

GUIDE

Motor Vehicle Records 101

*Everything You Need to Know About
Using MVRs in Your Safety Program*



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Introduction

Ensuring that your employees are legally qualified to drive and stay within the standards set in your safety policy are critical steps in maintaining a strong safety culture.

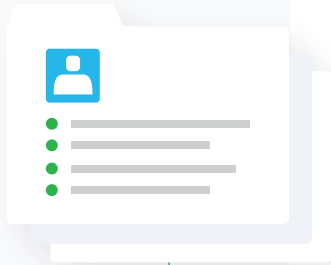
Over the years, the roads have become more dangerous to navigate. Between the rise in distracted and impaired driving, speeding and other reckless behaviors, you must be certain that your drivers are prioritizing the safety of themselves and those they share the road with.

Beyond poor driver behavior, around 3 to 5% of individuals on the roads are driving with a suspended license (SambaSafety). These drivers pose an extreme risk to your company and the population as a whole, as 19% of all U.S. driving fatalities involve drivers with invalid licenses¹.

That's why it's imperative to obtain and stay on top of motor vehicle records (MVRs) during both the hiring process and throughout the time an employee drives on behalf of your company.

In this guide, we explore the basic fundamentals of an MVR, how they're used and how often they should be pulled. We also provide a comprehensive checklist to help you better analyze these reports and ensure all drivers meet the necessary standards set in your safety policy.

¹ [carinsurance.com](https://www.carinsurance.com)



What Is an MVR?

Put simply, an MVR provides an individual's recent and historical driving record, compiled and administered by a specific state's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). It features documented incidents and specific violations that have occurred over a certain time period.

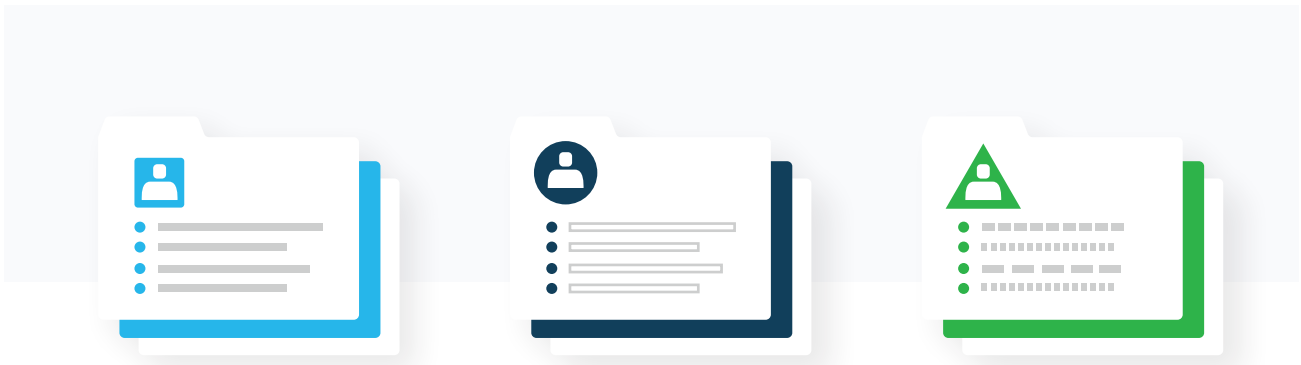
What Does an MVR Provide?

An MVR typically includes:

- Personal information pertaining to the driver (name, address, physical attributes, date of birth, etc.)
- License number and status (whether it's valid, invalid, suspended or revoked)
- Violations and convictions (speeding tickets, moving traffic violations, crashes, etc.)
- Any existing suspensions and revocations
- Other license and permit information (license class, endorsements, restrictions, etc.)
- Miscellaneous data (dependent on what's provided by the specific state, such as state disclaimers, restrictions or if the driver has an ignition interlock device)

If a violation or crash is reported, the violation information may include:

- Violation description
- Violation location
- Incident date
- Conviction date
- Points



Are All MVRs the Same?

DMVs do not use a standardized format for MVRs, so the information provided depends on what is required by the state. This makes analyzing driver data an incredibly challenging task, especially when it comes to violations.

