

NO PASSENGERS ALLOWED

Is it permissible to take someone for a ride in your vehicle? Sometimes you can, but the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations are extremely strict about who, where and when.

There's a good reason for these rules, of course. It has to do with your safety and the safety of any passenger who does come along.

No Hitchhikers

First and foremost, it's against all regulations to pick up hitchhikers. Most people who travel this way simply see it as a cheap form of transportation. But a few of them are dangerous. Some carry weapons. Don't place yourself in danger.

It's also possible that your carrier's insurance doesn't cover the casual traveler. You might get into big trouble if you give a ride to an unauthorized person.

If you get lonely on long stretches, use your radio for company.

In Emergencies

It's all right to transport someone in case of emergency. If a motorist's car breaks down and he needs a lift, by all means give

But There Are Exceptions

Helping others is part of being a professional driver and is

encouraged. But here's a big difference between helping out in an emergency and



picking up hitchhikers.

Get Permission

If your boss gives you permission to take someone along, go ahead. Then it's his responsibility. But get a written statement, which lists the passenger's name, the pick-up and drop-off points, and the date when the approval period ends.

Passenger's Place

The FMCSR says a passenger can ride in the van or trailer only if there is an exit that's easy to open from the inside. Only one person can rest in the sleeper berth when the vehicle is moving.

Safety Considerations

Should you ever suspect that any passenger in your cab has been affected by carbon monoxide, stop driving immediately. You may be affected, too, and it's vital to stop before you grow drowsy

and have an accident. Get emergency help for your passenger, and yourself, if either of you needs it. Determine whether you have an exhaust leak, and if so, get it fixed at once. Air out the cab thoroughly and make sure that you both have recovered fully before continuing.

If you're in an accident with an unauthorized passenger aboard, you're in trouble. If the passenger is injured or killed, your company may have serious problems with its insurance carrier.

There's no need to take chances. Make sure that any passenger you take along has the authorization of your carrier.