

TRANSPORTATION
INDUSTRY GUIDE

Where the Rubber Meets the Road

Driving Better Performance Through
Driver Wellbeing Strategies



The transportation industry faces a variety of critical hiring and retention challenges. Though the average number of job vacancies has improved in the sector the last few years, it remains 1.5 times higher than the average across the overall Canadian economy.¹ At the same time, transportation companies have experienced increased demand for their services without the drivers to meet that demand.²

Growing health and wellness concerns among the workforce are making it harder to attract and retain new talent and posing additional risks to driver safety and performance, which ultimately impacts a fleet operator's bottom line.

Given these challenges, transportation companies must prioritize employee wellbeing as a business imperative and utilize health and benefits strategies as essential tools to retain talent, improve performance and enhance safety.

By adopting holistic wellness models like the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (The Standard), and focusing on drivers' physical, mental and financial health, companies can differentiate themselves and gain a lasting edge in today's competitive market.

The Health Crisis Behind the Wheel

There is a very real health crisis impacting long-haul truck drivers in Canada. Drivers are exposed to significantly higher rates of chronic illness (heart disease, diabetes, obesity, etc.), and are more likely to experience depression, which can lead to risky behaviours like drug or alcohol abuse.³

The main factors that have contributed to these issues are:

- 1. Sleep deprivation and disorders.** A consistent, reliable sleep routine is critical to maintaining physical and mental wellbeing, which is increasingly hard to achieve for long-haul drivers. Thirty to 40% of North American crashes in the heavy truck industry are related to fatigue. And, about 60% of Canadian drivers admitted that they occasionally drove while fatigued, with 15% saying they had fallen asleep while driving during the past year.⁴
- 2. Poor diet, tobacco use, limited exercise.** Drivers that are constantly on the road and under pressure to meet delivery deadlines often don't have time to exercise or find healthy meal options.⁵ Smoking is also prevalent in the industry, with drivers turning to nicotine for its stimulant effects or to stave off boredom.⁶
- 3. Social isolation.** Long work hours, unpredictable transport delays and extended time away from friends and family make it challenging for drivers to form and maintain relationships. This absence of quality connections makes them much more likely to experience depression, loneliness and social isolation.

¹ TruckingHRCanada, "[National Job Vacancy Update](#)"

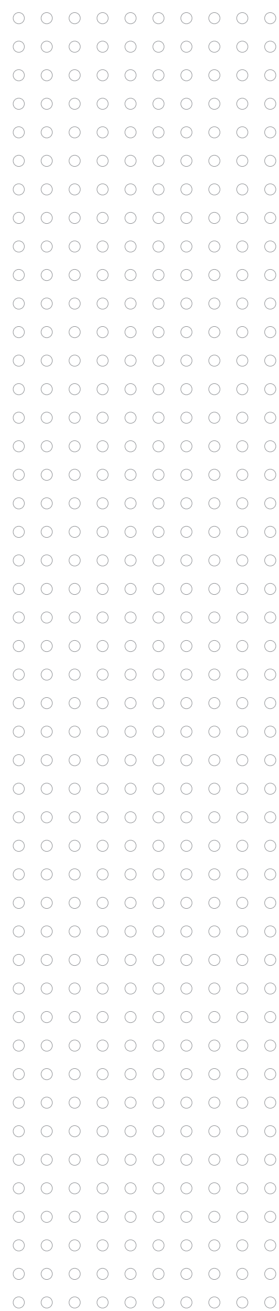
² Statistics Canada, "[Fewer job vacancies for truckers, but demand remains amid supply chain challenges](#)," Oct. 21, 2024.

³ Infrastructure Health & Safety Association, "[Mental health risks, stigma, and improving support in the trucking industry](#)," accessed Sept. 10, 2025.

⁴ IHSA.ca, "[Fatigue Basics](#)," accessed Sept. 10, 2025.

⁵ National Library of Medicine, "[Understanding health needs of professional truck drivers to inform health services: a pre-implementation qualitative study in a Canadian Province](#)," Oct. 10, 2024.

⁶ National Library of Medicine, "[Truck Drivers' Cigarette Smoking and Preferred Smoking Cessation Methods](#)," Aug. 13, 2020.



The bottom line is that the increasing prevalence of poor physical and mental health is actively contributing to increased safety risks, absenteeism and turnover rates impacting the transportation industry.

A Guide to Help Modern Fleet Resilience

Transportation companies can support their drivers' mental health and improve overall employee wellbeing by incorporating the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace's (The Standard) approach. The Standard, developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, offers employers a voluntary set of guidelines, tools and resources to help promote mental health and prevent psychological harm at work.⁷

Organizations that adopt the approach have seen improvements across productivity, risk management, recruitment and employee retention. Some of the top actions taken by employers include implementing respectful workplace policies, offering employee and family assistance programs and increasing mental health awareness among workers — all key steps for improving workplace safety.⁸

⁷ Mental Health Commission of Canada, "[National Standard](#)," accessed Sept. 10, 2025.

⁸ Mental Health Commission of Canada, "[Promising Practices](#)," accessed Sept. 10, 2025.

Retention and Recruitment through Benefits and Culture

The most successful fleets are those that differentiate their approach to improving health and wellbeing through life-enhancing benefits programs.

