

Medic Defensive Driving (MDD)

Study Guide



Medic Defensive Driving (MDD) Program

The **MDD Program** is designed to reduce risk and maintain safety through avoidance of dangerous situations while driving Agency vehicles.

The purpose of the program is to apply a uniform skill set and approach so that all employees have equal drive time and practice with:

- Maneuvering in and out of tight spaces
- Driving through heavily-traveled streets and highways
- Practicing merging into and out of traffic
- Visiting frequently assigned posts and hospital ambulance bay entrances and exits
- Applying the Agency's universal hand signals for backing
- Utilizing navigational skills

5 Targets for Driving Forward

Target 1: Look Ahead

- Our eyes are accustomed to functioning at a walking speed of 3-4 MPH.
- A driver will make 115 decisions per minute to safely drive one city block in average traffic.
- An average driver is only looking 3-6 seconds ahead of their vehicle.
- Try to **see where the vehicle will be** down the road in 15 or 30 seconds.
- Try to **identify hazards** while there's still time to make decisions.
- Look ahead to **distant traffic lights**.
 - Stale Traffic Light – Unwitnessed change in light.
 - Fresh Traffic Light - Witnessed change in light.
 - Pacing lights saves on gas and maintenance on vehicles and also decreases rear-end collisions.

Target 2: Get the Broad View

- To make the right decisions, your information should be current and complete.
- Stay alert and choose the lane of least resistance.
- **Scan your mirrors every 5 to 8 seconds.**
- Use a proper **following distance (at least 6 seconds)**.
- Not only is information 15 seconds ahead of you, but it's also **180 degrees** around your ambulance.

Target 3: Keep Scanning

- 85% of all information we retain is from our vision.
- Many drivers don't use their full visual capabilities due to distractions.
- Keep your **eyes moving every two seconds** to stimulate brain activity.
- **Avoid** fixed and blank **stares**.
- **Keep** your early warning system (**peripheral vision**) active.

Target 4: Create a Safe Space

- By **creating a space cushion** around your vehicle, it will allow an escape route from the seen and unforeseen.
- It's dynamic and requires constant planning and adjustment in order to prevent a collision.
- **Avoid clusters** because they tend to expose you to the mistakes of others. If congestion occurs around you, try to keep your front and one side open.
- **Evade tailgaters** by encouraging them to pass and if necessary, change lanes to allow them to move ahead.
- Anticipate the actions of others.
- When stopping behind another vehicle **stay back at least one car length (15 to 20 feet)** from the vehicle in front.
- When stopped at a crosswalk **stay back 15 feet**

Target 5: Be Seen and Stand Out

- **Alert others** to your presence and intentions.
- Be sure your **warnings are heeded** before moving forward.
- Watch the other vehicles tires and **always seek eye contact** with other drivers.
- Clear and timely communications will increase your safety margins and those of other drivers.
- **Don't assume the other driver will "do the right thing"**.

5 Targets for Driving Forward **Quick Reference Guide**

Target 1: Look Ahead

Use a 15 second eye lead time in the city to provide advanced warning signs of hazards.

Use a 30 second eye lead time on interstates for an additional margin of safety.

Target 2: Get the Broad View

Check mirrors every 5 – 8 seconds to consistently update relevant information.

Apply at least a 6 second following distance to maintain visibility for quick decision making.

Target 3: Keep Scanning

Keep your eyes moving every 2 seconds to keep your peripheral vision intact.

Clear intersections upon approach (look L-R-L/R-L-R) before making a turn or crossing through.

Target 4: Create a Safe Space

Build a space cushion around front and sides of your vehicle.

Anticipate the actions of others.

Target 5: Be Seen and Stand Out

Use your warning devices and directional signals.

Seek eye contact with drivers at intersections prior to moving forward.

Follow the Law of Due Regard.

The use of MDD's 5 Targets provide:

Space

For the Vehicle

Visibility

For the Driver

Time

To make Decisions

5 Targets for Driving in Reverse

Target 1: Look Ahead

- When possible, **AVOID BACKING!!!!**
- **Look, think, and plan ahead to select the safest possible parking locations and backing path.**
- Choose safety over convenience.
- Scan the backing area and its surroundings to identify potentially hazardous objects.

Target 2: Get the Broad View

- If backing is required, consider backing upon arrival.
- If you have any doubt about blind areas, a walk around inspection is recommended.
- Scan the area for relevant objects.
- Back into stalls rather than pulling in if necessary.
- **If you're unsure of conditions in blind areas, use GOAL method!**
- **Use of a backing spotter is MEDIC POLICY.**

Target 3: Keep Scanning

- **Scan, don't fixate.**
- Maximize the full range of your central and peripheral visions by scanning the entire area.
- Avoid staring at one object. Problems may be developing elsewhere.
- Do not forget the front and sides.
- Move your vehicle slowly.
- Do not forget about the fronts and sides (lateral movement).
- Move slowly and allow for time to make decisions.

