

Safely Onboarding Amazon DSP New Employees



The delivery industry is responsible for transporting billions of dollars' worth of products into and out of Colorado each year. Meanwhile, delivery drivers encounter a variety of unique hazards. As you know, motor vehicle accidents are a serious risk in the delivery industry, but Amazon Delivery Service Providers experience other types of injuries that might surprise you.

Slips, trips and falls, strains, dog bites, and striking objects pose unique risks as these drivers are fulfilling customer orders. After a long day of deliveries, routine movements such as getting out of the van can become dangerous. In inclement weather, loading and unloading is even trickier.

This industry naturally exposes even experienced drivers to risks on a daily basis, so it's especially important to understand the various risks your drivers face.

management buy-in, effective communication, safety training and screening. Since there are many factors that impact new-hire safety, it's essential that you take the time to recognize driver skill levels to prepare new employees for risks on and off the road.

Your process should include an orientation that continues beyond day one. It should include a standardized, **subsequent verbal check-in at 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, six months and 12 months after employees' start dates.** Checking in monthly helps ensure that your employees have the appropriate training



\$1,318,626

**THE COST OF CLAIMS FILED FOR NEW-HIRE DRIVERS
PAID BY COLORADO BUSINESSES 2020**

New-hire safety measures

Every new hire deserves the opportunity to be successful and perform his or her job safely. Did you know that in 2020, claims filed for new-hire drivers cost Colorado businesses \$1,318,626? New drivers experience work-related injuries at a higher frequency than experienced drivers. Injury prevention protects your newest and most vulnerable employees and positively impacts the financial stability of your business. Any new employee coming into your organization will require an introduction to the way your organization values safety and conducts business.

Onboarding essentials

An onboarding process is essential to protecting new employees and preventing them from becoming statistics. Delivery organizations should design an onboarding process that involves orientation,

they need to drive safely. This approach encourages safe attitudes and safe work behaviors and helps prevent injuries on the road. (See the sample check-in checklist at the end of this article.)

Since there are many factors that impact new-hire safety, it's essential that you take the time to recognize driver skill levels to prepare new employees for risks on and off the road.

Management commitment is critical to safety success

Leadership should demonstrate a commitment to safety and take an active role to provide adequate time, resources, personnel and financial support to create a work environment that's as safe as possible. Safety measures should be incorporated into the business model to demonstrate that the organization values safety and believes it is as important as your operations and production are.

Effective communication in action

Whether delivered in person, in writing or by video, communication from leadership to new employees strengthens your safety message. Consider creating a written safety policy statement from the owner/president that welcomes new hires and expresses the importance of workplace safety. If you're feeling creative, you can even use your mobile device to create a 30-second video from the owner/president. However you choose to communicate, tell your new employees (even those with years of experience) about your commitment to safety and your expectations so they understand that safety is a priority at your organization. This effort has shown to positively influence worker attitudes and behaviors.

Safety training can prevent new-hire injuries

Training is vital for employees who face occupational hazards on the road and at your facility. It also may be required by the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#), [Department of Transportation \(DOT\)](#) or other regulatory organizations.

Safety training for new employees should teach your employees to recognize job hazards and how to control or eliminate those hazards. OSHA standards also require training on specific topics including emergency preparedness, hazard communication, ladders, and personal protective equipment. Review [OSHA's Compliance Assistant Quick Start](#) for more information. Pinnacol also offers complimentary and [low-cost in-person and online training](#) to every policyholder.

Selective screening tools

Now that we've gone over how to begin developing an onboarding process, don't forget that managing new-hire risk begins before you actually hire your employee. In addition to your onboarding process development, selective screening tools can minimize the chances of hiring someone who is not a good fit for the organization. These screening tools go beyond the requirements that may be conducted during the pre-employment or post-offer application process. Note that you should always check with your employment law representative prior to implementing screening options. Some pre-employment screening options include:

- References.
- Credit scores.
- Criminal records.
- Drug and alcohol screens.
- Education verifications.
- Re-employment verifications.
- E-Verify.
- Integrity testing.
- Motor vehicle records.
- Name and address verifications.
- Professional certification verifications.
- Sex offender registries.
- Social Security validations.
- Fit-for-duty evaluations.

