

**The following provides tips on avoiding becoming an aggressive driver and offers guidance on handling emergency situations while driving. It advises leaving early for trips, maintaining calmness, and not escalating situations with other drivers. In emergency scenarios like potential collisions, it recommends actions such as slowing down, turning, or speeding up depending on the situation. Furthermore, it outlines responses to common vehicle emergencies like brake failure, tire blowout, power failure, headlight failure, and a jammed gas pedal, emphasizing the importance of staying calm and acting swiftly to ensure safety.**

**TIPS TO AVOID BECOMING AN AGGRESSIVE DRIVER** Leave early for any trip. Too frequently people don't allow enough time to get where they want on time. Expect others to make mistakes. Keep calm. Don't transfer the anger you may feel from other situations into your driving. Let people merge, even if they've done something uncourteous. Don't make their problem your problem. **EMERGENCIES** Should a driver encounter an emergency situation, being prepared and knowing how to respond can minimize the chance of more serious outcomes. **Avoiding collisions:** When it looks like a collision may happen, many drivers panic and fail to act or act in a way that does not reduce the chance of the collision. There almost always is something you can do to avoid the crash or reduce the results of the crash. To avoid a collision, drivers have three options: ● Slow down or stop ● Turn ● Speed up **Stopping quickly:** Most vehicles have an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) that will help you stop without skidding. Be sure to read the vehicle owner's manual on how to use the ABS. In general, if you need to stop quickly: ● With ABS: Apply the brakes with hard, firm pressure. You might feel the brake pedal pushing back when Colorado Driver Handbook 25 Colorado Driver Handbook the ABS is working. Do not let up on the brake pedal. The ABS system will only work with the brake pedal pushed down. ● Without ABS: You can cause the vehicle to go into a skid if you brake too hard. Apply the brakes as hard as you can without locking them. If the brakes lock up, you will feel the vehicle start to skid. Slightly let up on the brake pedal. As soon as the vehicle stops skidding, press the brake pedal again. Keep doing this until the vehicle has stopped. **Turning quickly:** In most cases, you can turn the vehicle quicker than you can stop it. You should consider turning in order to avoid a collision if it does not risk causing another collision. Make sure you have a good grip with both hands on the steering wheel. Once you have turned away or changed lanes, you must be ready to keep the vehicle under control. ● With ABS: One aspect of having ABS is that you can turn your vehicle while braking without skidding. This is very helpful if you must turn and stop or slow down. ● Without ABS: If you do not have ABS, you must use a different procedure to turn quickly. Step on the brake pedal, but then let up and turn the steering wheel. Braking will slow the vehicle some, the brake should be released before making an evasive turn. Do not lock up the front wheels while braking or turn so sharply that the vehicle can only plow ahead. ● Another consideration is that generally it is better to run off the road than to crash head-on into another vehicle. **Speeding up:** Sometimes it is necessary, to speed up to avoid a collision. This may happen when another vehicle is about to hit you from the side or from behind and there is room to the front of you to get out of danger. Be sure to slow down once the danger has passed. **Animals:** Always stay alert for animals in or near the roadway, particularly in rural and mountainous regions and between dusk and dawn when approximately 90% of crashes with deer and elk occur. Upon entering a designated animal crossing, the first precaution should be to slow down and look for animals. If there are animals near the roadway, slow down and proceed with extreme caution. There may be occasions when an animal suddenly runs in front of your vehicle which can present a hazard, particularly large game animals that may cause the motorist to take drastic evasive action to prevent a collision that may result in losing control of

the vehicle. This may result in a more serious crash than if the vehicle collided with the animal. Regretfully, the safest alternative for passengers may be hitting the animal. Concentrate on retaining control of the vehicle before, during, and after the collision with the animal. **VEHICLE EMERGENCIES** Following the recommended vehicle maintenance schedule in the vehicle owner's manual greatly reduces the chance that a vehicle will have a problem. The following section notes some possible vehicle failures and what you can do if they happen. **Brake failure:** Take your foot off the accelerator. Pump the brake pedal several times. This will often build up enough brake pressure to allow you to stop. If that does not work, use the parking brake. Pull on the parking brake handle or push on the parking brake pedal slowly so you will not lock the rear wheels and cause a skid. Be ready to release the brake if the vehicle starts to skid. If that does not work, shift to lower gears and look for a safe place to slow to a stop. Make sure the car is off the roadway. Don't drive the vehicle without brakes. **Tire blowout:** Hold the steering wheel tightly, and keep the vehicle going straight as you slow down gradually. Take your foot off the gas pedal and use the brakes lightly. Do not stop on the road if possible. Once you have slowed, pull off the road in a safe place. **Power failure:** Keep a strong grip on the steering wheel. Be aware that the steering may be difficult to turn but you can turn it. Pull off the roadway. The brakes will still work but you may have to push very hard on the brake pedal. **Headlight failure:** Pull off the road as soon as possible. Try the headlight switch a few times. If that does not work, put on the emergency flashers, turn signals or fog lights, if you have them. **Jammed gas pedal:** Keep your eyes on the road. Quickly shift to neutral. Pull off the road when safe to do so. Turn off the engine.