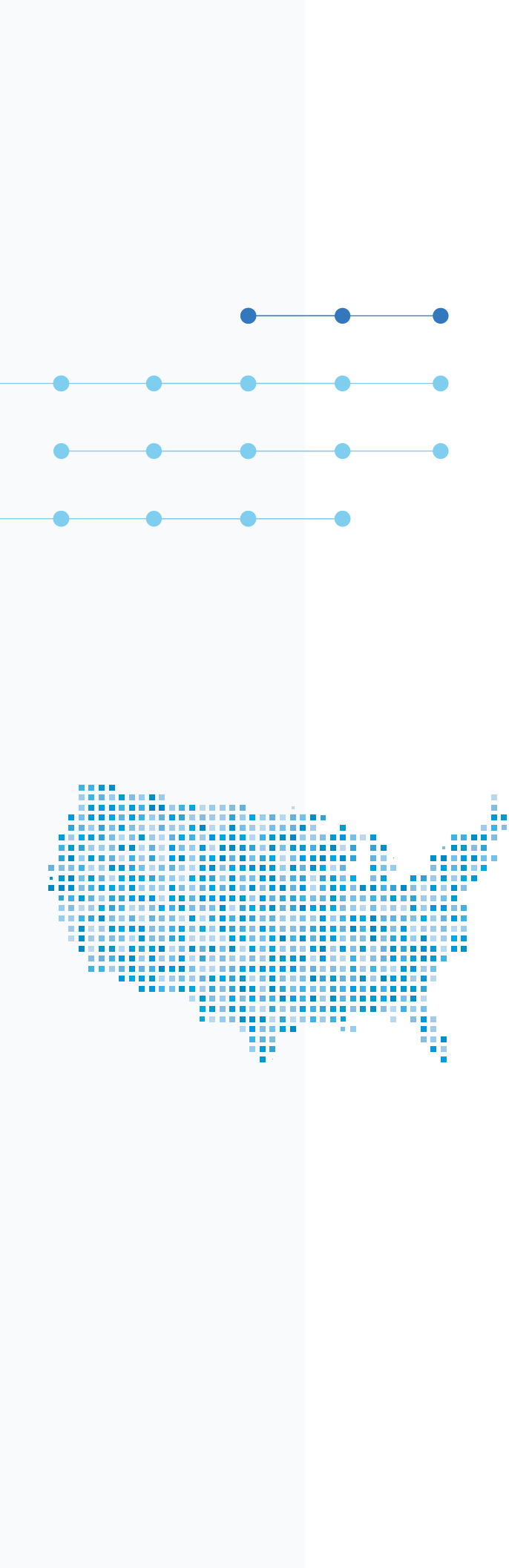
Driver violations are typically categorized by a group of standardized codes found in the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) Code Dictionary (ACD). The ACD is a set of codes used nationwide to identify the type of driver conviction or reason for a driver withdrawal. The challenge that arises here is that there's no nationally-adopted practice or requirement for states to assign an ACD code to every violation listed. So, while some states do include them in their reports, some don't report violation codes at all.

This requires those reviewing MVRs to determine how similar violations correspond to tens of thousands of codes. Speeding alone has a laundry list of ACD codes that a violation could potentially

fall under. The code that may be provided for a specific speeding violation is then dependent on what level of detail the jurisdiction has access to, such as the speed limit or actual speed driven. These details factor into which code is best fit for the violation.

For example, a violation in one state may report that the driver was SPEEDING 15 mph or more (S15) while another will list the same violation as SPEEDING 45 in a 30 (S92) if they are provided with more specific detail surrounding the violation.

The amount of information provided throughout other sections of an MVR also varies. For example, some states, such as Florida and Maryland, are far more verbose when including miscellaneous data that's provided at the bottom of an MVR. North Carolina and Wisconsin also provide a full license class history beyond the current license information that's typically offered. States like Texas even offer several versions of an MVR, categorized by specific driver record "Types."



How Far Back Does an MVR Go?

As there is no nationally-set standard for how far back an MVR goes, the timeframe also depends on the state in which the driver operates. Each state's DMV has its own laws that dictate how far back a report goes. While some states offer as little as three years of driving history, some states' MVRs go as far back as seven years.

How Much Does an MVR Cost?

The cost of accessing MVRs also varies by state and is subject to change. As of 2023, the average jurisdiction fee that's charged by the state is between \$10-12 nationwide. Some states, such as Colorado, offer MVRs for just a few dollars, while states like Oklahoma charge closer to \$28.

When Should MVRs Be Used?

As an employer, your company is held liable for your employees' actions each and every time they get behind the wheel.

That's why MVRs should be reviewed both during the hiring process and on a continuous basis throughout an employee's entire tenure at your company. This process works to:

- Ensure each driver's license is in good standing, and that they hold the right type of license according to their role at your company
- Confirm that their current and past driving record meets the standards set in your company's driver safety policy – before and after they are hired
- Identify which employees are in need of intervention in order to remain qualified to drive
- Reduce your company's liability, in turn reducing insurance rates and the likelihood of costly litigation
- Protect your greatest asset (your drivers), as well as your fleet, your reputation and the communities you serve



How Often Should MVRs Be Pulled?