Elements to Your Onboarding Process

TRANSPORTATION ONBOARDING FLOW CHART



Implement a Driver Mentorship Program

Another essential part of onboarding a new employee is a driver mentorship program. Mentorship programs are an excellent way to mitigate risk to employees and equipment, helping your employees:

- Hone new-hire driving skills.
- Demonstrate proper care of loads and equipment.
- Improve customer service — package handling, placement, etc.
- Share knowledge and lessons learned, broadly.
- Improve the safety of your employees and the safety culture of your operation.

A mentorship program improves the skill set of your new hires while recognizing your most tenured and valued employees. Selecting the right mentor for the job is a crucial piece of the puzzle.

The ideal mentorship

Your organization should establish a process to determine the best mentor candidates. For example, you can select mentors by asking your employees for volunteers or nominees. When selecting an employee to fill this role, it is important for that individual to fully embody the standards of the organization's safety program and cultural expectations. The mentor is there to set the example for the new employee while helping them develop the skills and techniques necessary to get the job done safely.

Who should act as a mentor?

The mentors should be experienced, skilled drivers with excellent safety records and strong interpersonal skills. Remember, a high-performing employee may be excellent at their job, but that doesn't necessarily mean they will make a good mentor. The mentor must

be willing to devote time and energy to the new employee and should possess solid communication and listening skills. Think of your mentors as your organization's coaches who are the positive and encouraging force driving your new hires toward success.

Mentors should not be the employee's manager, and the mentor's and the driver's expectations should be set accordingly. Drivers and mentors may have different relationship styles. They may get along well and form more personal bonds or they may limit the mentorship to a professional level. When drivers and mentors are able to forge a more casual relationship, that can help improve the new driver's comfort level and enhance their ability to learn and ask questions.

Sometimes a new driver is reluctant to listen and take instructions from a mentor who isn't a member of management. In this case, the mentor must be someone who has the skills to convey their experience and knowledge effectively even though they aren't managing people. The mentor should be skilled in encouraging positive behaviors and providing constructive criticism to the new driver, who may be struggling with a portion of their training.

Evaluating your mentorship program

Monitoring the results of your mentorship program is crucial to its effectiveness. The mentorship program should be monitored carefully by the safety coordinator or a member of management. They should evaluate whether the mentors and drivers are creating beneficial relationships and whether the program is reaching its desired outcomes. Is this program bringing value to the organization? Is there any return on investment? One of the best ways to evaluate a mentorship program is with employee surveys. These can provide insight into the mentor and driver relationship and the new employee's progression in their training program. We've included a sample Mentee Evaluation Form as part of this resource to get you started.



If you have more questions about creating or maintaining a mentorship program, please contact Safety On Call at safetyoncall@pinnacol.com. Our safety consultants are available Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and can address all your questions quickly.

Injury Profile for Amazon DSPs

Pinnacol estimates Amazon DSP drivers experience slip-and-fall and animal-related injuries more commonly than other delivery drivers in Colorado. Pinnacol's occupational safety experts attribute this to the industry's relative newness and increased demand due to the pandemic. They also noticed a high incidence of strain injuries, which is expected among employees who handle so many packages per day. All of these injuries can be minimized or prevented with appropriate awareness and training programs.

Pinnacol safety experts stress the importance of a rigorous onboarding program that also includes specific safety training such as lifting techniques, exiting and entering the vehicle safely, and safe driving. Employees should be expected to perform regular vehicle inspections, pre-work stretching routines and use winter traction cleats. [Read Pinnacol's analysis of Amazon DSP workforce claims.](#)

Injuries Experienced by Amazon DSP Employees

Take a look at the snapshot of the claims reported by Amazon Delivery Service Providers in Colorado for workers employed zero to 12 months. Since 2019, the Amazon DSPs have seen a concerning upward trend in claims experienced by workers with fewer than 12 months on the job.

How does your organization look compared to the rest of the transportation industry in Colorado?



