

How to Handle Car Accidents Involving Commercial Vehicles

Our Pittsburgh attorneys can fight for the compensation you deserve

In the greater Pittsburgh area, we share the road with commercial vehicles every day. These vehicles deliver our goods and help us get around. But sometimes, commercial vehicle owners and operators fail to uphold their duty of care on the road.

Commercial vehicles include trucks, buses, delivery vans, and other vehicles used for business purposes. A [commercial vehicle accident](#) can cause devastating injuries. This can leave victims with mounting medical expenses, lost income, and an uncertain recovery.

What are common commercial vehicle accident injuries?

Injuries from commercial vehicle accidents are often more severe than those from standard car accidents. The size and weight of these vehicles amplify the force of impact, leading to devastating results.

- **Traumatic brain injuries (TBI):** TBIs occur from sudden blows to the head, causing concussions or more severe brain damage. Victims may experience long-term cognitive and emotional impairments.
- **Spinal cord injuries:** The force of a collision can damage the spinal cord, potentially leading to partial or complete paralysis. These injuries often require extensive medical care and rehabilitation.
- **Broken bones:** The impact from a commercial vehicle crash frequently results in fractures. Legs, arms, and ribs are especially vulnerable.
- **Internal injuries:** Crashes can cause internal bleeding or organ damage. These injuries are particularly dangerous because they may not show immediate symptoms.
- **Whiplash and soft tissue injuries:** Sudden movements during a collision can strain muscles, ligaments, and tendons. While these injuries might seem minor, they often result in ongoing pain and limited mobility.

What makes commercial vehicle accidents more complicated than regular car accidents?

Commercial vehicle accidents are more complicated than regular car accidents due to several factors that impact liability, insurance claims, and legal processes. These include:

- Multiple potential liable parties such as drivers, companies, manufacturers, and/or vehicle repair companies.
- [Federal regulations](#) such as hours-of-service, drug screening, and vehicle maintenance laws imposed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

- Higher insurance policy limits due to the potential of major damage in a crash and larger payouts.
- More severe injuries and damage in crashes due to the size and weight of commercial vehicles.
- Complicated evidence gathering, such as black box data, driver logs, and maintenance records.
- Multiple insurance companies and policies involved.
- Strong legal representation from corporations.

Who is typically at fault in a commercial vehicle accident?

Determining fault in a commercial vehicle accident depends on the circumstances of the crash and the parties involved. Unlike regular car accidents, liability in commercial vehicle accidents often extends beyond the driver. Here are the parties that may be found liable:

- **The commercial vehicle driver:** The driver is often held responsible if their negligence caused the crash due to distracted driving, speeding, drowsy driving, impaired driving, or reckless driving.
- **The trucking or transportation company:** Employers can share liability if they fail to hire qualified drivers, provide proper training, maintain their vehicles, and enforce safe driving practices.
- **Vehicle or equipment manufacturers:** If a mechanical defect caused a commercial vehicle accident, the manufacturer or supplier might be liable. For example, defective steering systems or faulty cargo restraints can lead to catastrophic crashes.
- **Cargo loaders or shippers:** Improperly loaded or secured cargo can cause crashes by shifting during transit or falling onto the roadway. Responsibility for loading often lies with third-party contractors or shipping companies.
- **Other drivers:** Non-commercial drivers can also cause accidents involving commercial vehicles. For example, a car cutting off a truck or stopping suddenly could lead to a crash, even if the commercial vehicle driver reacted appropriately.
- **Shared fault:** In some cases, multiple parties share fault. For example, the driver might have been distracted, but the employer also failed to maintain the vehicle's brakes.

How do commercial vehicle companies minimize their liability?

Trucking companies and other commercial vehicle operators have resources at their disposal to limit their liability. They often launch their own investigations immediately after a crash to control the narrative. These investigations, conducted by company-employed adjusters or legal teams, may prioritize protecting the company over uncovering the truth.

Additionally, companies may withhold or alter key evidence, such as driver logs, black box data, or maintenance records. Without legal intervention, this information could remain hidden, which can make proving negligence difficult. An experienced attorney knows how to obtain and preserve evidence through subpoenas, independent investigations, and expert analysis.

What tactics do insurance companies use to keep their costs down?

Commercial vehicle accidents typically involve high-limit insurance policies. That means insurance companies stand to lose a lot of money in a settlement. To reduce their financial obligations, they use various tactics. Here are some examples:

- Insurance companies may argue their client wasn't at fault, even if evidence suggests otherwise.
- Adjusters often question the severity of injuries or claim they were pre-existing.
- Insurance companies may pressure you to accept a settlement that only covers a small portion of your total damages.
- The at-fault party's insurer may prolong negotiations, hoping that you'll accept a lowball settlement offer.

An experienced Florida commercial vehicle accident attorney understands these strategies and can counter them by building a strong case, negotiating aggressively, and taking the matter to court if necessary.

What evidence will a lawyer look for in a commercial vehicle accident case?

Building a strong case after a commercial vehicle accident requires thorough evidence collection. A lawyer will investigate every aspect of your commercial vehicle accident to establish liability, prove damages, and protect your rights. Here's what they typically look for:

- Photographs and video footage from the crash scene
- Witness statements
- The official police report from the responding agency
- Event data recorders (EDRs) that log speed, braking patterns, and driver behavior
- Maintenance logs and inspection reports
- Driver logs that track their hours of service
- Drug and alcohol testing records
- Evidence of negligent hiring, such as employing unqualified or inexperienced drivers

What damages can I recover after a commercial vehicle crash?

If you've been injured in a commercial vehicle accident, you may be entitled to compensation for the losses you've suffered. The damages you can recover include:

- Current and future medical costs for treatments such as hospital stays, surgeries, rehabilitation, medications, and assistive devices.
- Current and future income you've lost during your recovery.
- Repair or replacement costs for your vehicle and any other personal property damaged in the crash.
- Out-of-pocket expenses such as transportation to medical appointments, home modifications, or hiring help for tasks you can no longer perform due to your injuries.
- Non-economic damages such as pain and suffering, emotional distress, loss of enjoyment of life, and loss of consortium.

Let our Pittsburgh attorneys fight for justice on your behalf

If you've been hurt in a commercial vehicle accident in the greater Pittsburgh area, you need more than just a lawyer. You need an ally who will fight for you every step of the way. The attorneys at [Romanow Law Group](#) know what it takes to win. Commercial vehicle companies and their insurance providers often go to great lengths to deny responsibility, but we don't back down.

Our team can build a strong case, uncover hidden evidence, and take on the toughest opponents to get the maximum compensation you deserve. Don't let insurance companies pressure you into accepting less than what you're owed. [Contact us online](#) or call us today to schedule a free, no-obligation case consultation.