To start, there are federal rules surrounding MVR checks. These checks are a mandatory part of the hiring process for any business that falls under the regulations of the Department of Transportation (DOT).

For transportation companies specifically, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) also requires pre-employment MVR checks in every state where a CDL license was held within the previous three-year period. These companies must also review MVRs annually to ensure their drivers maintain the proper driver requirements².

But these mandated checks should be considered the bare minimum, as MVRs only offer a snapshot of time. Even when companies pull MVRs quarterly or bi-annually, the amount of time, money and manpower it takes to manually pull and compare these records is considerably high. And beyond the administrative burden, the company is yet again

in the dark about any future violations, incidents and suspensions until the next round of MVR pulls. This creates what we refer to as the “visibility gap.”

LET'S DO THE MATH:

If a company has **1,000 drivers**, and it takes an estimated **15 minutes**

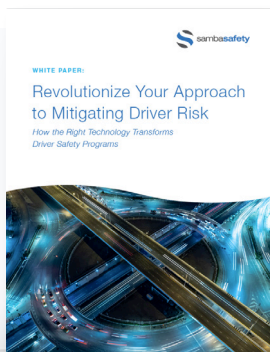
to request and analyze an MVR for each driver, the annual MVR process will take at least **250 hours.**

This equates to an astounding **six-person team**

working exclusively on this process for

one 40-hour week.

Thankfully, technology now exists that works to close the gap between annual MVR pulls. It continuously alerts companies of new license and driver activity so that quick interventions can be implemented before a driver becomes disqualified.



Discover How Technology Can Transform MVR Checks, Intervention Strategies and More

DIVE INTO OUR GUIDE

² [fmcsa.dot.gov](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov)

How to Read an MVR

Below, we provide a top-to-bottom overview of important components that are included in an MVR.

TOP OF THE MVR

State that Produced this record



MVR for Driver's Name

HAPPY COMPANY HAPPY VALE 101 ORANGEVALE, CA 95662
INDIANA Driver Record - B5544 **Order Date: 11/28/2022** **Seq #: 0**

Host Used:	Overnight	Bill Code:	Driver Address Information
Rec Type:	STANDARD	Reference:	
		License:	
		Name:	
		Address:	

Sex:	Weight:	DOB:	Age:
Eyes: P.I.I.	Height: P.I.I.	Iss Date:	Current License Dates
Hair:		Exp Date:	

Approx. Year Lic. First Issued: 1980 STATUS: **Current License Status for the driver**

At the top of the MVR, there are details provided about the account that placed the order, the date that the order was placed, the driver's personally identifiable information (PII) and license status.

MIDDLE OF THE MVR

Violation codes assigned by the State & categorized

Violations/Convictions			Failures To Appear		Accidents							
TYPE	VIOL	CONV	ACD	AVD	V/C	DESCRIPTION	C	SPEED	LOCATION/TICKET	ACCD	AT FAULT	PT
VIOL	08/06/2019	09/12/2019	S92	SA01	-	SPEEDING	N		MOORESVILLE TOWN/551011908IF001382			2
VIOL	08/10/2019	09/09/2019	F04	EB02	-	SEAT BELT VIOLATION	N		CLAY SUPERIOR/11D011908IF000765			-
VIOL	11/12/2019	10/23/2020	S92	SA01	-	SPEEDING	N		TERRE HAUTE CITY/84H011911IF007098			2
VIOL	05/01/2021	05/01/2021	D35	DE05	-	FAIL TO PROV PROOF OF INS FOR ACCI	N		SEF COURT/99999BMV DETER			-

Suspensions/Revocations									
ACTIONS	ORD/DATE	EFF/DATE	CLEAR/DATE	END/DATE	CODE	AVD	DESCRIPTION	NEW	SUSP
SUSPENSION	10/27/2020	01/25/2021			-	UE06	FTA FOR DRIVER SAFETY PROGRAM		

Indicates no PTs have been assessed

The mid-section of the MVR lists all applicable driver violations and suspensions that have occurred, as well as the corresponding state points. The amount of violation/suspension detail displayed will depend not only on what the state reported but also the current standing of the action against the driver in terms of being completed with the court or state.

On the far right of this section, state points assigned to a driver appear under the points (PTs) section. If a dash symbol “-” appears in place of the assigned points, this means state points have not been assessed for that violation.