Sample New-Employee Safety Checklist

THE NEW EMPLOYEE AND THEIR SUPERVISOR MUST INITIAL THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

Day 1

		Employee	Supervisor
1	Introduction to organization – President/owner has described organizational safety through video, in-person greeting or written welcome letter.		
2	Safety climate – I have read and someone has explained to me the organization’s safety policy.		
3	Personal accountability – I understand how my actions can impact safety goals.		
4	Tour facility – I have learned where the equipment and materials are stored, and the location of bathrooms and the organization’s offices.		
5	Human Resources programs/policies – I reviewed claims management processes, filing a work-related claim, accident investigations and designated medical providers.		
6	Safety program – I understand the roles and responsibilities of the organization’s safety coordinator/committee.		
7	Safety program – I have read and someone has explained to me the safety rules for the organization and any rules specific to my job position.		
8	Drug and alcohol policy – I understand the organization’s policy on drugs and alcohol.		
9	Organization-specific safety training – List company-specific new-employee training below. Even if the employee is experienced, be sure that the training is adequate and that the employee is competent in the task. Contact your Pinnacol Assurance safety consultant for complimentary and low-cost training courses.		
10	Equipment-specific safety rules		
11	Emergency action planning/emergency evacuation		
12	Hazardous communication		
13	Ergonomics and lifting		
14	Other hazard-specific topics unique to the organization		
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20	Safety program enforcement – The organization’s disciplinary policies have been explained to me.		
21	Emergency response – I have reviewed the plan for the office and the job site.		
22	Emergency response – I have received and understand the procedures for road emergencies and fire, and I understand the organization’s fire prevention plan.		
23	Injury reporting – I have read and signed the New-Employee Designated Provider Notification Letter and understand I must report all injuries to my supervisor immediately.		
24	First aid – I know where the first aid station and kits are located.		

25	Hazard communication – I understand the purpose of hazard communication and know the location of the safety data sheets (SDSs).		
26	Personal protective equipment (PPE) – I have been issued and trained on the proper use of the following equipment:		

27	Safety glasses		
28	Reflective outerwear or high-visibility vest (if applicable)		
29	Hearing protection (if applicable)		

30	Safety toe shoes		
31	Gloves		

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

EMPLOYEE'S PRINTED NAME

DATE

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE

SUPERVISOR'S PRINTED NAME

DATE

Safety Check-in

Use this to perform a standardized safety check-in at 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, six months and 12 months after employees' start dates. This will take only 10-15 minutes of your time, and it will help your employees work safer and let them know they are valued and cared about.

- Organization climate check** – Verify safety expectations and knowledge retention and the application of organization-specific safety rules by using this simple checklist to document the safety check-in meeting.
- Skills check** – Verify the ability to perform work safely, including equipment operation.
- On-the-job training** – Ensure that supervisors coach and mentor new employees and demonstrate safe work practices; also ensure that they lead by example.
- At 12 months**, include a reflection on the past year of employment:

Have there been any safety rule violations?

Have there been any near misses?

What is the safety attitude of the employee?

CHECK-IN

		Yes	No
1	I have the personal protective equipment I need to perform the work safely.		
2	I have the safety training I need to get my job done.		
3	I know what to do in case of an emergency.		
4	I know who to notify in case of a work injury.		
5	I know where to go if I have a workplace injury.		
6	I understand the drug and alcohol policy.		
7	I have read and someone has explained to me the organization's fatigue management plan.		
8	I am aware of workplace fall hazards, and I am always protected when working at heights.		
9	My supervisor cares about the safety and health of the team.		
10	Safety meetings are conducted with my supervisor.		
11	My mentor helps me learn and makes me feel like a part of the team.		

Other notes about our safety discussion:

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

EMPLOYEE'S PRINTED NAME

DATE

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE

SUPERVISOR'S PRINTED NAME

DATE

Driver Ride Along Checklist

DRIVER'S NAME

VEHICLE #

AUDIT DATE

DRIVER/REVIEWER'S NAME

REVIEW COMPLETED TIME

1. Pre-trip inspection complete

- Yes No

2. Cab check

- Parking brake Mirrors
 Engine lights Cameras operational
 Pressure levels

3. Under-the-hood check

- Oil Leaking fluid
 Coolant Noted concerns
 Hoses

4. Outside check

- Headlights Taillights
 Marker lights Reflectors (if applicable)
 Turn signals Mud flaps (if applicable)

5. Safety check

- Safety items checked
 Extinguisher
 Seat belt functional

6. Driver observations

- Courteous and friendly to other drivers
 Courteous and knowledgeable to customer (if applicable)
 Reported to work in a timely manner
 Hands-free equipment present
 Distracted driving avoided
 Hostile driving avoided
 Signs of fatigue

7. Post-trip inspection

- Yes No

Mentee Evaluation Form

MENTEE'S NAME

		Yes	No
1	Based on your interactions with your mentee, are you comfortable with their progress at this point in their new-hire training regimen? Comments:		
2	Is the mentee receptive to your training/coaching? Comments:		
3	Is the mentee making an effort to align with (organization's name) safety culture? Comments:		
4	Do you have any specific concerns regarding the mentee's competency with their assigned tasks or their behavior while working for (organization name)? Comments:		
5	Do you believe the mentee has made sufficient progress in their new-hire training and is ready to graduate from the mentorship program? Comments:		

MENTOR'S SIGNATURE

MENTOR'S PRINTED NAME

DATE

Sample Employee Safety Orientation Quiz

Use this to evaluate and understand your employees' safety comprehension.

