

AGE UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough **Driver's Handbook**

Objectives of the Handbook

1. To make drivers aware of the main risks they face or create when driving for work
2. To make sure that employees who drive vehicles in the course of their work demonstrate safe, efficient driving skills and other good road safety habits at all times.
3. To ensure all vehicles driven for work are maintained in a safe, clean and roadworthy condition to ensure the maximum safety of the drivers, occupants and other road users, and to reduce the impact of vehicles driven for Age UK purposes on the environment.

Code of Conduct

While driving personal vehicles for work purposes, employees must comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety habits.

The following actions in a personal vehicle driven for work purposes will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct with Disciplinary Procedures being a consequence:

- Drinking or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while driving
- Driving while disqualified or not correctly licensed
- Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury
- Failing to stop after a collision
- Acquiring penalty points leading to suspension of licence
- Using a handheld mobile phone (personal or work) while driving

Employee Responsibilities

Every Age UK driver must:

Safe driver

- Hold a current driving licence for the category of vehicle they are driving and carry the licence when driving for work purposes.
- Show their driving licence and insurance certificate indicating business use cover is in place when requested at induction and as part of the annual verification process.
- Consent to Age UK noting details of their car make, model and registration on their online personnel file on BreatheHR.
- Immediately notify their supervisor or manager if their driver licence has been suspended or cancelled, or has had limitations placed upon it.
- Declare to their supervisor or Chief People Officer any medical condition which may affect their ability to drive.
- Drive according to the Highway Code, The Road Traffic Act (1991) and all other relevant legislation.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Do not drive if taking prescription and over the counter medication if they cause drowsiness.
- Report to their supervisor any issues that may affect their ability to drive.
- Do not drive when tired; ensure sufficient rest breaks are taken, journeys are planned to avoid driving for two or more hours without stops, and that drivers remain well-hydrated throughout the working day.
- Avoid verbal and physical conflict with other road users.

Safe vehicle

- Take time to familiarise themselves with the vehicle handbook.
- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy, with a valid MOT certificate for vehicles older than 3 years and valid tax in place.
- Carry out a full daily walk around check prior to using the vehicle; refer to the daily checklist at the end of this document for full details. Take action to remedy any defects that affect the roadworthiness or safety of the vehicle immediately. Inform a supervisor or manager immediately if this prevents the vehicle being used for work.
- Ensure all loads are secure before setting off and that loads do not exceed the vehicle's safe working load (found in vehicle's handbook).
- Never carry any hazardous substances without the prior approval of the line manager. Hazardous goods may only be carried in full compliance with relevant legislation.
- Ensure valuables are kept out of site in the vehicle and the vehicle is left locked at all times. Keys must never be left in the ignition while unattended.
- Consider carrying an appropriate fire extinguisher, emergency warning triangle, hi-vis vest for the driver and passengers, spare screen wash, torch and batteries and a first aid kit in your vehicle at all times. During the winter months, it is advisable to also carry a snow shovel, blanket, thick gloves, spare screen wash, de-icer and ice scraper.

Safe journey

- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when driving for the purposes of work
- Display the highest level of professional conduct when driving for the purposes of work.
- Assess hazards while driving and anticipate 'what if' scenarios
- Read and understand the Adverse Weather Policy and liaise with your supervisor to avoid driving during adverse weather, especially if emergency services and motoring organisations have advised against travel unless absolutely necessary.
- Drive within the legal speed limits, including driving to the conditions
- Wear a seat belt and make sure all occupants wear their seat belt at all times
- Avoid distraction when driving – if you need to, adjust or set sat-navs/car stereos/mirrors before setting off. If you need to re-adjust whilst driving pull over safely in order to do so
- Never use a handheld mobile phone while driving. A hands-free mobile phone may be used as a sat-nav only, provided it is connected to the vehicle's screen or placed in a holder or mount and set up prior to setting off. Calls should not be made or received while driving under any circumstances, including via hands-free devices. Refer to the Mobile Phone Policy for further guidance.
- Report any incidents or near-misses to your supervisor, including incidents where there was property damage but no injuries to people. These incidents and near-misses need to be recorded in the Accident Book.
- Plan the journey beforehand, to take into account known hazards such as roadworks and accident hot-spots, road condition, congestion and other potential delays. Allow sufficient time for the journey, and discuss any concerns with your supervisor prior to setting off.

Employer Responsibilities

The employer will take all steps to ensure driving for Age UK is carried out as safely as possible and will not require employees to drive under conditions that are unsafe or likely to create an unsafe environment, physical distress or fatigue.

