Driving for Work Policy

Policy Statement

The Health and Safety Executive has recognised that driving for work is one of the most dangerous things many workers will do. It is estimated that up to a third of all road traffic incidents involve someone who is 'driving for work' at the time. This may account for around 12 fatalities and 150 serious injuries every week. Each year in Great Britain there are over 35,000 injury collisions that involve someone who was driving for work at the time.

The Voluntary Network is committed to managing their road risk and delivering its legal and moral obligations regarding employees driving for work to ensure they get home safe and well at the end of each day. Driving for work refers to any work carried out on behalf of The Voluntary Network that involves an employee driving a vehicle and covers all journeys other than to and from the employee's normal place of work.

Many vehicles used for work journeys are supplied by the employer, but there are also vehicles used for work that are owned, leased, or hired by individual members of staff. These are called "grey fleet" vehicles and drivers. The Voluntary Network owes the same duty of care under health and safety law to grey fleet drivers as they do to employees who drive company owned, leased, or hired vehicles.

The Voluntary Network requires any employees who drive for work to comply with safe driving guidance and always follow the Highway Code. There is no requirement or expectation that an employee, regardless of their position, will break any road traffic law while driving on work journeys. There is no business activity that justifies placing an employee or others at risk of a road collision.

All employees who drive for work on behalf of The Voluntary Network have a legal duty, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to comply with this driving for work policy while doing so.

Non Compliance

Employees who drive for work will be responsible and accountable for their own actions when driving for the purposes of work. Should The Voluntary Network receive information that an employee may have breached this policy, an internal investigation will be carried out which may lead to disciplinary action being taken, including the possibility of termination of employment.

Policy Monitoring

This policy was last reviewed on 03/08/2026 by Caroline Wilson, Director.

The Voluntary Network reserves the right to amend policy requirements relating to employees who drive and vehicles which are being used for work purposes.

This policy will be formally reviewed and updated by on at least an annual basis, or sooner if deemed appropriate, or by reasonable request.

The Driver

Driving Licence Checks

The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that as well as it being an offence for a driver to drive without a valid licence, it is also an offence for a person or organisation to permit a driver to drive without a valid licence. All employees who are engaged in work-related driving must:

- be holders of a full current driving licence, valid in the UK, for the category of vehicle which they are driving (including automatic or manual).
- notify their line manager immediately if their licence has expired, been suspended, revoked, or cancelled, or has had any limitation placed upon it.
- notify their employer immediately of any driving endorsements or prosecutions, including any that are accrued while driving a private vehicle, as this could affect any relevant insurance policies in place.
- notify the DVLA immediately of any changes to their name or address.
- allow their licence to be checked on a regular basis.

The Voluntary Network will carry out checks of driving licences for all employers who are required to drive on company business. Employees are required to provide details to facilitate the checking of their driving licence against the DVLA database.

Fitness To Drive

A person's fitness to drive can be affected by a medical condition, by temporary illness and by the environment in which they work, drive and live. Health impairments – including stress, sleep disturbance, migraine, flu, severe colds, hay fever – can lead to unsafe driving. Sometimes, the treatment for these conditions can also impair driving. Employees must ensure they are fit to drive before embarking on any work journey.

Eyesight

Employees driving for work are required to meet the minimum eyesight standards which involve being able to read an unfamiliar number plate from a distance of 20 metres (about 5 car lengths). Failure will result in the employee being stopped from driving on company business until they can demonstrate they meet the required minimum standard.

Medical Conditions

Employees should only drive when fit to do so. They should report to their manager any new condition, or a change in their health and wellbeing which may affect their ability to drive safely. Employees should make themselves familiar with Notifiable Conditions which must be reported to the DVLA.

Impairment

Driving under the influence of drink or drugs is against the law. It is extremely dangerous and can seriously impair judgement and reactions leading to an increased risk of incidents and vehicle collisions.

No employee should attempt to drive whilst impaired or consume alcohol or any unlawful drugs in the workplace during work time or during a period prior to work where they may still be under the influence of alcohol and drugs effects which may carry over to the working hours.

Employees should also be mindful that many prescription medicines can cause drowsiness and affect the ability drive. If you are prescribed any drugs or medication, you should make your doctor aware that your job entails driving and ensure that you are aware of any restrictions on driving that are advised when taking the drugs or medication. Read any notes accompanying such medicines carefully and advise your manager if you think your driving may be affected.

