

Keep your drivers safe during times of protest

From the JJ Keller Library –

During times of unrest, the safety and security of your drivers should be your top priority. Whether citizens protesting or employees picketing near a customer's site, both your drivers and dispatch should be trained on precautionary measures.

Provided below are suggested best practices to assist in safeguarding your drivers. The well-being of your drivers may depend on how vigilant your motor carrier is.

The following best practice list is not all-inclusive. Any actions taken by the driver and carrier should be on a case-by-case basis after careful evaluation of the circumstances and may require measures outside of those provided below.

Dispatcher Checklist

Act like an air traffic controller to alert drivers of hazards and reroute the truck.

- Use input from leadership and the customer on whether to delay a delivery.
- Brief drivers on what to do.
- Make sure your driver never feels alone while out on the road, especially if a new driver.
- Ask for driver input on escape and secondary routes for specific deliveries.
- Allow the driver to make a decision — based on his or her comfort level — on whether to take a load where protests or other unrest are happening:
 - Do not unduly influence a driver. Entering any such area can be dangerous.
 - If the driver feels unsafe, do not dispatch him or her to that area.
- Assign drivers who are comfortable taking the vehicle and delivery, provided there are no signs of imminent danger.

- Utilize the customer's employees as a resource to learn:
 - The most up-to-date information on the protests, including specific information on where crowds are gathering each day;
 - The safest routes to avoid the protests; and
 - Directions for alternate routes.
- Confirm with the customer that someone is at the facility to receive the freight at a specific time.
- Be conscious of bridge heights for rerouted vehicles.
- Use local news sites, state DOT sites, customer insights, social media, etc. to monitor hot spots.
- Be prepared to cancel specialized loads with required routes.
- Ensure drivers understand that they are not to approach any crowds if they run into a surprise gathering or uprising (nothing is worth getting hurt or hurting others over).
- Arrange to park the vehicle in secure location if the situation warrants, and reschedule with the customer.
- Monitor state DOT site lists to learn of routes that are closed to enter/exit a city.
- Equip trucks with CBs in the event a cell phone signal is lost and drivers need help.

Driver Checklist

Never risk your safety or that of a demonstrator/rioter.

- Be sure your vehicle is filled with fuel.
- Obtain alternate routes from dispatch **before** leaving for a destination that requires driving to or through a potential hotspot.
- Have a trucker's atlas in the vehicle that shows all the clearances and acceptable reroutes. Don't rely on GPS to tell route details, unless using a GPS for truckers.
- Stay on main roads/interstates that are heavily trafficked with a police presence.
- If an unexpected gathering is observed, contact dispatch immediately to obtain instructions. Call via a Bluetooth/hands-free cell phone device or pull over and find a safe place to park if possible. Use a CB if your signal is lost.
- Have the phone number of the delivery location accessible to provide them updates as needed (when it is safe to do so).
- Contact the delivery location to:

- Verify that their staff will be at the facility during a designated time period.
 - Ask for any directions or information to help avoid any gatherings or hotspots.
- Be alert to what is developing around you. Anticipate trouble.
- If found to be in close proximity to the activity, do not speak or become involved in any arguments.
- Make no gestures.
- Look as nonthreatening as possible.
- Remain calm, composed, and professional.
- Demonstrate patience and commonsense.
- Do not attempt to intimidate anyone with your vehicle (e.g., gunning the motor or blowing the city or air horn).
- Keep all windows rolled up and lock all doors.
- If forced to stop:
 - Speak only as needed to communicate your intent.
 - Lower your window slightly; do not open it all the way.
 - Keep your seat belt on to keep from being pulled out.
- If you have no alternative and can safely do so, drive through the area slowly and carefully.
 - Do not force your vehicle through any crowd.
 - Move slowly and wait for an opening.
 - Wait for the police to direct you if they are present.
 - Remain where you are stopped until waived through or the road is clearly open to travel.
- If your vehicle is bumped, rocked, hit, or damaged, **do not** become hostile.
- Do not open your door or get out while transiting an area with crowds.
- If you experience delays in getting through due to the crowds, please be patient and **do not** display any emotion or frustration.
- Do not worry if traffic is tied up.
- Report to dispatch any significant change in the situation if you can safely do so. Report when you are safely through the area of concern.