**Safe Speed Talking Points for Safety Stakeholders: California**

## Why is the safe speed campaign important in california?

* In 2023, unsafe speed contributed to 113,697 crashes, resulting in 546 fatalities and 68,598 injured victims in California.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* During the same year, road users “following vehicles too closely” contributed to 186 total crashes, 1 fatality and 107 injured victims.1
* The campaign will provide the commercial motor vehicle (CMV) community—including drivers and industry stakeholders—with safety tips and other educational resources that remind drivers of the importance of maintaining a safe speed while driving.
* Through this campaign, we can help improve road safety and reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.

## Key Messages and calls to action

* Speeding endangers not only the life of the speeder, but all the people on the road around them. It is everyone’s responsibility to help address this problem.
* CMVs present unique driving challenges because their large size and weight mean slower acceleration and longer braking distances. Safely operating large trucks and buses while obeying California traffic laws can save lives – unsafe driving behaviors can lead to crashes or even deaths on our roads.
  + Large trucks and buses take much longer to stop because of their weight and size. Whether it’s highway travel or slowing for sharp turns, it’s important CMV drivers maintain a safe speed for themselves and others on the road.
  + Driving over the speed limit endangers road users. Maintaining a safe speed helps CMV drivers control their large vehicles and carefully react to changing road conditions.
* It’s important for everyone sharing the road to be aware of the dangers of speeding and follow these tips:
  + Prioritize safety and always maintain a safe speed.
  + Always drive within the speed limit. Speeding can lead to crashes and fatalities.
  + Inspect your vehicle. Ensure you conduct pre-trip safety checks, particularly for tires and brakes. This helps you control speed and your vehicle throughout your trip.
  + Check the weather. Hazardous conditions like rain, sleet, or snow can greatly increase the stopping distance for CMVs. Drive at an appropriate speed to avoid the risk of a crash.
  + Review your route. Be aware of work zones, detours, mountainous terrain, and road conditions to anticipate when a slower speed may be necessary.
  + Reduce speed on curves and ramps. The speed limits posted on curve warning signs are intended for passenger vehicles; CMVs should reduce speed even further. Approach curves and entrance/exit ramps at a safe speed to avoid rollovers.

## Road Safety is Our Priority

* In 2023, I-5, I-10, I-15, I-80, SR-99, and US-101 were identified as California’s high-crash corridors. Stay alert and drive safely on these busy routes to help keep California’s roads safe for everyone.[[2]](#footnote-3)
* Fatal crashes on America’s roadways are rising, and speeding is a crucial contributing factor.
* In 2021 alone, more than 42,939 people died on the road—a 10% increase from the year prior.[[3]](#footnote-4)
* Of large truck-related crashes in 2021, at least 5,788 people died, and approximately 155,000 were injured.[[4]](#footnote-5)
* FMCSA is continuing its work and commitment to keeping large truck and bus drivers—and those operating around them safe—on our roads.
* Large truck and bus drivers are at the core of the CMV community and critical to keeping the American economy, and people, moving, which is why it is imperative that we ensure safety is top of mind for all road users.
* The Safe Speed Campaign is part of FMCSA’s [*Our Roads, Our Safety*](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/ourroads?utm_source=earnedtoolkit&utm_medium=talkingpoints&utm_campaign=cmv_safespeeds)*®* program, which promotes road safety as everyone’s responsibility. The program educates all road users on how to share the road safely with large trucks and buses.

1. [Total Truck Involved Crashes by Severity and Killed/Injured Victims by PCF Violation Category Statewide CHP & Allied Agencies](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:6b581264-824f-4fea-875c-445852dc769f)  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:5d8b3c9b-edc1-446c-9535-e0ae7226c2d7> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813509.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/data-and-statistics/large-truck-and-bus-crash-facts-2021> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)