The driver of a vehicle found to be over the drink-drive limit, and/or driving while impaired by drugs, can receive a criminal record, an unlimited fine, imprisonment, and an automatic driving ban. Driving while impaired by drink or drugs will be treated as gross misconduct and dealt with through the normal disciplinary process which could include termination of employment.

Fatigue

It is estimated that 20% of road collisions are a result of driver fatigue. Lack of sleep, or poor sleep can impair performance to the same extent as being over the legal alcohol limit. Employees should only drive when fit and healthy to do so which includes having had adequate sleep. Employees are expected to take adequate rest breaks during a journey – typically a 15-minute rest for every two hours of driving.

Whilst it is not an offence to drive tired, if tiredness is suspected to be the cause of a crash, the police can investigate all aspects relating to the driver of the vehicle. In a fatal incident, the driver could be charged with death by dangerous driving or death by careless driving, with a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.

Wellbeing

All kinds of personal stresses can affect your ability to concentrate and drive safely. Financial worries, health issues, relationship problems and family situations such as a new baby can all understandably have a hugely distracting effect. If a personal situation is affecting your ability to concentrate while driving, please talk to your manager.

Driver Competence

In addition to holding a valid licence, employees must also be deemed competent to drive and given the necessary skills to drive in a safe and secure manner considering the potential range of vehicle types they may drive and activities they may conduct. This is specifically important for activities involving use of commercial vehicles, towing and individuals who drive long distances on company business. The company may occasionally require drivers to undertake additional training or refresher training.

The Vehicle

Vehicle Roadworthiness

A roadworthy vehicle is one that is safe to drive with all its safety-critical and other important elements in good condition and working order.

Drivers should conduct a walk around check of their vehicle to ensure there are no safety defects. A helpful aide is to remember the acronym POWDER: – Petrol (fuel) – Oil – Water – Damage – Electrics – Rubber. When checking tyres, ensure they are the correct pressure, do not have any cuts, bulges or other damage such as nails or screws, and that they have sufficient tread depth. The legal minimum tread depth for cars, vans and other LCVs is 1.6mm across 75% (three quarters) of the width of the tyre. Tyres should be replaced BEFORE they are at the legal limit.

Check the windscreen for any damage. Many chips can be repaired however, for damage larger than 10mm directly in front of the driver, the law usually requires the windscreen to be replaced.

Any defects and/or damage should be reported immediately. If safety-critical defects are found then the vehicle must not be used until those faults or defects have been

rectified. Non-safety-critical defects should be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.

Driving a vehicle with major defects is a serious offence and can result in harsh penalties. The penalties a driver may receive for driving a defective vehicle will range depending on the type and severity of the offence. Any such penalties are the responsibility of the driver. If the vehicle's condition causes the driver to have a collision, they could face additional charges and penalties.

Safe Loads

Insecure loads pose a significant risk to other road users and incidents involving insecure loads can easily result in loss of life or life-changing injuries. The Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the police have powers to issue fines to any driver in charge of a vehicle that is overloaded or if the load is insecure.

The load on a vehicle is not just restricted to goods being carried. The load is anything being carried on, and in the vehicle including tools, equipment, machinery, load restraint equipment, signage, raw materials, samples, and baggage. All can be classified as being part of the load being carried and must be safely and securely fixed to and/or in the vehicle.

Employees required to drive for work purposes will attend and comply with any training provided around safe and secure loads. They will check and ensure that 'their load' is within load limits and securely fastened before commencing a journey, and then again during a journey when any part of the load has been moved or removed. They should report any incident and near miss to their manager, that involves the safety and security of their load.

Vehicle Cleanliness

It is the responsibility of the driver of the vehicle to maintain the vehicle being driven for work in a high standard of cleanliness both internally and externally. The dashboard must be kept free of loose items including including paperwork, food, litter and/or tools and equipment. The rear of the vehicle must be kept free of debris and maintained in a clean, organised, and presentable state.

Vehicle Security

When driving a company-supplied vehicle for work purposes, employees are held responsible for its keys and security. Vehicle keys should never be left unattended in public and, when at home, keys should be kept out of sight and out of reach. Keys

should be kept away from the front door to prevent remote vehicle theft where possible. Vehicles must always be locked when not in use and any security device fitted to or supplied with the vehicle must be activated. Vehicles should be parked in a place that is well lit and where possible, the use of security patrolled car parks, or those covered by CCTV are preferred.

