# WORK ZONE SAFETY Talking Points: Arkansas

**The Importance of Work Zone Safety in Arkansas**

* Arkansas ranks in the top half of states in the U.S. for fatal crashes involving CMVs in work zones. [[1]](#footnote-1)
* Arkansas currently has many active work zones impacting drivers across the state, particularly along I-40 from the west Tennessee border through Little Rock to Fort Smith, which is under construction more than any other interstate in the state. [[2]](#footnote-2)

**Sharing the Road**

* Work zones present challenges for truck drivers across Arkansas – narrowed lanes, sudden stops, traffic pattern shifts, and uneven road surfaces can lead to crashes and fatalities if they are not prepared and alert. Plan your route, reduce speed, stay alert, and do your part while traveling through Arkansas work zones.
* On average, large trucks are overrepresented in work zone crashes. In 2021, 32% of work zone fatalities involved a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) driver[[3]](#footnote-3). And in Arkansas, more than six crashes involving a CMV resulted in seven fatalities in 2021 alone[[4]](#footnote-4).
* Large blind spots, long stopping distances, and size constraints make maneuvering large trucks and buses in work zones particularly challenging. Passenger vehicles should be mindful that CMV drivers need to take extra precaution when driving through these areas.
* Pay close attention to road workers and flaggers – give them extra room, always slow when approaching them, and be prepared to stop if necessary.

**How to Drive Safely Through Work Zones**

* There are plenty of resources available to research your routes and check for upcoming work zones. Make sure you know of any road work before embarking on your route and when possible, use detours to avoid having to pass through these areas.
* Reduce speed while traveling through Arkansas work zones, paying close attention to signs and signals.
* Be aware of passenger vehicle drivers around you, who may not be aware of commercial vehicle driving challenges, including large blind spots and longer stopping distances.
* Be prepared to stop or slow unexpectedly, and when doing so, activate emergency flashers to alert vehicles behind you.
* When approaching lane closures, move into the open lane as soon as possible – pay close attention to vehicles around you that could be in your blind spot.
* Rear-end crashes are common in work zones – obey all speeds, avoid distractions and maintain extra space between your vehicle and the one in front of you at all times.
* In 2023, the Arkansas State Legislature also passed a law allowing the usage of speed cameras in highway work zones. The law allows a camera to be stationed inside a work zone and alert an officer downstream of a speeding vehicle. The officer can then use that data to safely issue a warning or citation once the vehicle exits the work zone.

**Arkansas’ Active Work Zones**

* As you travel through Arkansas, it’s critical for all drivers – both CMV and passenger vehicle drivers – to share the road safely, particularly as they approach or enter work zones.
* Download the IDrive Arkansas app or visit [idrivearkansas.com](http://idrivearkansas.com/) for the most up-to-date work zone information and real-time travel information.

**Where to get more information**

* The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) provides work zone safety [shareable materials](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads/work-zone-safety-shareable-material) and [safety tips](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads/work-zones-safety-tips) on the *Our Roads, Our Safety*® website.
* The Arkansas Department of Transportation also offers Arkansas-specific [resources](https://www.ardot.gov/resources/).
1. The Federal Highway Administration State Ranking for Fatal Crashes Involving CMVs in Work Zones [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse [↑](#footnote-ref-4)