



POST-COLLISION ESSENTIALS





What to Do At the Scene of a Collision





INTRODUCTION

If you've been in a collision, **stay calm, contact emergency services immediately, and get as much information as you can:**

-  Use this document as a guide to what information you need to collect at the scene of the collision.
-  Take pictures if possible.
-  Don't talk to the other driver except to check on their injuries or collect their contact/insurance information.
-  Don't say it was your fault, even if you think it might be.

Once you know you are safe and physically okay, take a deep breath. Then use this guide to record the information you will need from the scene of the collision.



If you believe that you or anyone else may have been seriously injured or have a medical or mental health emergency, immediately dial 911 or contact emergency services.






HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE THIS AND THE “POST COLLISION ESSENTIALS” SERIES


This document gives you a place to write down important information about how a collision happened and details of the scene.

It is the most helpful when used with other guides in SAFE Support’s “Post Collision Essentials” series. These guides are available in the resource library on SAFE’s website (www.StreetsAreForEveryone.org/Library).


The “Post Collision Essentials” series, along with the “Professional Assistance” and the “Getting Back on Your Feet” series of resources will help you recover physically, emotionally, and financially.


To be most effective, follow these suggestions when writing in SAFE Support documents:


 **Use the templates as a guide to help you record what you’re going through. Make as many copies as you need. Keep your records in a computer, tablet, or notebook, or make photocopies to put in a binder. When available, take advantage of fillable PDF versions to make quick copies for easy digital storage.**


 **Write down your thoughts, feelings, and experiences as soon as you are able, while they are still fresh in your memory. Courts view**


statements that are made soon after a collision as more believable than the ones written down later.

 **Write as much as you need and as often as you need, there is no limit.**

 **Keep your SAFE Support materials where you are likely to see them and fill them out. Your kitchen counter, living room coffee table, or bedroom night table are all great options.**

 **Be honest, detailed, and complete. Use the same words in your SAFE documents as you did in a police report or with your insurance company. Other people may read your words as part of your case or claim. Changing your story can make you seem less reliable.**

 **Scan or save all records of a collision, including receipts, prescriptions, and doctor’s notes.**

 **Visit www.StreetsAreForEveryone.org/safe-support for more information.**



If you believe that you or anyone else may have been seriously injured or have a medical or mental health emergency, immediately dial 911 or contact emergency services.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION
TO COLLECT AND RECORD**

MY INFORMATION

My Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

My Vehicle

License Plate	Make	Model	Driver's License Number
Driver Name	Driver Address	VIN	
Driver Phone		Insurance Company	Policy Number

Names, addresses, and phone numbers of other people in the car with me:



Describe the damage to my vehicle/property:

Describe the injuries, pain, or physical discomfort I feel immediately after the collision:

VEHICLE/PROPERTY #2 INFORMATION

Driver / Owner Name _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Vehicle #2

License Plate	Make	Model	Driver's License Number
Driver Name	Driver Address	VIN	
Driver Phone		Insurance Company	Policy Number



Names, addresses, and phone numbers of any other passengers in vehicle #2:

Describe the damage to vehicle/property #2:

VEHICLE/PROPERTY #3 INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

Driver / Owner Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Vehicle #3

License Plate	Make	Model	Driver's License Number
Driver Name	Driver Address	VIN	
Driver Phone		Insurance Company	Policy Number

Names, addresses, and phone numbers of any other passengers in vehicle #3:

Describe the damage to vehicle/property #3:

WITNESS #1 INFORMATION

Witness #1 Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Witness #1 Status:

- Passenger in a vehicle involved in the collision
- Driver or passenger of a vehicle not involved in the collision



- Pedestrian
- Cyclist
- Other: _____

Witness #1 Role in the Collision:

- "I witnessed the collision and the events immediately leading up to it."
- "I witnessed the collision as it happened but did not see the events leading up to it."
- "I came upon the scene immediately, within seconds of the collision occurring, but did not witness it myself."
- "I came upon the scene more than 1 minute after the collision occurred."

WITNESS #2 INFORMATION

Witness #2 Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Witness #2 Status:

- Passenger in a vehicle involved in the collision
- Driver or passenger of a vehicle not involved in the collision
- Pedestrian
- Cyclist
- Other: _____

Witness #2 Role in the Collision:

- "I witnessed the collision and the events immediately leading up to it."
- "I witnessed the collision as it happened but did not see the events leading up to it."
- "I came upon the scene immediately, within seconds of the collision occurring, but did not witness it myself."
- "I came upon the scene more than 1 minute after the collision occurred."

WITNESS #3 INFORMATION

Witness #3 Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Witness #3 Status:

- Passenger in a vehicle involved in the collision
- Driver or passenger of a vehicle not involved in the collision
- Pedestrian
- Cyclist
- Other: _____

Witness #3 Role in the Collision:

- "I witnessed the collision and the events immediately leading up to it."
- "I witnessed the collision as it happened but did not see the events leading up to it."
- "I came upon the scene immediately, within seconds of the collision occurring, but did not witness it myself."
- "I came upon the scene more than 1 minute after the collision occurred."

COLLISION DETAILS

Describe the collision in your own words:

Date and Time of the Collision:

Location of the Collision:

(Street address, closest intersection, mile marker, city, etc.)

