



Company Vehicle Use Manual

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Policy statement

Policy statement regarding the provision of a vehicle to carry out work-related business

The Health and Safety Executive now regard existing Health and Safety laws as applying to anyone driving a vehicle as part of their work. It is now essential therefore that the company has a controlled and auditable management process in place to protect itself and its employees.

Driving any vehicle carries significant risk of injury or death. The company takes very seriously its duty of care to ensure that all drivers using company vehicles or driving any vehicle on company business in any circumstances do so in a manner that minimises the risk, both to the employee and the company.

The company has identified that motor vehicles are a necessary requirement for the fulfilment of its business. This Driver Vehicle Handbook, agreed by the directors, sets out all the rules, processes and regulations that the company and all drivers will follow.

Within the handbook, specific requirements and tasks are set out. Anyone using a vehicle must comply with these requirements. Failure to do so will result in the company treating the matter as a disciplinary issue.

There should be no misunderstanding with regard to the company's policy relating to the provision and use of vehicles.

Please study the handbook, comply with its requirements and share in the significant benefits for everyone as a result of safer driving.

The company's and driver's responsibilities

The provision and use of road vehicles is absolutely necessary for the survival and success of the company's business. These vehicles are 'tools of the trade' and must be managed, maintained and used so that the company complies with all health and safety laws. These laws apply to 'on the road' work activities as much as they do to all other work activities.

Serious or fatal consequences can be caused to members of the public, the employee or the company due to human error or misuse of a company vehicle. In so far as its own vehicles and drivers are concerned, it is the company's intention to actively manage and control the risk (occupational road risk or ORR) which arises from this use.

The results of improper or careless vehicle use include increased costs and inefficiency, imprisonment or serious or fatal injury. By carefully managing the vehicles and the users of them, it is possible to increase safety, avoid injury or fatality, increase efficiency and also profitability. The company therefore places heavy emphasis on the proactive and

constructive management of its vehicles, the employees who use them and its management of ORR.

The intention of this document is to supply the basic rules and guidance for the use of vehicles being used on the company's business. This forms an important part of the company's management of ORR.

It is essential that all authorised drivers familiarize themselves with the contents of this document, as there may be financial penalties arising if certain requirements are ignored. The company may not accept liability for any expenditure as a result of failure on the part of any driver to comply with these documented requirements in relation to driving, operating or maintaining a company vehicle.

Employees who drive whilst working for the company are required to co-operate fully with the management of ORR. In return, the employee, the company and the public at large can only benefit from the successful management of this important part of our business.

The company reserves the right to withdraw a vehicle or the permission to use a vehicle at any time, particularly in the event of the employee failing to comply with any of the terms and conditions of its use.

Health and safety

Policy

The policy statement issued by the company underlines the absolute commitment to create and maintain a safe working environment. When adhered to it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, help to safeguard the interests of the company and the health and safety of its employees who drive in the course of their employment.

There is a legal duty for employees to follow company guidance, taking reasonable care for themselves and for the safety of others whilst at work and this includes driving during the course of their employment.

Driving fatigue and tiredness

Many road traffic accidents are caused by tiredness. Avoid driving directly after a heavy meal or particularly strenuous work and stop in a safe place for regular breaks before fatigue sets in. It is recommended that you do not drive for more the two hours without taking a break of at least 20 minutes duration.

Fitness and health

You must inform the company of any health conditions that may affect your ability to drive safely. Company rules preclude unsuitable persons from driving.

Driving whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment. Before driving, seek medical advice if in doubt as to the effect of any prescribed medication that you are taking.

Ensure your eyesight is tested at least every two years if you already have defective eyesight. If glasses or other corrective devices are necessary for driving, these must be worn.

Driving position

Ensure the vehicle seat height, lumbar and head restraint, etc, are correctly adjusted, along with the steering wheel and mirrors so that you are in a comfortable position whilst driving. You should be able to touch the top of the steering wheel with your wrist without stretching your arm unduly. Posture is important in avoiding injuries such as back and neck strains.