NAME

ORGANIZATION JOB TITLE

DATE

Circle the best answer for the following questions related to the safety orientation presentation.

1. [Enter organization name] believes that _____ are our most important asset.
 - a) Tools
 - b) Trucks
 - c) People
 - d) Financials
2. What is the best way to exit the delivery van?
 - a) Hold a cup of coffee
 - b) Check the ground for obstacles; do not jump, and be sure to face the vehicle and use handrails
 - c) Jump down to the ground
 - d) Walk straight out of the van
3. What are four key elements of an effective safety program?
 - a) Rewards, personal protective equipment, employees and SDSs
 - b) SDSs, safety program, rewards and management commitment
 - c) Management commitment, employee involvement, hazard analysis and safety training
 - d) Safety training, management commitment, rewards and employee involvement
4. Hazard communication, or HAZCOM, provides information to the employee via _____.
 - a) Safety meetings
 - b) SDSs
 - c) Labels
 - d) Audible alarms
5. Each employee at [enter organization name] is equally empowered with _____.
 - a) Stop-work authority
 - b) Lockout/tagout training
 - c) Reasonable safety training
 - d) Competent-person authority
6. Safety training is required for _____.
 - a) Van operation
 - b) Van electronics/telematics
 - c) Personal protective equipment
 - d) Any piece of equipment that I have never used before
7. [Enter organization name] has a written safety enforcement policy.
 - a) True
 - b) False
8. Every employee is required to participate in the _____ safety meeting.
 - a) Monthly
 - b) Weekly
 - c) Hourly
 - d) Important
9. Housekeeping is the responsibility of _____.
 - a) Everyone
 - b) Superintendents
 - c) Management
 - d) Laborers

10. **Personal protective equipment shall be worn _____.**
- a) When it's required
 - b) At all times
 - c) By drivers only
 - d) By warehouse staff only
11. **Jumping out of the van increases the force and strain on joints, ligaments and bones.**
- a) True
 - b) False
12. **How do I communicate van maintenance needs to leadership?**
- a) Post-it note on the dispatch computer
 - b) Text message to supervisor
 - c) Carrier pigeon
 - d) End-of-route survey
13. **Which of the following is an example of appropriate footwear for performing deliveries?**
- a) Flip-flops or sandals
 - b) Driving slippers
 - c) Closed-toed shoes or boots with good, solid tread
 - d) Loafers or high heels
14. **In the event of an injury, I am to notify my supervisor/management immediately.**
- a) True
 - b) False
15. **[Enter organization name] requires that all injuries be reported _____.**
- a) Within 24 hours
 - b) Within eight hours
 - c) Immediately or as soon as possible
 - d) Quickly
16. **Unless it's an emergency, all employees suffering a work-related injury shall seek medical attention only through a _____.**
- a) Plan provider professional
 - b) Designated medical provider
 - c) General hospital procedure
 - d) Tell supervisor method
17. **[Enter organization name] desires all employees to return to work as soon as possible after a work-related injury. That is why [enter organization name] uses a _____ program.**
- a) Catch release
 - b) Quick pick
 - c) Modified duty
 - d) News flash
18. **[Enter organization name] requires a team lift for any equipment exceeding [enter weight] lbs.**
- a) True
 - b) False
19. **When lifting heavy objects, the strong muscles of the back should be used and the object should be held as far away from the body as possible.**
- a) True
 - b) False

Quiz Answer Key

1.	C	11.	A
2.	B	12.	D
3.	C	13.	B
4.	B	14.	A
5.	A	15.	B
6.	D	16.	B
7.	A	17.	C
8.	B	18.	A
9.	A	19.	B
10.	A		

Resources

Get more Amazon DSP resources designed especially for Pinnacol customers:
pinnacol.com/blog-topics/amazon-dsp

Additional training resources by J.J. Keller can be found on Pinnacol.com:
pinnacol.com/knowledge-center/j-j-keller-safety-training

The National Safety Council provides a variety of safety information and programs:
www.nsc.org