Target 4: Create a Safe Space

- If you cannot avoid backing, choose the site with the fewest hazards.
- Cut no closer to the other objects than you must.
- Back only as far as you must.
- **Surround yourself with space.**

Target 5: Be Seen and Stand Out

- If you think someone may enter your path, **seek eye contact.**
- **Use the warning devices** on your vehicle and/or hand signals if necessary.
- Do not take anything for granted. Eye contact is never a guarantee.
- Be sure your warnings are heeded before moving or backing.
- If there is potential for others to enter your path, get their attention.

5 Targets for Driving in Reverse

Quick Reference Guide

Target 1: Look Ahead

AVOID BACKING, PERIOD!

Target 2: Get the Broad View

AVOID BACKING, PERIOD!

Target 3: Keep Scanning

AVOID BACKING, PERIOD!

Target 4: Create a Safe Space

AVOID BACKING, PERIOD!

Target 5: Be Seen and Stand Out

AVOID BACKING, PERIOD!

G.O.A.L

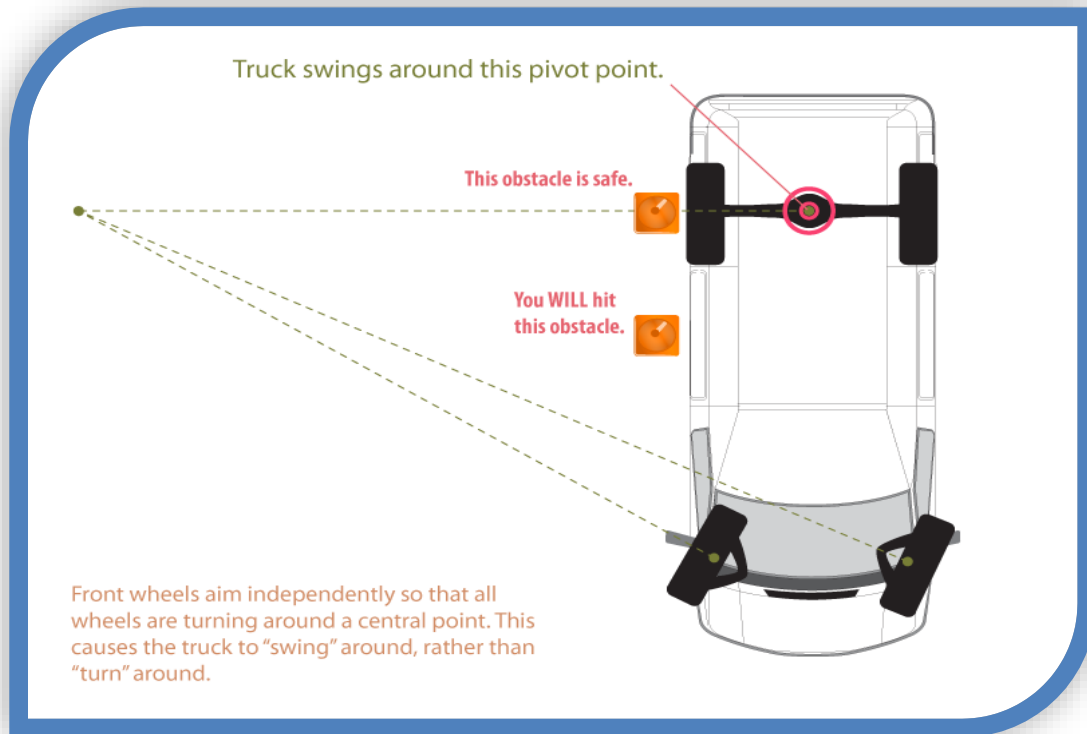
GET OUT AND LOOK!!

Ultimately the driver is responsible for safe backing of vehicle.
Communicate universal hand signals with your spotter before backing.
If you cannot see your vehicle spotter don't back up!!

MEDIC's policy is to always use a spotter.

What is a Pivot Point?

Pivot Point: The pivot point is at/near the rear axle. The front wheels turn with the steering wheel (at the turning point) and the rear tires pivot around cone/corner. When making a turn, the rear wheels will not follow the same path as the front wheels. They will track closer to the corner.



Pivot Point on a Medic Unit

- The vehicle's forward pivot point is at the center of the wheelbase and that's the point that tracks over your intended path.
- Be sure to use mirrors to watch the back tire being used INSIDE the turn.

Example: Right forward/backwards turn = Right rear tire.

Left forward/backwards turn = Left rear tire.



Avoid Backing Collisions:

- Avoid backing whenever possible.
- Leave a space cushion around your vehicle when pulling up to a scene.
- **Always** use a spotter per Agency policy.

Stop



Back Straight



Move Right



Move Left



Distance from Object



Slow Down