The Voluntary Network is committed to protecting air quality by reducing the environmental impact of their operations in relation to engine idling by employees in company vehicles or in private vehicles being used on company business. Vehicle exhaust emissions from idling vehicles contributes significantly to air pollution which impacts on health, economic growth, and quality of life.

The driver of any vehicle being used on company business will:

- turn the engine off when a vehicle is stationary for more than 1 minute and only restart when they are ready to drive away.
- not use the engine to pre-heat the vehicle unless necessary due to safety considerations or weather conditions.
- always turn off the engine when on a break, loading or unloading.

Engines may remain switched on to perform a pre use walk around check, for the safety of the vehicle occupants, or when unforeseen emergency circumstances arise.

Private Use Of Company Vehicles

Company cars may be used for private journeys. Commercial vehicles must not be used for private journeys. No company-supplied vehicle may be raced, rallied, or otherwise used in a non-business- related, off-road environment.

Employees being asked to tow a trailer or equipment should ensure that their driving licence allows them to do so legally.

Drivers should be competent at correctly hitching the trailer, checking the trailer before use including tyres, electrical and brake connections, ensuring loads are safe and secure, and manoeuvring/reversing the trailer. Drivers without this competence should seek additional training from their manager before towing on behalf of the organisation.

Employees towing a trailer or equipment should familiarise themselves with the relevant changes in speed limits and permitted motorway lanes while towing, along with the permitted weight limits for their vehicle/trailer combination. They should also remember to allow additional time for slowing down and manoeuvring their vehicle when towing.

The Journey

Journey Planning

Any journey should be reviewed, and a decision made as to whether the journey by road is necessary, whether it can be made by rail or air travel, or replaced with remote communications.

Drivers hours in the UK are governed by GB Domestic rules or assimilated EU Rules. The Voluntary Network will fully apply to the current rulings. Breaks and break locations should be planned in advance. Where employees are planned to travel a long distance to a work location at the beginning or end of the day, or if travel time risks making the working day unreasonably long, employees can discuss with their manager the requirement to arrange overnight accommodation to avoid driving tired.

Safe Driving

It is important that all drivers of vehicles are aware of the requirements and any updates to The Highway Code, and that they are considerate to other road users and understand their responsibility for the safety of themselves and other road users.

Employees who drive for work are required to apply safe driving behaviours and techniques to help reduce their risk of collisions and incidents. When driving, they should remain a safe distance from the vehicle in front, stay alert and ready to anticipate changes to road and weather conditions.

On no account should employees driving for work become involved in incidents of road rage or intimidation of other road users.

Safe Speeds

One of the most significant risks drivers face, and create, is driving at inappropriate speeds on work-related journeys. This includes both exceeding the speed limit and driving within the limit but still too fast for the road and weather conditions.

Every year, over 200 people are killed in crashes involving someone exceeding the speed limit and over 100 people die in crashes involving someone travelling within the speed limit but too fast for the conditions. Speed limits are a limit, not a target.

Employees who drive for work should know the speed limits for the type of vehicle they are driving and road they are travelling on and understand the importance of staying within speed limits. Van drivers should remember that the applicable speed limit for a van is often lower for that of a car. Drivers should notify their manger immediately of impending prosecutions and penalties associated with unsafe driving, including speeding, whether these resulted from at-work or personal driving.

No employee driving for work should ever drive faster than road conditions safely allow and should always obey speed limits. Employees driving for work are expected to always drive safely, responsibly, and legally.

The minimum penalty for speeding is a £100 fine and 3 penalty points added to a driving licence.

Seatbelts

It has been a legal requirement for drivers and passengers to wear seat belts since 1983. The minimum penalty if caught not wearing a seatbelt is a fine of £100, rising to £500 if the case goes to court.

Seat belts are the best protection against injury or death in a crash. Wearing a seat belt reduces the chance of serious injury or death by 40% to 60%. People thrown from a vehicle are 4 times more likely to be killed than those who were wearing a seat belt and remain inside the vehicle. Seat belts should be worn by both drivers and passengers while traveling for work in any vehicle, whether company-operated or privately-owned. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for enforcing seat belt use by all occupants.

