the VOLUNTARY NETWORK

Community Transport Health and Safety Policy

All drivers are issued with our Driving for work policy and complete MiDAS training. We would like to draw particular attention to the following.

Drivers

All drivers will be scheduled an hour's lunch break and no driver will be expected to drive more than two hours continuously.

All drivers are issued with safety shoes which must be worn unless they present a certificate from their doctor. All drivers have access to a hi-visibility jacket which must be worn at all times; it is very important that drivers are clearly visible to others.

Any driver who feels unwell and is therefore not able to carry out their duties safely, must inform the General Manager or emergency services as appropriate. All drivers must carefully read our Road Safety Policy.

All drivers must provide details of a person to contact in an emergency, we would ask that this information is promptly updated following any changes.

Each vehicle is issued with a mobile phone. Drivers must ensure they are switched on and with them at all times. We do however operate a strict "no mobile, when mobile" policy, detailed in the Driving at Work Policy.

Passenger Care

The Voluntary Network prides itself on the standard of service offered to its passengers. We would expect both passengers and drivers to be treated with courtesy and respect. We will not tolerate any form of either verbal or physical abuse.

Should there be any instance of inappropriate conduct involving either a passenger, driver or member of the public, employees must inform the General Manager. Any concern raised will be handled with discretion and (for staff) in accordance with the guidelines stated in the Staff Handbook.

If a driver finds themselves in a difficult situation/potential conflict then they should remain calm, polite and remove themselves from the situation.

Employees must not enter a passenger's home; it is not part of their duties.

Employees must not assist in finding items in handbags, helping with money or using door keys. Such assistance, however well meaning, can lead to misunderstandings that could lead to a disciplinary offence.

Should a passenger not be at home when due to be collected drivers should call the Bookings Team, who will attempt to make telephone contact. If unsuccessful we will speak to the passenger's emergency contact and take any appropriate action.

Drivers should inform the office of any changes in passenger needs, in particular their mobility status or new use of walking aids. It is important that schedules are constructed in such a way that passenger needs are given full consideration.

Drivers must ensure that passengers do not enter/exit the vehicle unless it has been positioned so that the exit opens directly onto the pavement. Drivers must avoid pulling up next to bollards, A-frames or any other obstruction. If unavoidable then the passenger should be made fully aware of any potential risk.

Theft

- Fares must be handed to the office each day and kept out of sight at all times
- Donation boxes should be kept out of sight when unattended and brought to the office regularly to be emptied. All boxes will be provided with tamper proof seals.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices must not be left unattended
- Vehicles must not be left unlocked and unattended at any time, including the vehicle yard
- Vehicles should never be left standing with the keys in the ignition keys unattended
- Employees should keep personal belongings to an absolute minimum and keep them out of sight; employees are accountable and liable for any losses

Storage of equipment

It is very important that all equipment including shopping trolleys and walkers are appropriately secured. Any unsecured item could cause serious injury if the driver needs to brake sharply. Drivers must ensure that there are no unnecessary trip hazards.

- All walking aids should be secured to the vehicle using the appropriate straps/clamps
- All shopping trolleys should be secured to the vehicle using the appropriate straps/clamps
- No item should be positioned in such a way that emergency exits are blocked
- Drivers must ensure that vehicle equipment is kept to a minimum and safely stowed in the designated storage areas
- No heavy items should be stored in the storage locker above the driver
- Clamps should be safely stowed at all times, do not leave them fixed to floor unless in use by a passenger
- Drivers must advise passengers of any potential trip hazards and assist with any impediments eg. umbrella, bags

Handling of Wheelchairs

All drivers are MiDAS trained. We do not carry Mobility Scooters. Drivers are free to decline to carry any passenger who will not allow them to carry out their duties according to the MiDAS guidelines. MiDAS training includes information about Manual handling and all correct procedures.

Whilst MiDAS advice covers all issues we would like to emphasise the following points:

- Drivers should wear their safety shoes at all times, to protect them from any potential injury
- Drivers should carry out all duties in line with the HSE guidelines as detailed in our Manual Handling Policy.
- Drivers using the tail lift should ensure that the vehicle's engine is turned off and the keys are removed
- Drivers may stand on the tail lift but only if there is enough space to do so safely
- Always ensure that all brakes on a wheelchair are applied
- Always inform wheelchair users when the lift is about to be used
- If parking on a slope, the vehicle should be facing downhill when dealing with wheelchairs
- It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that wheelchairs are securely fixed to the vehicle, using the appropriate restraints. Do not allow others, including passenger assistants to secure the wheelchairs.
- Drivers are asked to inform the office if more time needs to be allocated to a particular passenger within the schedules, ensuring they are not under any undue pressure to minimise their safety routines
- Wheelchair restraints are provided on each vehicle, they must be checked every day. Faulty equipment must be reported.

