



## **NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

### **DRIVING AT WORK POLICY**

January 2017

Policy Applies to:	All Staff, Members, Volunteers and Contractors
Review date:	January 2019
Responsibility:	Sustainability Officer
Approved by:	Resources, Audit and Performance Committee
Date:	

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The Authority recognises that driving is one of the most dangerous daily activities that people undertake. This policy aims to reduce or eliminate the risks of injury, death and damage to vehicles.

It is estimated that up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who is at work which may account for over 20 fatalities and 250 serious injuries every week.

Public transport remains the preferred option for all business travel but it is recognised that this is not always practical. Where possible drivers should make use of Authority vehicles and car share with others attending the same meeting/destination.

## **2 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS**

This policy covers any person who is driving for work purposes, it applies to all Authority staff, members, volunteers, contractors, or any other person permitted to drive on Authority business (referred to as 'drivers' throughout this document).

It applies to all vehicles whilst driven on Authority business regardless of ownership i.e. vehicles owned, leased or hired by the Authority or privately owned and used for work purposes.

This policy should be read in-conjunction with the lone working policy and travel and subsistence policy. Commuting is not covered by this policy.

## **3 HEALTH & SAFETY**

Individuals driving on Authority business are considered to be undertaking a work activity and the vehicle they are driving, regardless of ownership is regarded as a place of work.

As such Health and Safety law applies to on-the-road work activities as well as the Road Traffic Act which is enforced by the police. The Authority aims to minimise workplace risks by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.

A risk assessment for driving at work can be found below which forms the basis of this policy, all drivers must read and follow the risk assessment. The safest way to reduce the risk from driving is to avoid wherever possible and use alternatives such as public transport or tele/video conferencing.



Driving at work RISK  
ASSESSMENT Dec 20:

## **4 QUALIFICATION**

Any person driving a vehicle on Authority business must be in possession of a full, valid UK, European or suitable international driving licence. It is recommended that staff carry their licence at all times whilst driving for work.

Drivers must ensure that they have the appropriate level of qualification for the vehicle they intend to drive. This particularly applies when towing a trailer or driving a mini-bus.

If drivers are unsure as to whether they are qualified or not then they should contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). The DVLA also provides an online tool to check towing licence and age requirements: <https://www.gov.uk/towing-rules>.

Driving a minibus or towing a trailer is very different to every day driving. The Authority recommends that those who already have licence categories that enable them to drive a minibus/tow a trailer undertake familiarisation/refresher training with a suitably qualified person prior to driving.

## **5 PROSECUTIONS/ENDORSEMENTS**

Drivers are personally responsible for motoring offences such as speeding, dangerous driving and parking fines and may be subject for further disciplinary action by the Authority.

It is the responsibility of drivers to inform Human Resources (HR) immediately if their licence is endorsed, suspended or removed. To knowingly drive on Authority business as a disqualified driver will be regarded as gross misconduct and render staff liable to disciplinary action.

Drivers should note that with their agreement, the Authority may check with the DVLA if there is any doubt over the validity of the licence provided. Authority staff, members and volunteers must report any endorsements or disqualifications to their line manager or HR.

If a member of staff is convicted of driving without due care and attention or dangerous driving then they may be removed from driving duties until an objective assessment of the risk they pose is undertaken.

## 6 EMPLOYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority will carry out safety checks on all vehicles that it owns or leases every **six weeks** and record when checks have taken place.

The Authority will ensure that its vehicles are serviced as per manufacturer schedules, have a current MOT, are taxed and insured.

Line Managers must allow drivers sufficient time so that they arrive at appointments in good time, driving within speed limits and adhering to Health and Safety policies and road traffic law.

The Authority will provide driver training for any vehicle as required, this may be a formal qualification or familiarisation sessions.

HR will check the documents submitted as per section 7, driver responsibilities.

## 7 DRIVERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Drivers are responsible for ensuring that any vehicle driven is legal, safe and well maintained, vehicles must be:

- roadworthy
- serviced in accordance with manufacturer's service schedules
- have a valid MOT Certificate (if required)
- taxed
- insured for business use

Drivers must present the following documents to the Authority prior to commencing driving and annually thereafter or when requested:

- Driving Licence
- Insurance Certificate covering business use

Documents should also be presented when there is a change of circumstances/details e.g. renewal of insurance, change of vehicle, prosecution(s), endorsements etc.

