# WORK ZONE SAFETY Talking Points: Oklahoma

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

* Oklahoma ranks ninth in the country for fatal crashes involving commercial motor vehicles[[1]](#footnote-1) in the state’s active work zones.
* A work zone involves workers, vehicles, trucks, and equipment that can necessitate lane closures, detours, and moving equipment, and can last from a few days to several years. It’s everyone’s job to drive safely through work zones.

**Sharing the Road**

* Work zones present challenges for truck drivers across Oklahoma – 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, stay alert, and do your part while traveling through Oklahoma work zones.
* On average, large trucks are overrepresented in work zone crashes. In 2019, over 32% of fatal crashes involved commercial motor vehicles (CMV) [[2]](#footnote-2).
* Large blind spots, long stopping distances, and size constraints make maneuvering large trucks and buses in work zones particularly challenging. Passenger vehicle drivers 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 and obey signs and signals while traveling through Oklahoma work zones.
* 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.
* 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.

**Oklahoma’s Active Work Zones**

* As you travel through Oklahoma, 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.
* As you travel along I-40 west from the Arkansas state line through Oklahoma City to Erick, stay alert and watch for work zones.Look for signs and signals, reduce your speed, and carefully maneuver around other vehicles.
* There are active work zones that may impact driving on I-40 in Oklahoma, including[[3]](#footnote-3):
  + I-40 narrowed to 1 lane near between Muldrow and Sallisaw, Sequoyah Co.
  + I-40 narrowed to 2 lanes at Douglas Blvd. in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Co.
  + I-40 will be narrowed to 1 lane in one direction at a time between US-270 and I-40 Business in El Reno, Canadian Co.
  + I-40 narrowed to 1 lane at SH-66/Airport Rd. in Weatherford, Custer, Co.
  + I-40 narrowed to 1 lane at Washita River in Clinton, Custer Co.

**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 Oklahoma Department of Transportation also offers state-specific [resources](https://oklahoma.gov/odot/citizen/make-safety-stick-everybody-click.html).

1. The Federal Highway Administration State Ranking for Fatal Crashes Involving CMVs in Work Zones [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)