If no suspensions or violations have taken place for a driver – the “Violation” and “Suspension” sections will display ***NO ACTIVITY *** or ***NONE TO REPORT***. This contributes to what is considered a “clean” MVR. Clean MVRs showcase a driver with a valid license status with no violations, convictions, suspensions or revocations.

BOTTOM OF THE MVR

CDL Medical Information

Self Certificate Type	Issued	Effective	Expiration	Downgraded	Status
Medical Examiner Name	Phone	License	State	Speciality	Registry Number

Med. Cert detail - the type of Med Cert will determine how much information is displayed here

Miscellaneous State Data

PROOF CODE SR22 NOT NEEDED

PROOF CODE SR22 NOT NEEDED

ADDRESS: 1708 S 32ND ST # 26

ADDRESS: 1708 S 32ND ST # 26

ADDRESS: 1708 S 32ND ST # 26

TOTAL STATE POINTS: 6

REINSTATEMENT FEE: \$0.00

NO INSURANCE FEE: \$0.00

EXPIRATION DATES IN THIS DOCUMENT MAY HAVE BEEN EXTENDED PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE
OR LEGISLATIVE ACTION OF THE ISSUING JURISDICTION RELATED TO COVID-19.
PLEASE CONSULT WITH THE JURISDICTION FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

SCORE 19: EXCEPTION

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION - TO BE USED AS PER STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.
MISUSE MAY RESULT IN A CRIMINAL PROSECUTION

END OF REPORT FOR **Driver Name**

(CONTROL NUMBER: **Order ID**)

**Additional Notes from the
state about the Driver**



The final section of the MVR includes the current (and, in some states historic) license information on the driver. Detail on license status, type and driver-specific endorsements and restrictions are included here if they apply.

Following license information, if the driver maintains a Medical Certificate (Med Cert) for any reason with the state, the information on that certificate is displayed here. The type of Med Cert will determine

what and how much information is reported for the driver.

Each MVR is then concluded with any miscellaneous notes that have been provided by the state for the driver. This information may include details on driver correction courses completed, license history, historic notes on suspensions or other activity, state disclaimers, restrictions, crash information, change in the state of license, etc.

5 Questions to Consider When Reviewing MVRs

Now that you have a high-level understanding of what's reported on MVRs, let's dive a little deeper into how this information can be leveraged to inform your driver safety program. Below, we provide a helpful checklist that explores important factors to look out for when reviewing MVRs.

1. Does the Driver's Story Match?

MVRs tell a story that may or may not match up with who an individual claims to be. This is a critical step during the hiring process, ensuring that the information provided on an application and throughout the interview process reflects the information that's generated during their MVR check. It also ensures drivers are honest about any past driving history that may affect their eligibility to drive on behalf of your company.

If your company requires current drivers to self-report any incidents they may be involved in throughout the course of their employment, an MVR will also confirm whether or not they are keeping you in the loop and that nothing has slipped through the cracks.

2. Is Their License Valid?

As we mentioned before, 3-5% of drivers are operating with an invalid license. It's critical to ensure that anytime a driver gets behind the wheel, they are legally qualified to do so.

Beyond disqualifications for crashes and accumulated violations, licenses can also be suspended for factors relating to unpaid child support and other administrative reasons that may not directly pertain to driving. It's also common for drivers to be unaware that these types of suspensions even exist, so your company must remain diligent about checking license statuses on a continuous basis.

3. If They Are a CDL Driver, Do They Meet the Proper Requirements?

From license classes to endorsements and Med Certs, there are certain licensing and certification requirements that must be met for drivers to operate commercial vehicles. These requirements may depend on the specific vehicle that the driver uses, what they are transporting and where. It's critical to ensure that your drivers meet these requirements and that they are proactively updating their licensing come renewal time.

4. Is the MVR "Clean"?

As we mentioned above, a clean MVR includes a valid license status with no violations, convictions, suspensions or revocations in the driver's history. In other words, a driver with a clean MVR is legally permitted to get behind the wheel.

5. What if the MVR is Not Clean?

In the case that the driver's MVR is not clean, there are two things your company should consider before permitting the individual to drive:

What violations exist?

Violations can be broken down into two main categories – major and minor violations. Major violations are serious offenses that result in fines and jail time (DUIs, reckless driving, driving with a suspended or invalid license, etc.), while minor violations include speeding, running a red light or failing to yield.

