SOP Template: Driver Assignment and Dispatch Protocols

This SOP details **driver assignment and dispatch protocols**, including criteria for driver selection, vehicle allocation procedures, scheduling and routing guidelines, communication standards between dispatch and drivers, safety compliance checks, load documentation, and emergency response actions. The objective is to optimize operational efficiency, ensure timely deliveries, and maintain safety and regulatory compliance throughout the transportation process.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for assigning drivers and dispatching vehicles, ensuring compliance, safety, and efficiency in transportation operations.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all dispatchers and drivers involved in company transportation activities.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Dispatcher	Assign drivers, allocate vehicles, oversee communication, monitor compliance, and respond to emergencies.
Driver	Follow assigned schedules, adhere to safety protocols, maintain communication, and complete documentation.
Operations Manager	Ensure SOP implementation, monitor compliance, provide training and make improvements as needed.

4. Procedure

4.1. Driver Selection Criteria

1. Verify valid driver's license and necessary endorsements.
2. Check driver qualification file (DQF) for compliance and up-to-date certifications.
3. Assess experience relevant to load type and route.
4. Review safety record and medical clearance.

4.2. Vehicle Allocation Procedures

1. Assign vehicles based on load requirements, driver certification, and vehicle availability.
2. Ensure pre-trip inspection is completed and documented.
3. Match vehicle capacity to cargo type and quantity.

4.3. Scheduling and Routing Guidelines

1. Prepare daily/weekly schedules according to delivery priorities and customer requirements.
2. Utilize route optimization tools to reduce travel time and costs.
3. Account for driving/rest hours to remain in compliance with hours-of-service regulations.

4.4. Communication Standards

1. Maintain continuous, two-way communication via radio, phone, or onboard systems.
2. Dispatchers provide timely updates on schedules, changes, and incidents.
3. All communications must be logged and archived for reference.

4.5. Safety Compliance Checks

1. Conduct pre-departure safety checklists (vehicle condition, emergency equipment, load security).
2. Verify driver's fitness for duty at the start of each shift.
3. Confirm all regulatory documentation is present (insurance, permits, logbooks).

4.6. Load Documentation

1. Ensure Bills of Lading and other required documents accompany each shipment.
2. Confirm accuracy of cargo details: destination, weight, special handling instructions.
3. Obtain signatures for pick-up and delivery as required for proof of service.

4.7. Emergency Response Actions

1. Instruct drivers to immediately notify dispatch of any accidents, breakdowns, or incidents.
2. Dispatch coordinates with authorities and emergency responders as needed.
3. Complete post-incident reports and follow company investigation procedures.
4. Maintain emergency contacts and procedures accessible to all drivers and staff.

5. Recordkeeping

1. Retain assignment logs, trip sheets, inspection reports, and communication records as per company policy.
2. Maintain confidentiality and data protection standards for all stored information.

6. Training and Review

1. Provide initial and ongoing training for all dispatch and driving staff on SOP compliance and updates.
2. Review and update protocols annually or when regulatory changes occur.

7. References

- Company Transportation Handbook
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR)
- State/Provincial Transportation Laws