This approach means going beyond basic healthcare coverage and providing additional support and services, such as:

- Access to mental health and financial wellness assistance.
- Redesigning vehicles to reduce physical strain.
- Implementing flexible policies around childcare and route assignments to enhance work-life balance.
- Supporting financial wellbeing through disability insurance, accident coverage and flexible benefit options.

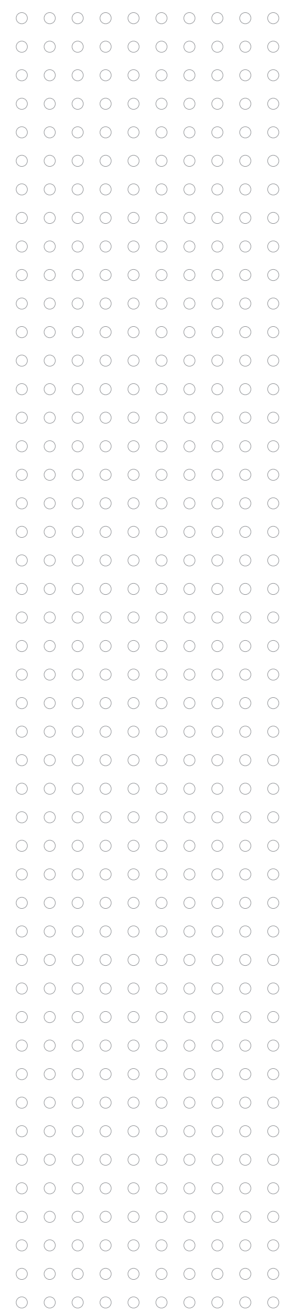
Additionally, leading fleets are increasingly moving away from a one-size-fits-all benefits model and instead implementing more customized benefits approach that supports [quality experiences](#) for all of your employees.

For example, regular mental health screenings can help drivers understand their needs and help employers offer the right resources, whether it's a relevant health podcast or hands-on mental health training. Organizations can also provide customized telemedicine options and other resources to drivers who are independent contractors.

Improving retention isn't just about benefits either — it's about building a driver-centric culture defined by an open commitment to enhancing wellbeing. Transportation companies must take other steps as well, including:

- Upholding trust and transparency as cultural pillars.
- Encouraging driver input to establish consistent feedback loops.
- Celebrating both first-time achievements and long-term excellence.
- Embedding wellness and safety into core values and leadership communications.





Leading fleet operators understand that shifting their approach from reactive to proactive is critical to company sustainability and are implementing integrated systems designed to support driver health, safety and engagement. Organizations that win over talent in the coming years will be those who view driver wellbeing as a strategic imperative rather than a mere perk or compliance objective.

Utilizing Benefits as a Risk Reduction Strategy

Integrating health and wellness into your benefits strategy is also a strategic risk management move that can result in significant competitive advantages and cost-savings opportunities.

Comprehensive benefits programs have been shown to directly reduce some of the biggest operational risks fleets face as a result of poor driver health and impaired performance, such as higher crash risk, slower reaction times and increased fatigue-related incidents.

When done right, wellness programs can:

- Lower workers' compensation claims from health issues before they lead to costly injuries.
- Reduce turnover by improving job satisfaction, building a stronger safety culture and meeting drivers' needs for health and wellness options.
- Cut down on fatigue-related driving events (as measured by telematics), lowering crash frequency and severity.
- Address traditional risk factors, such as chronic health conditions, that can influence liability exposure.

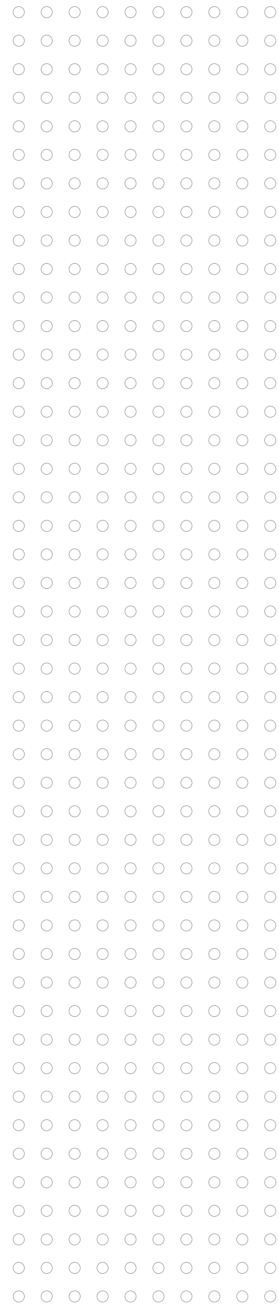
Additionally, a well-executed wellness initiative can help transportation companies gain preferential pricing or terms with auto liability carriers, especially those in captive insurance programs.

With the rise of advanced technologies and evolving industry demands, it's more important than ever to align driver health with operational safety and business performance. To elevate your fleet to one that is truly high-performing and resilient, health and wellness needs to be a core part of your benefits program.

The HUB Advantage: Tapping Into the ROI of Driver Wellbeing

Working with a specialized transportation broker like HUB is a critical component of building a resilient, people-first culture. Your HUB adviser can help design a strategic approach tailored to your operations, driver demographics and insurer expectations. Our advisers can help you navigate regulatory requirements and develop a benefits benchmarking strategy that supports a healthier, more sustainable workforce.

Contact [HUB's transportation risk and insurance specialists](#) to learn more.



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