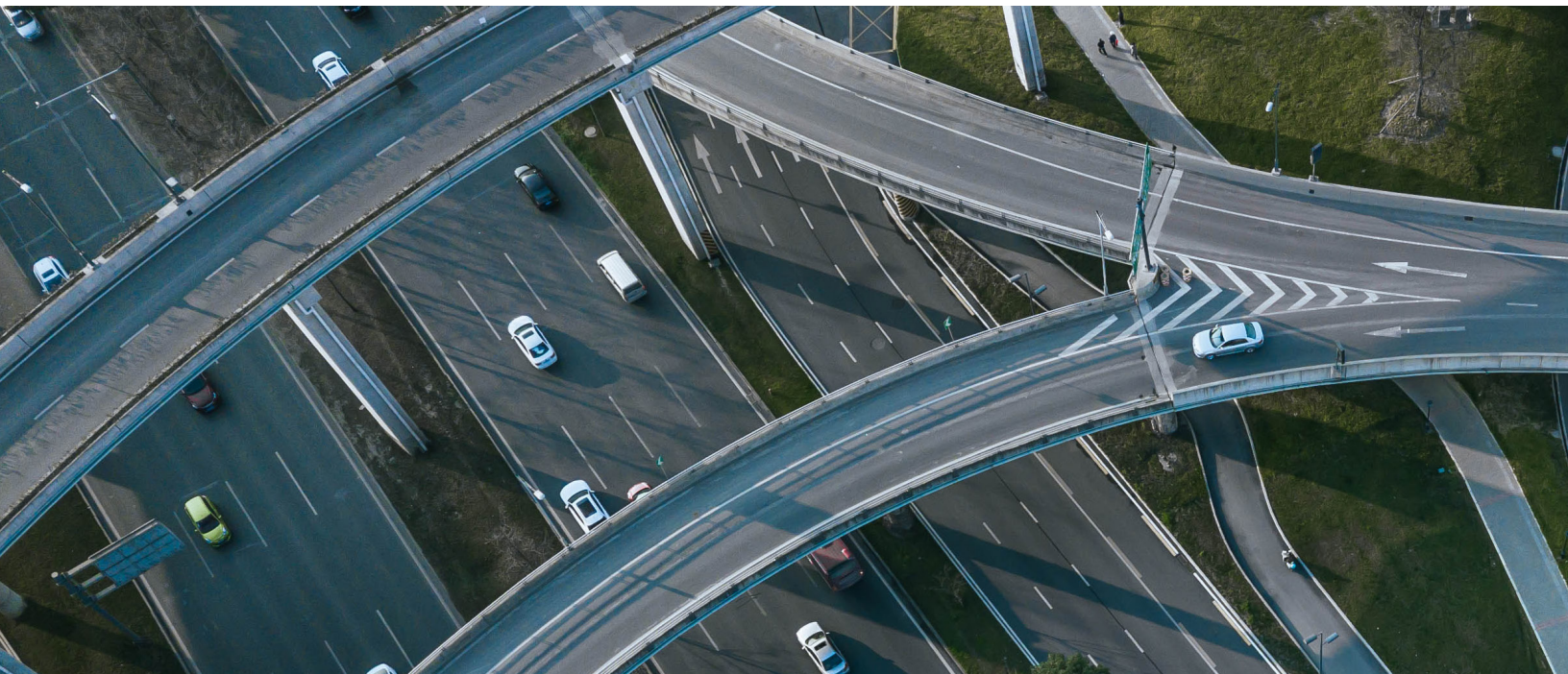
Do the violations still meet the standards set in your safety policy?

It's important to distinguish major versus minor traffic violations to help decide if they are categorized as tolerable or intolerable risk within your company's safety policy. While major violations are intolerable and disqualify a driver, tolerable risk may be remediated with the right interventions.

PRO TIP: *It's possible that the candidates you initially reject due to minor driving record blemishes could actually be safe, reliable and qualified drivers if they're properly trained. We refer to this as "premedial training." This unique intervention strategy can create a great opportunity for expanding your hiring pool and combatting ongoing driver shortages.*

Download our helpful checklist to discover how premedial training can safely expand your hiring pool.

For those already driving on behalf of your company, these minor violations may also be remediated with targeted training that can correct poor driving behavior and get them safely back on the road before they are disqualified due to a crash or other serious violation.



Simply Meeting Safety Regulations Won't Reduce Your Company's Risk

While there are federal rules surrounding MVRs and general fleet safety that companies must comply with, these are merely a legal baseline when it comes to effectively mitigating risk. Companies must implement more intentional strategies to protect their drivers, brand reputation and bottom line.

In our guide, How to Implement a Comprehensive Driver Safety Program, we provide a deep dive into the fundamental steps companies must take to establish a strong culture of safety. Visit the link below to discover all six!

[DOWNLOAD GUIDE](#)



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