Take particular care when handling or lifting goods into the boot of the vehicle as this involves bending and stretching. Get help if the load is too heavy to move on your own.

General guidelines

- No vehicle is to be driven in an illegal or unroadworthy condition. If a vehicle becomes unroadworthy it must be taken off the road IMMEDIATELY.
- In adverse weather conditions, such as fog or icy roads, it is recommended that you either delay your journey or make alternative travel arrangements.
- Safety belts must be worn in both front and rear seats and it is the driver's responsibility (and your own if you are a passenger) to ensure they are used at all times.
- You should be fully conversant with the Highway Code.
- Attention must be paid regularly, preferably weekly, to check oil, lights, tyre condition and tyre pressures, steering, brakes, windscreen washers and wipers, and the condition of the vehicle generally.
- If any damage is caused to a company-provided vehicle due to neglect, the company reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the employee.
- You must be conversant with 'hours of darkness' regulations requiring the vehicle to be lit by front and rear lights. In conditions of poor visibility such as fog, heavy rain,

snow and smoke you are required by law to drive with dipped headlights, not sidelights. If in doubt, drive on dipped headlights. All lights must be kept clean and in full working order at all times.

- Neither you nor anyone driving the company vehicle is permitted to give lifts to strangers.
- Stow loose luggage in the boot or on the floor at the back of the vehicle. In the event of a collision, unsecured items can cause injury if projected forward.
- No child seat must be fitted with its back facing an airbag.

Theft and vandalism guidance

- The ignition key must always be removed and the vehicle locked according to the manufacturers recommendations whenever and wherever the vehicle is left unattended.
- Check that the doors, windows, sunroof, bonnet, boot lid and petrol cap are securely locked when the vehicle is left unattended.
- Wherever possible, park in well-lit areas. If in a public car park, always take the ticket with you.
- Never leave valuable items inside the cabin of the vehicle. Lock them in the boot or preferably, take items out of the vehicle completely.

Driving safety and security

Drive within legal speed limits and follow Highway Code guidance at all times. Remember, you are representing the company whilst driving at work. Show consideration and avoid the temptation to respond aggressively towards discourteous road users, so as to minimise possible 'road rage'.

Do not eat or drink whilst driving and use 'voicemail' or 'divert' to avoid the use of mobile telephones, as use with hands-free devices still increases risk. Avoid other distractions such as loud music or smoking.

Park in well-lit roads or preferably manned car parks and, if possible, park in an open area near the entrance. Do not 'hang about' once out of the vehicle. Whenever practical to do so

reverse park and position the vehicle so as to allow the open door to protect you from potential attack. When returning always has the keys easily available, preferably in your hand, ready for use.

Emergencies

If you break down, use hazard lights. After calling the breakdown services remember to take the vehicle keys with you and stand behind motorway crash barriers or on the nearside verge of other roads whilst waiting for their arrival. Do not sit in the vehicle. Only get back into the vehicle if you feel at risk from attack, then return via the passenger side and keep the doors locked.

Summary checklist for your benefit

Your journey

- Consider if it is necessary.
- Allow sufficient time for traffic delays, breaks and re-routing, etc.
- Choose the safest route, taking into account the weather conditions, etc.
- Prepare emergency arrangements for an unplanned overnight stay should there be adverse conditions.
- Ensure you have sufficient fuel for the journey to avoid the possibility of breakdown or stopping in unsafe areas.

Yourself and the vehicle

- Avoid heavy drinking the night before your journey. Ensure you are not fatigued or under stress immediately before your journey.
- Seek medical advice if in doubt whilst taking prescribed medicines.
- Remember to wear clean spectacles or contact lenses if you need them for driving.
- Top up screen wash and check lights, coolant levels and tyre pressures etc.
- Familiarise yourself with the vehicle and its controls before your journey.
- Make driver comfort adjustments before the journey.
- Ensure goods are secure and locked away before setting off.
- Carry a torch, cloth, ice scraper, de-icer spray, coins, and maps etc.
- Have your route pre-planned and any notes you need clearly positioned within your sightline on a proper holder. Never attempt to consult a road atlas or map whilst driving.
- Check for traffic hold ups by listening to radio traffic reports or mobile phone services when safe to do so.
- Be familiar with the company accident/breakdown procedure and contact numbers.
- Switch mobile telephones to off in a high risk or urban environment. Mobile phones may only be used when driving in a low risk environment and only then if an approved hands-free kit is fitted in the vehicle.