Where medically exempt from wearing a seat belt, a Certificate of Exemption from Compulsory Seat Belt Wearing should be obtained from a doctor. A copy must be presented to the Manager and a copy kept in the vehicle being driven to present to the police if stopped.

Driver Distraction

The Voluntary Network operates a zero-tolerance approach to driver distraction.

The use of a handheld mobile device in any vehicle whilst driving is illegal and employees face prosecution if caught doing so. Police can issue a fixed penalty notice (£200 fine and 6 penalty points) or summons the driver to court where they are likely to receive a more stringent penalty on conviction. Please note that any such penalty could affect your employment. No employee is required to take or make calls while driving. Switch your phone off or put it in silent mode and place it out of reach. If you need to make a call, even if only to advise of a travel delay, find a safe place to stop and switch off the engine first. Initiating or participating in conference calls of any kind, texting or emailing when driving is not permitted under any circumstances. Adjusting a sat nav or other such system should be done while stationary with the engine switched off.

Eating or drinking while driving is not permitted. Drivers should take refreshments during normal rest breaks or while the vehicle is stationary with the engine switched off. Note: It is illegal to stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway to make or take a call.

Distraction can also be caused by other technology such as sat nav systems. Always programme your sat nav while parked and never try to do this while driving.

Applicable to ALL EMPLOYEES within the organisation is a further rule that no employee may talk to another person, such as a client or supplier, if that person is known to be driving. Advise the driver of this rule and arrange to resume the call when they are not driving.

Driving in Adverse Weather

Weather can be unpredictable and can change quickly. When it does, the risk of a serious collision occurring substantially increases. Driving in adverse weather conditions can be extremely dangerous and can affect a drivers' awareness and concentration as well as their ability to drive safely.

Before commencing any journey, employees who are required to drive for work should always consider the weather conditions and potential for changes and deterioration in weather. They should adjust their driving style to the weather and road conditions at the time. Fuel levels should be checked at the start of a journey to ensure there is sufficient to complete the journey, and employees should have access to a fully charged mobile electronic device to provide updates to their managers if they need to postpone journeys or change routes when the police and travel organisations advise against road travel due to weather conditions.

If poor weather is expected, the necessity for the journey should be considered. Employees who still need to drive should ensure they have appropriate clothing to stay warm and dry, plus food and water in case of travel delays.

Employees driving for work should also have with them an up-to-date list of breakdown and emergency contact numbers.

Passengers

For safety and insurance reasons, under no circumstances are employees permitted to allow unauthorised passengers in any vehicle being used for work purposes. Employees are not permitted to pick up hitchhikers in a company vehicle, and employees using their own vehicles for work are not permitted to pick up hitchhikers while driving on company business.

The driver of the vehicle is responsible for the safety and conduct of everyone in their vehicle. If the carrying of passengers is permitted by management, the number of legally permitted passengers is not to be exceeded in that vehicle and seat belts must be used, unless medical exemption certificates apply.

The carriage of children, dogs or any other animal in a vehicle being used for work purposes is not permitted.

Smoking

Under the 2006 Health Act, smoking is banned in the workplace, and any vehicles being used for work. Smoking by either driver or passengers is not permitted in any vehicle while traveling on official company business. This includes vehicles allocated to a single person. This policy includes the use of e-cigarettes and vapes. Employees and their passengers who smoke in work vehicles are breaking the law and can be fined.

Fines And Penalties

Any employee who is caught and prosecuted by the police for unsafe and dangerous behaviour while driving a vehicle for work, will be responsible for any fines, administration charges and subsequent penalties imposed. Parking fines are the responsibility of the driver and not the employer. Licence endorsements may affect the insurance of the driver concerned and mean they are unable to continue driving on behalf of The Voluntary Network.

Breakdowns, Punctures and Glass Repair

If your company-supplied vehicle breaks down, contact the office, we will arrange assistance from our designated breakdown & recovery service.

If your company-supplied vehicle suffers a puncture, contact the office, we will contact our designated mobile tyre service. If you are on a motorway, you must not attempt to change the wheel or tyre yourself.

If your company-supplied vehicle suffers a broken windshield or window, call our designated glass replacement service.

Damage Or Theft While Parked

If your vehicle is damaged or stolen while unattended, call your manager for further instructions.

