



The State of Trucking 2023

A DRIVER'S GUIDE



Introduction

Those who have been in the industry a long time have weathered many storms of the past. And many will tell you that trucking is often a barometer for the state of our economy. Because transportation is such a critical piece of our country's infrastructure — when transportation thrives, so does the U.S. While it seems like the challenges in the industry are never ending after the pandemic, there is still more ahead.

Our fourth annual State of Trucking survey hoped to gather how drivers are feeling before we head into turbulent times ahead. See how you measure up against your peers, where the industry stands as a whole and what the future may bring.

An Economic Storm is Brewing

The economy has taken quite a few hits in the last couple of years and this downturn seems like a long time coming. We are still feeling the aftershocks of the chaos and upheaval caused by the pandemic. Rising inflation, interest rates, layoffs and talks of a recession still loom large across the country.

And trucking is, unfortunately, no exception. Over half (51%) of transportation employers feel we are in a recession right now—despite media, government officials and economic experts steering clear of the word for months.

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Drivers are starting to feel the squeeze too. 46% of drivers we surveyed said they would be taking on more driving jobs in 2023. Additionally, over 60% of drivers reported they were not looking to change jobs this year—opting for stability in turbulent times. All in all, trucking is pointing to an economic recession or at least a slowdown.

A Driver's Market

Since the pandemic, the job market has significantly shifted and trucking seems to be following these trends. Before, it was often an employer calling the shots and now it is often the reverse. Employers are still struggling to find enough drivers and retain the drivers they already have. But our survey showed drivers can afford to be picky about jobs and benefits. Over 65% reported that finding and applying for jobs is easy.

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Adding to the picture, retention seems to be top of mind for employers this year. And drivers were clear about their priorities in our survey. A majority of drivers are looking for better pay and a stronger work-life balance from employers. Stability and better benefits also ranked high on the list of what would motivate a driver to switch jobs.

more than
45%

of drivers surveyed have been driving **for more than 15 years**

We also wanted to dig deeper into the life and priorities of drivers. We wanted to know what you looked for in a job, why you love driving and more. Our survey also showed that many drivers are in this profession for life. More than 45% of drivers surveyed have been driving for more than 15 years. Our results showed that on average, most drivers take about one driving job per month. In addition to that, more than half said they prefer local routes, showing that drivers like stability, consistency and a balanced home life.

Working for Centerline, means you can always prioritize your work-life balance. We work hard to make sure our drivers get home at night with local routes for steady hours and competitive pay.

Safety is Top of Mind



Year after year, this is a big issue for drivers and employers. For the fourth year running, it's the number one thing that keeps employers up at night. And 32% of drivers surveyed worry about making it home to their family and 20% are concerned about their safety on the road. In addition, 46% of drivers say they don't feel safe on the road today, mainly due to reckless drivers. But other things like other distracted drivers on the road (69%) and fatigue (67%) are top concerns for drivers as well and continue to impact their ability to be safe every day.

There are efforts to change this across the industry and among employers. 75% of employers plan to increase safety measures in 2023.

When asked what they plan to do many said:

Safety meetings

Additional trainings

Hiring safety specialists

Adding in new technology to monitor safety

Offering incentives for safe driving

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Born to Drive

We also asked drivers what they enjoyed about driving and what they do on the road. When asked what they love about driving, our survey responders said they love the road for opportunities to travel to somewhere new, its independence, the pay and the stability of driving because they are so in demand.

The most popular bucket list driving destinations were Alaska, Hawaii, Montana Florida and Maine. Even with short haul drives, the hours on the road can be long. We asked drivers what they enjoyed listening to while driving.



The top types of music are:

-  R&B
-  Classic Rock
-  Hip Hop/Rap
-  Country
-  Pop

Staying healthy on the road was also a priority, according to our survey. Of those surveyed, 62% make an effort to eat healthy on the road, 43% prepare meals ahead of time, 61% exercise and 23% meditate regularly.



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61%

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23%

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However, there are consequences for not leading a healthy life. More than half reported that they have gained weight while working as a truck driver. The most common health challenge on the road was the ability to find healthy food or non-fast food while driving.

On a positive note, of those who maintain healthy habits – 85% reported not having any ailments due to driving. If you are having trouble maintaining a healthy lifestyle, **[check out our collection of articles to help get you started.](#)**

The Road Ahead

Overall, the year ahead may be a bumpy one. The economy is headed into a period of unpredictability and trucking is no exception. However, truck drivers are still the backbone of what makes this country run. Their priorities have not drastically changed from year to year. Most want better pay, stability and a good work-life balance. Only time will tell if employers match these demands under the circumstances.

Through Any Weather, Drivers Have Seen It All

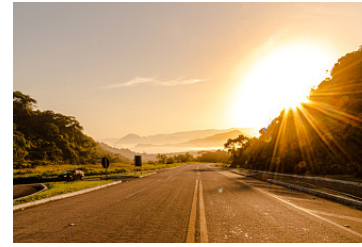
Drivers shared their most memorable stories from the last year. Here are a few of their stories.



"Driving through the mountains of Maine and Vermont. It looked like I was driving through the North Pole."



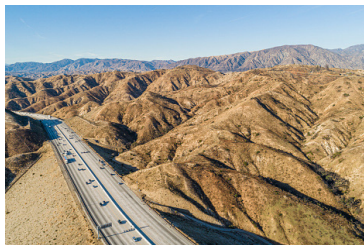
"I once witnessed a tornado form in West Texas."



"Seeing nice sunset skies."



"Driving through Utah in the snow. Gorgeous scenery."



"Going to California for the first time seeing the deserts and mountains — beautiful view."



"Car hauling in Florida is the most memorable. Beautiful night, clear skies lights from distant cities and 85 degrees. I truly felt at peace"



"Whenever I'm on a road that I've never been on and I see a sunset or sunrise."

Centerline Drivers wants to help you find the perfect placement.

We focus on fit – working with transportation departments in top companies to expertly match your skills, shift and equipment preferences and lifestyle to open positions. We want to find you local routes with steady, reliable hours and competitive pay. Driving with Centerline means you still get to live your life.

Centerline has a team of dedicated, responsive recruiters who will work with you. With support every step of the way, Centerline makes it easy for you to find your perfect next position fast.

Interested in applying? [View jobs now.](#)

METHOD

This research was the result of a survey of more 400 truck drivers nationwide.