- Should a driver feel that an individual passengers needs/situation presents particular risks, they must inform the General Manger, who will carry out an individual risk assessment.
- Drivers will assist passengers from their home to the vehicle, in accordance with their manual handling training. Should there be any concerns, eg. unsuitable access, then they must inform the manager. It is essential that any assistance to wheelchair users is done in accordance with MiDAS, Disability Awareness and Manual Handling training.
- The tail lifts should only be deployed when required, not left protruding for long periods of time whilst waiting – minimising the trip window
- We must not allow passengers to travel in a wheelchair which is not deemed to be fit for purpose eg. tyres must be fully pumped and brakes fully operational. All Wheelchairs will be Risk Assessed. A further check is to be carried out each journey, identifying any changes or new faults. Should a wheelchair not be fit for purpose, please inform your manager, we will then ask the passenger to arrange for their wheelchair to be re- assessed.
- Wheelchairs must be fitted with appropriate footrest, wheelchair passengers must not travel without one.

Carrying shopping

Passengers will often require some assistance with carrying their shopping to their home, drivers are able to assist with this task. However, there are risks involved and we would therefore expect drivers to carry out the task in line with the following

- Drivers must not lift any more than 25kgs
- If a Driver feels lifting any item, regardless of weight, is likely to cause an injury then they must not proceed with the task and should advise their Manager.
- All members of staff have access to HSE safe handling guidelines, detailing the correct methods of lifting. It is important that these guidelines are carefully read and that the task is carried out in the manner detailed.
- Any instance of heavy items should be reported to the General Manager
- Passengers are encouraged to use shopping trolleys or split their shopping into smaller bags
- Drivers should inform the General Manager if schedules need to be altered to provide any extra time. It is important that drivers only carry a safe weight even if it does result in lengthening the time it takes to complete a task.

Removal and installation of seats

It is sometimes necessary for seats to be removed or added to the vehicle according to the requirements of the schedules. The task must be handled in the appropriate manner in order that injuries are avoided.

We allocate vehicles to schedules in such a way that should minimise the need to alter the seating layout. When purchasing new vehicles we will aim to install flip and fold seating, costs allowing.

Seats should be removed as follows:

- Drivers are advised to ask for assistance with the process
- Drivers are reminded to always use the tail lift to move seats out of or up to the vehicle – seats must not be lifted out of the vehicle
- The task should be carried out as per the manual handling guidelines
- Drivers must check that seats are safely fitted before driving away

Vehicle Maintenance

It is important that all vehicles are maintained to the highest standard.

- Vehicles are inspected every 8 to 12 weeks
- Vehicles are regularly serviced and MOT'd
- All maintenance is recorded on the vehicle maintenance portal and all work reports are retained
- Tail lifts are serviced every six months and weight tested every twelve months
- Drivers are asked to report any vehicle faults immediately
- Drivers are asked to regularly check safety equipment and to report any faults
- Drivers are issued with an Emergency Plan, detailing action required following a vehicle breakdown.

Drivers are at all times legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle that they drive. This includes the tyres, steering, brakes, headlights, fire extinguisher and first aid kits. This responsibility cannot be passed on to the organisation owning the vehicle. We do therefore ask drivers to carry out daily checks of their vehicles and report any issues immediately.

Cleaning of Vehicles

We ask that all drivers take great care of the vehicles that they drive. We expect vehicles to be kept clean, promoting a positive image to both passengers and members of the public.

A clean and tidy vehicle will also contribute towards health and safety, best practice and will minimise the chance of someone slipping on dirty flooring or tripping on unwanted items.

- All drivers are asked to contribute towards the cleaning of our vehicles, as required and as schedules allow
- External and Internal cleaning to be carried out at Depot Road, all cleaning materials kept on site.
- Please ensure that you do not put yourself or anyone else at risk. Ensure we minimise trip hazard risks with cables
- Hazardous substances should be treated with respect, please read the warning labels of the following products available for use
    - De-icer
    - Anti-freeze
    - Car Shampoo
    - White Spirit
    - Bleach

- It is important that all such substances are kept in the appropriate safety capped containers and clearly marked
- Drivers must avoid contact with skin or eyes, gloves are provided – medical advice should be sought following any contact

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