Collisions

After any accident or collision YOU MUST STOP. Failure to stop at the scene of an accident is a criminal offence. If you are involved in a collision that results in injury to a third party, you are required by law to contact the emergency services immediately by telephoning 999. If nobody has been injured and your vehicle is not causing an obstruction, you are not required to call the emergency services.

If it is possible to move your vehicle to a safe location at the side of the road you should do so and switch off the engine. Move all uninjured passengers to the side of the road.

If you are on a motorway, ensure everyone remains behind the safety barrier. Do not attempt to move injured passengers unless they are in danger – wait instead for the paramedics to arrive. If a motorcyclist is involved, do not attempt to remove their crash helmet.

Once all vehicles and passengers are safe, exchange details with any other parties including name, address and insurance details. If there are any witnesses, collect their names and addresses as well.

Do not admit any liability for the collision or enter into any discussion other than to exchange the details required to report the accident to your insurance company and your employer.

If possible, and without putting yourself in danger, take photos of the accident and any damage to the vehicles involved. You should also take photos of any road or landscape features that may have contributed to the collision.

You will need to complete a full report of the incident including a diagram of the vehicles showing how the accident occurred, why it occurred and what damage resulted.

Clear any debris to the side of the road so it doesn't present any danger to other road users but DO NOT try to recover any debris if you are on a motorway. If your vehicle is drivable, you may now continue your journey.

Incident Reporting

All work-related road incidents and near misses (including damage-only ones and ones involving privately owned vehicles when they are used for work) should be reported as soon as it is safe to do so. Prompt and accurate reporting and recording of work-related road incidents, and near misses help to keep employees safe and reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring again.

Incidents involving a company-supplied vehicle must be reported to the Manager or the organisation's appointed accident management agent immediately where possible or, at the latest, within 24 hours.

An incident is an event that resulted in personal injury to an employee or another person, or resulted in property or vehicle damage, or a dangerous occurrence. This could include a motoring offence, a crash or collision involving a vehicle being driven for work, or a vehicle breakdown. A near miss is a dangerous occurrence that had the potential to result in personal injury to a staff member or another person, or to result in property damage.

Grey Fleet Drivers

Please note that if you use your own car for work, the organisation's legal duty of care to ensure the safety of the driver, the vehicle and journey remain the same. Grey fleet drivers should make themselves aware of all the company policies relevant to driving for work and ensure they always comply with them.

Grey fleet drivers must ensure:

- They are fit to drive.
- They hold a valid driving licence for the vehicle being driven, and provide permission for the employer to check this licence directly with DVLA.
- The vehicle is appropriate for the journey and use, taxed, MOT'd and serviced in line with manufacturer recommendations.
- They hold appropriate and valid insurance cover for business use.
- They can produce documentary proof of the above, on request.
- The vehicle is regularly checked to ensure its roadworthiness and a walk around safety check is conducted prior to starting any long work journey.
- They will notify their Manager if they are unable to use a vehicle which meets the minimum safety standards required.
- They will notify their Manager of any Notice of Intended Prosecutions and collisions they are involved in whilst driving, especially whilst on a journey for work purposes.
- They co-operate with company rules and policies when using their own vehicle for work.

Individual Responsibilities

Senior Managers, from the head of the organisation down, will provide a safe working environment through the provision of well-maintained vehicles that are fit for purpose.

They will lead by personal example when driving themselves and not tolerate poor driving practice among colleagues.

Managers should ensure work duties and practices are not planned that pressurise employees into driving in an unsafe or illegal manner and will challenge any unsafe attitudes and behaviours, encouraging each other to drive safely. They will co-operate with the monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures following a reported incident of non-compliance with this policy.

Office-based employees will inform their manager of any information or concern regarding the health, wellbeing and safety of an employee who is required to drive for work and maintain complete and full records for employees and vehicles being used for work journeys. Office-based employees must be aware of the company. policy on mobile phone use while driving and not put colleagues who may be driving at risk in this way.

Employees who drive for work should make themselves aware of and comply with all company policy and procedures relating to driving for work. They should raise concerns to their manager around anything that may affect their ability to drive safely and co-operate with any investigation procedures regarding reported incidents that may involve them.

Policy Queries

If there is anything in this policy document that you do not fully understand, or would like clarification on, please contact your line manager or the policy owner.

Dated August 2026 To be reviewed August 2028