



STATE OF WISCONSIN  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Tony Evers, Governor  
Joel Brennan, Secretary  
Jana Steinmetz, Administrator

February 15, 2021

TO: Agency Risk Managers  
Agency Fleet Managers  
Risk Management Executive Committee

FROM: Bradley Templin, Property & Liability Program Manager  
Bureau of State Risk Management

RE: Trailer Training Guidelines for State Agencies

The recommendations noted below are for trailering done by other than professional drivers with CDLs. This training should be considered when an agency has a business need to do so.

Each agency should administer these general trailering guidelines based on its individual functions and needs. The trailering guidelines should be applied to non-professional drivers without CDLs and should be implemented by agencies that use trailers pulled by any licensed motor vehicle, regardless of whether the trailer use is on public roadways or state grounds.

### **Trailer Training Instructor Qualifications**

Drivers experienced in trailering may train other agency employees after being identified by the agency to do so. Each agency should determine criteria to identify drivers experienced in trailering who have the knowledge and skills to conduct the training. The agency may contact the Bureau of State Risk Management for assistance in developing such criteria. Instructors of trailer training should use the following recommended curriculum:

### **Trailer Training Curriculum**

Each driver should receive sufficient time, with hands-on training, to adequately demonstrate their proficiency and knowledge in handling the additional risks of trailering. Drivers should satisfactorily complete a trailer inspection, connection, and complete sufficient time behind the wheel demonstrating their proficiency. It is highly recommended that each driver take the trailering course in the vehicle and trailer with which they will do the majority of their trailering. The emphasis should be hands-on experience and demonstration of competency, including knowledge and proficiency in the following:

NHTSA Towing a Trailer booklet (found at [https://fifthwheelst.com/documents/nhtsa\\_towing.pdf](https://fifthwheelst.com/documents/nhtsa_towing.pdf))

- GVW of vehicle and trailer
- Hooking up, types of hitches – pre-trip inspection
- Brakes and braking, including air brakes, if equipped
- Backing

February 15, 2021

Page 2

Turning/cornering  
Turning while backing  
Speed and control  
Load distribution  
Securing the load  
Additional length

A sample course should be no more than 12 feet wide. Each student must be able to back up 100 feet in a straight line, back up 50 feet to the right and to the left and stop within 2 feet of the last cone. It is also recommended that each student demonstrate their on-street ability with a trailer training instructor.

The agency, through its trailer training instructors, shall keep a record of those who have satisfactorily completed the course. Re-training will be offered to current trailering individuals on a voluntary basis or required on an as-needed basis.

Trailering with a 12/15-passenger van is highly discouraged. If an agency has a business need to do so, the approved van driver must first demonstrate competency in driving a 12/15-passenger van. Then, upon recommendation from his/her supervisor in conjunction with the agency fleet manager and/or risk manager, the van driver must successfully complete the trailering course.

Agencies may implement more stringent standards than outlined.

Sincerely,

Bradley Templin  
Property & Liability Program Manager