The law and your vehicle

It is your responsibility to comply with all laws relating to your company vehicle.

[Seatbelts](#)

Seat belts must be worn at all times in both the front and rear of the vehicle. They must be maintained in proper working order.

[Lights](#)

Drivers must ensure that all lights are clean and in working order. This includes rear fog lamps, hazard warning lamps, number plate lights, indicator lights, brake lights, front and rear lights. It is also the driver's responsibility to ensure that headlights are adjusted properly. Even in daylight hours the lights must be in full working order. Only use rear fog lamps in foggy conditions.

[Horn and speedometer](#)

The law requires that all cars have a functional horn and speedometer at all times.

[Drugs, Drinking and Driving](#)

It is a very serious matter to be convicted of a driving offence, e.g., driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In the event of a conviction, your status in relation to the use of a company vehicle will be re-assessed.

[Parking fines](#)

Should you at any time incur a fixed penalty parking fine, you must settle this yourself within the time specified. THIS IS NOT RECLAIMABLE FROM THE COMPANY.

[Checklist to avoid possible prosecution](#)

You are breaking the law if you drive a vehicle that has:

- defective seat belts
- defective exhaust
- defective brakes
- defective steering
- defective tyres (minimum tread depth = 1.6mm)
- defective speedometer
- defective lights, including indicators, brakes lights etc
- defective horn
- windscreen that is not completely transparent
- no valid tax disc on display
- damaged bodywork that could be dangerous to others
- no number plates, or number plates which are not visible
- no current MOT, if applicable

You, as driver, can be prosecuted in all the above instances, even if the defect is due to bad workmanship by a garage.

Use of a company vehicle

Whenever you receive a new or reallocated vehicle you will be notified of a vehicle hand-over date. This hand-over will include a vehicle familiarisation and a check to ensure that the Driver Handbook has been read and understood.

Permitted use

- Visitations to schools in a morning which may be close to the driver's home
- Going on tour and requiring the vehicle first thing in the morning.
- Taking the vehicle to a performance and on the way home during close of business you may be near your home which makes sense instead of driving all the way to work you drive home and return the vehicle the following morning. (Please note there may be the odd situation we require you to return the vehicle even on some such days should the organisation require the vehicle. We do believe this will be rare situations).
- Taking the vehicle home because you are going on tour or visiting a school first thing in the morning.
- The organisation will not be held liable for leaving personal belongings in the vehicle
- All drivers are required to fill in a log sheet found in the glove box.

Fuel reimbursement

Fuel reimbursement is dependent upon individual terms of employment. Please consult the HR department for guidance.

Condition/cleaning of vehicle

The company vehicle allocated to you represents a substantial investment in you and your job. You have the responsibility to drive the vehicle safely and to comply with all vehicle-operating requirements as stated in law, this policy and the manufacturer's handbook.

You are expected to keep the vehicle in a clean and tidy condition at all times. Kept in good order, the vehicle will reflect a good image of both you and the company. If you allow the vehicle condition to deteriorate through neglect it could be dangerous and cause serious injury. If animals are carried in the vehicle, a guard must be fitted to keep pets in the rear or luggage area and a suitable floor covering provided to protect the carpet.

Smoking is not permitted in company provided vehicles at any time.

You will have acknowledged that the vehicle was received by you in a clean, tidy and roadworthy condition and will have agreed to return the vehicle in the same condition, fair wear and tear excepted. Any costs incurred by the company to return the vehicle to this

condition will be charged to you. The comprehensive vehicle inspection report will be used to calculate any charges.