The employer will do this by:

- Ensuring the vehicle has valid business use insurance policy and tax is maintained in accordance with DVLA requirements, via checks at induction and the annual verification of insurance certificates.
- Recording the make, model and registration of an employee's vehicle on their online personnel file on BreatheHR.
- Recording any reported licence endorsements on an employee's online personnel file on BreatheHR.
- Providing guidance on safe journey planning to all drivers (see Appendix 2).
- Checking an employee's driver's licence at induction and annually thereafter.
- Ensuring sufficient time is given to complete journeys, without placing undue pressure on employees to speed or drive for too long without a break.

What to do in the event of an incident while driving for Age UK

Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene or as close to it as possible, making sure you are not obstructing traffic.

1. Apply the handbrake and switch off the engine.
2. Switch on the vehicles' hazard warning lights.
3. Ensure your own safety first, put on your hi-vis vest before exiting the vehicle.
4. Ensure any passengers put their hi-vis vest on before getting out.
5. If the vehicle is on fire – get out immediately
6. Help any injured people and call for assistance if needed.
7. Try to get the following information:
 - Details of the other vehicle(s) and registration number(s)
 - Name(s) and address(es) of the other vehicle owner(s) and driver(s)
 - Name(s) and address(es) of any witness(es)
 - Name(s) of insurer(s)
8. Give your name and company details.
9. If you damage another vehicle that is unattended, leave a note on the vehicle with your contact details.

You must report the incident to your line manager as soon as is practicable to do so.

Employee Declaration

You will be asked to read this document as part of the annual verification process. You will be asked to confirm you have read, understood and will comply with its contents via the annual employee declaration questionnaire.

Appendix 1: Daily Vehicle Checklist

Employees are advised to check the following at the start of each working day before setting off:

1. External walkround, checking for condition and cleanliness of:
 - Bodywork
 - Windscreen and wipers
 - Windows
 - Mirrors
 - Lights
 - Number plates
 - Tyre pressure and tread (min. 1.6mm)
2. Internal check, checking for function of:
 - Hazard lights
 - Lights
 - Wipers
 - Brake
 - Horn
 - Mirrors
 - Fuel level
 - Seat belts
3. Storage, checking that:
 - All loads are secure
 - Vehicle safety items such as extinguisher, triangle and hi-vis vests are present
 - First aid kit is present

Report any deficiencies to your supervisor immediately.

Appendix 2: Safe Journey Planning

Drivers who become drowsy or fall asleep at the wheel cause thousands of crashes each year. They often cause serious injuries because they tend to happen on high speed roads and a sleeping driver cannot brake or swerve to avoid or reduce the impact. They are most likely to happen:

- on long journeys on monotonous roads, such as motorways
- between 2am and 6am and between 2pm and 4pm (especially after eating, or taking even one alcoholic drink)
- after having less sleep than normal
- after drinking alcohol
- if taking medicines that cause drowsiness
- after long working hours or on journeys home after long shifts, especially night shifts

Tiredness reduces your reaction time, alertness and decision-making, all crucial driving skills. Safe journey planning can help to reduce the risk of driver fatigue.

Drivers should:

- **Avoid long car journeys, where possible.** If possible use public transport, which is far safer and more environmentally friendly. If driving is unavoidable, maximise vehicle sharing to reduce the number of journeys, and to reduce the length of time drivers spend at the wheel.
- **Avoid high risk times.** Avoid driving in the early hours of the morning, when you have had less sleep than normal, or in mid afternoon after eating a large meal - these are peak times for sleep-related accidents. Avoid starting a long journey after a full day's (or shift's) work.
- **Plan your route.** Estimate how long the journey will take, including rest breaks and unexpected delays, and plan where to stop for regular rest breaks (about every two hours for at least 15 to 20 minutes). Live traffic information on motorways and trunk roads provided on www.trafficengland.com is useful to help establish route options, distances and journey times. If using a Sat Nav, input the destination before setting off, and if you need to change it during the journey, stop in a safe place to do so. Consider the type of road (accident rates are lowest on motorways and dual carriageways), congestion (avoid peak traffic hours) and high-risk features, such as schools or busy shopping centres. If possible, plan alternative routes to avoid any major delays.
- **Sleep.** Try not to stay up late or reduce your normal sleep before a long journey.
- **Alcohol.** Alcohol stays in the body for several hours and will make you more sleepy, so avoid having even one drink.
- **Medicines.** If you are taking any medication, check whether it causes drowsiness. If it does, ask your doctor or pharmacist for an alternative that does not cause drowsiness.
- **Check your vehicle.** Make sure everything is working properly before you set off, especially the tyres, lights, windscreen wipers, and all fluid levels.
- **Avoid driving in bad weather,** particularly fog, heavy rainfall, very high winds, ice, snow or flooding or where there is a danger of being stranded. Be ready to postpone your journey or change your route if the police and travel organisations advise against road travel due to weather conditions. Consider what emergency equipment to carry in the vehicle in case you get stranded.