure listed in this fact sheet is not in itself a violation of the General Duty Clause of the *OSH Act*.

Taxi and delivery companies that only use the services of drivers who are independent contractors are not subject to *OSH Act* coverage. It should be noted, however, that the potential safety measures listed here are likely to help reduce

the risk for independent contractors to the same extent as employees.

## Conclusion

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While it is the responsibility of employers to implement measures to protect the health and safety of their employees, it is also incumbent upon each driver to practice safety. OSHA has provided this list of potential safety measures to help reduce work-related risks. This is not a new standard or regulation. This fact sheet is advisory in nature and informational in content.

Employers and employees alike may find this information useful in making changes that may help prevent assaults upon taxi and delivery drivers.

## Review

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1. Which factor or factors could put drivers at risk?
  - a. working at night
  - b. working with cash
  - c. working in high crime areas
  - d. all of the above
2. One solution should correct the problem for all.
  - a. true
  - b. false
3. Potential safety measures to protect the drivers are:
  - a. use of debit/credit cards
  - b. arming the drivers
  - c. partitions or shields to protect the drivers
  - d. both a and c
4. Employers can be cited under the General Duty Clause for not providing protection for drivers.
  - a. true
  - b. false



## Answer Key:

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1. d
2. False (there is no one size fits all solution)
3. d
4. a

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## Resources

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The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI, DWC) Resource Center offers a workers' health and safety video tape library. Call (512) 804-4620 for more information or visit our web site at [www.tdi.state.tx.us](http://www.tdi.state.tx.us).

Disclaimer: Information contained in this training program is considered accurate at time of publication.

The Texas Department of Insurance,  
Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI, DWC)  
E-mail [resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us)  
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

*Safety Violations Hotline*  
**1-800-452-9595**  
[safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us)