Vehicle inspections

Random inspections of all vehicles used on company business may be carried out from time to time without prior notice.

Care and maintenance

Care and maintenance of the vehicle is your responsibility. Please ensure that you note the following:

Routine checks

The checks set out in the vehicle handbook are essential. It is your responsibility to check:

- engine oil at least weekly
- brake fluid at least monthly
- battery levels at least monthly
- windscreen washers at least weekly
- radiator level at least weekly
- tyre pressures and tread condition at least weekly
- lights, including indicators at least weekly

Accident procedure

In the event of an accident, theft or incident, you must inform the Fleet Manager.

You should then request and complete an insurance claim form.

Please note that any damage found on your vehicle should be reported to [] regardless of how the damage was caused.

To assist your wellbeing and, at the same time, help your understanding of the various processes, please find below some helpful information.

Reporting accidents to the Police

Only report an accident to the Police if:

- There is an injury to a person or animal (i.e., dog or larger).
- The third party refuses to give name and address details or fails to stop after the accident (however slight). This includes damage caused to the vehicle whilst parked.
- You are unable to give your name and address to a third party at the scene of the accident.
- The incident is theft or attempted theft of the vehicle or any of its accessories.

What to do in the event of an accident:

- Stop and switch off your engine to avoid fire and switch on your hazard warning lights.
- Your first priority must be the safety and care of any persons involved. Call an ambulance in case of injury or the fire brigade if there is danger of fire or where someone is trapped.
- Do not discuss what happened.
- DO NOT ADMIT LIABILITY, APOLOGISE OR OFFER ANY PAYMENT even if you consider the accident was your fault. To do so could invalidate the company's insurance claim. Even a simple apology can be misconstrued at a later stage of the proceedings.
- Conversely, do not accept any offer to pay for any damage to your vehicle.

Write down:

- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of any witnesses.
- The date and time of accident.
- The registration number of any vehicle whose occupants may have seen the accident.
- Name, number and station of any attending police officers.

Obtain and write down third party(s):

- Name (if not owner, relevant particulars of owner).
- Address in full and telephone number if applicable.
- Owner of vehicle(s) and addresses.
- Insurance company including policy numbers.
- Make, model, colour and registration of vehicle.
- Details of all damage.
- The number of people in the vehicle.

REMEMBER you do not have to make a statement to the police, and it is better not to as you may be in a state of shock and could incriminate yourself. If you decide to make a statement write it down yourself and keep a copy.

Insurance

Cover

The vehicle is insured for business use and for social, domestic and pleasure purposes by only those drivers that have completed the company's approved driver process.

Exclusions

Rallying, hiring for gain, carrying passengers for reward, racing, reliability trials or speed testing.

Security

The vehicle must be locked, windows closed and all keys removed whilst left unattended. Movable valuables, owned by the company or driver, should be removed from the vehicle or locked in the boot out of sight when the vehicle is left unattended. Where it is possible the vehicle should be garaged overnight, or at least parked in a safe, secure area.

Personal injury

In the event of an injury to you or your passengers following a motor accident you are covered for emergency medical costs if charged by the NHS. These costs can be recovered from the insurance company therefore please contact [] with any receipts.

If the accident is the fault of a third party, claims for personal injury may be possible.

Personal effects

These are not insured under the company Motor Fleet Policy. You should arrange separate insurance, if so desired, for personal belongings.

Disclosure of material facts

It is a condition of the company's motor policy that vehicles are not driven by any person who:

- Suffers from any disease or infirmity that impairs the ability to drive.
- Has been refused motor vehicle insurance cover.
- has, during the last 5 years, been convicted of any of the following motoring offences:
 - causing death by dangerous driving.
 - dangerous driving (by any terminology).
 - failing to stop after an accident.
 - any offence which resulted in suspension from driving.
 - driving under the influence of drink or drugs.
- has any driving conviction not disclosed to the company.