Direction you were traveling:

Number of lanes in your direction: _____

Total number of lanes on the road: _____

Posted Speed Limit: _____

Weather:

(Select all that apply)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Partly Cloudy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny | <input type="checkbox"/> Overcast | |

Lighting:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunrise | <input type="checkbox"/> Night: Streetlights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daytime | <input type="checkbox"/> Night: Moonlight |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunset | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark: Tunnel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Night: Road Unlit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Precipitation:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rain | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fog | <input type="checkbox"/> Hail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snow | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |



Road Surface:

- Concrete
- Black Top
- Gravel
- Other:

Road Conditions:

- Dry
- Wet
- Muddy
- Snowy
- Icy
- Debris
- Potholes
- Construction
- Other:

Road Features:

- Lanes marked with paint
- Lanes marked with cones
- Lanes marked with other:

- Freeway Entrance
- Freeway Exit
- Weaving Lane
- Passing Lane
- Left Turn Lane
- Right Turn Lane
- Middle Turn Lane
- Shoulder
- Parking Lane
- Railroad Crossing
- Protected Bicycle Lane
- Unprotected Bicycle Lane
- Pedestrian Lane
- Sidewalk
- Concrete Median
- Side Rails
- Water Barrels
- Cones
- Rumble Strips
- Reflectors
- Other:

Traffic Control:

(Select all that apply)

- No Traffic Control
- Traffic Lights
- Traffic Officer
- Crossing Guard
- Stop Sign
- Yield Sign
- Railroad Crossing Lights
- Railroad Crossing Gate
- Painted Crosswalk
- Reflector-Lined Crosswalk
- Flashing Lights/ Pedestrian Crossing
- School Zone
- Construction Zone
- Passing Zone (Centerline Dashed)
- No Passing Zone (Centerline Solid)
- Passing Zone in one direction
- Other:

Any other important notes not covered above:



COLLISION RESPONSE DETAILS

Law Enforcement Officer Name:

Law Enforcement Agency:

Badge #: _____

Phone #: _____

Ambulance Company: _____

Ambulance Phone: _____

Name of Hospital You were taken to by Ambulance:

Tow-Truck Driver's Name: _____

Towing Company:

Towing Company Phone: _____



Avoid scams by making sure the towing company is licensed and authorized. Call Freeway Service Patrol (511) or your insurance company to connect with a reputable towing company and make sure the tow truck that shows up is the one you called. For more information, check out SAFE Support's "Post Collision Essentials: How to Find a Reputable Tow Truck Driver".





I'VE BEEN IN A COLLISION...WHAT NOW!? 9 STEPS TO GET BACK ON YOUR FEET - A SUMMARY

There are nine basic actions you should take after a collision to help you get back on your feet.



If you believe that you or anyone else may have been seriously injured or have a medical or mental health emergency, immediately dial 911 or contact emergency services.

1. Document evidence and write down important information.



Write down witness names, contact info, and other important information using “Post Collision Essentials: What to do at the Scene of a Collision”.



Taking photos and gathering other evidence is a task that might make sense for family members and friends that want to help.

2. DO NOT admit fault or give a recorded or written statement without seeking legal advice.



State law requires you to exchange insurance information at the scene of the collision. You are not required to share any other information or statements.



Don't sign any documents or let someone record your voice without talking to an attorney. These statements can be used against you later.



For further information on what to do, see SAFE Support's “Post Collision Essentials: What to do at the Scene of a Collision”.

3. Seek medical care right away and follow your doctor's advice.



If you are hurt, waiting to see a doctor or ignoring their advice can hurt your insurance claim.

4. File a police report.



State law requires filing a report if you are injured or if damages are more than \$500. But it's a good idea to file a report even if you think your damages are less than \$500.



If the collision occurs in the City of Los Angeles, you can use SAFE Support's “Post Collision Essentials: How to Fill Out an Online LAPD Traffic Collision Report” to help you.

5. Contact your insurance company and start an insurance claim.



Your insurance company can refuse to protect you if the collision isn't reported right away. You can find help with filing an insurance claim in SAFE Support's “Professional





Assistance: How and When to File an Insurance Claim”.

- 🚧 Ask your insurance agent about benefits that can help you while waiting to settle your claim. Benefits often include car repair, rental cars, wage loss, or medical bill coverage. Using these benefits shouldn't raise your insurance rates if the collision wasn't your fault.

6. Consult with an attorney.

- 🚧 The first call or meeting with an attorney is almost always free. Ask what assistance they can provide.
- 🚧 Collision victims with attorneys normally recover two to three times as much as people who try to deal with an insurance company on their own. Most attorneys only get paid if you do.
- 🚧 The SAFE Support documents “Professional Assistance: When to Seek Legal Advice” and “Professional Assistance: How to Find a Great Attorney” can help you with this.

7. Get help from SAFE Support.

- 🚧 Crashes are traumatic experiences. Get support from friends and family or professionals. SAFE Support is a family of survivors that offers a support community for you and your family.

8. Start an impact journal and keep records.

- 🚧 Take time to write down how a collision affects your day-to-day life. If you decide to make a claim against the other driver, you will need this information.
- 🚧 Use SAFE Support's “Post Collision Essentials: Medical and Quality of Life Impact Journal” and “Post Collision Essentials: Expense Tracker” to help capture important details.

9. Join our Movement for Safer Streets.

- 🚧 We are a family of people personally affected by collisions and are here to help you get back to a normal life. Healing can include holding drivers accountable and assisting in preventing further crashes. Visit www.StreetsAreForEveryone.org/join-the-movement to learn more.

All documents referenced in this guide are available in the SAFE Support Resource Library at:

www.StreetsAreForEveryone.org/Library.





SAFE SUPPORT

Free support services for survivors of street collisions and their loved ones.

You are not alone.

We are available to provide you with the following services:

- Patient Advocacy
- Medical Issues
- Insurance Difficulties
- On-Line Police Reports
- Post-Collision Resource Guides
- Emotional Support
- Legal Referrals
- Navigating the Justice System
- Remembrance & Speaking Out
- Child & Family Grief Support

Monday through Friday

9 am—5 pm

After-hours available upon request

(844) 204-7233

www.StreetsAreForEveryone.org/safe-support/

StreetsAreForEveryone.org

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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