## 8 VEHICLE CHECKS

The responsibility for ensuring that vehicles are roadworthy and safe lies with the driver. If a driver is found to be driving a vehicle that is not safe then the driver will be liable to be prosecuted, regardless of ownership.

Before starting journeys drivers should complete the safety checks outlined in appendix 1.

Before undertaking **long** journeys drivers should **manually** check tyre pressure and fluid levels (oil, power steering, brake fluid, engine coolant, windscreen wash, and transmission).

Any driver who is unfamiliar with how to carry out these tasks should speak to their line manager/HR and seek further training.

## **9 DRIVER ERROR**

Driver error is the largest cause of accidents, drivers must familiarise themselves with vehicle controls and instrument layout before commencing a journey. All handbooks for Authority vehicles are stored in the glove compartment and drivers must familiarise themselves with them before taking a vehicle out for the first time.

Drivers must adjust seat, seat belt, steering wheel position, mirrors and head restraints to provide a good driving position and good all round visibility. All items, luggage and equipment etc. must be securely stowed before starting a journey.

Eating, drinking, map reading and listening to loud music can cause a distraction whilst driving. Drivers must stop in a safe place to eat, drink or check map/directions.

Passengers must ensure their actions do not distract the driver.

## **10 MOBILE PHONES**

It is illegal to use a hand-held phone or similar device while driving. Highway Code Rule 149 states that when driving you must not use a hand-held mobile phone except to call 999 or 112 in a genuine emergency and it is unsafe or impractical to stop.

Mobile phones should be switched off or on silent mode whilst driving; if necessary stop and pull in periodically to check for messages. Drivers must not use hands free systems as they cause a distraction too.

Lone workers may wish to have their phone turned on, in silent mode in case they need to protect themselves from harm.

## **11 SAT NAVS**

Sat Navs must be programmed before journeys start and securely fixed in the vehicle. If the location or settings need to be amended then the driver must find a safe place to stop and turn off the engine before making any changes.

## **12 TIME**

Working long hours and driving can increase the possibility of accidents due to fatigue. Wherever possible car sharing or alternatives to driving such as teleconference calls or public transport must be considered.

If there is no alternative to driving and the working day (including driving time) exceeds 12 hours, for example when attending meetings in other national parks arrangements for overnight accommodation should be considered.

Drivers must plan journeys in advance, allowing time for delays and rest breaks of **at least 15 minutes in every two hours** of continuous driving. Drivers should share driving when possible.

## **13 NIGHT DRIVING/ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

Drivers should avoid driving at night and in adverse weather conditions (high winds, fog, ice, snow etc.) due to the increased risk of accidents.

Drivers should postpone journeys or change routes to avoid adverse conditions and follow police/travel organisations advice. Drivers should consider staying overnight to avoid adverse conditions.

## **14 SPEED**

Drivers must comply with speed limits and adapt driving to take account of the prevailing weather and road conditions.

Speed limits should not be treated as targets; it is possible to drive at an inappropriate speed but within the speed limit for example, twisting country roads or wet/icy conditions.

## **15 HEALTH**

No person should drive at work under any circumstances which they know may affect their ability to drive safely. It is the duty of anybody who is required to drive at work to inform their line manager if they are suffering from any illness or health condition which impairs their driving ability.

## **16 EYESIGHT**

All drivers have a legal duty to satisfy the eyesight requirements of the Highway Code of reading a standard height number plate at 20.5 meters (67 feet), with glasses if needed. If glasses are needed they must be worn by law even if your driving licence is not marked '01' due to poor eyesight.

## **17 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

Drivers must not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs (both legal medicines and illegal substances). Staff must not drink alcohol before driving as even small amounts below the legal limit impair judgement.

Drivers should follow medical advice leaflets and check with their doctor or pharmacist if in doubt as to the effects of medicines on judgement before driving.

For any person to knowingly drive whilst above the legal limit of units of alcohol in the blood or under the influence of drugs (both legal medicines and illegal substances) such that their driving ability is impaired, may be regarded as committing gross misconduct and render them liable to disciplinary action.

## **18 SMOKING**

Drivers and passengers must not smoke in any vehicle whilst they are driving at work, this includes e-cigarettes.

## **19 ANIMALS ON THE NEW FOREST**

Animals roam freely in the New Forest and have right of way, it is the driver's responsibility to slow down and give way, the majority of accidents involve local drivers:

- Be ready to stop - animals may step out even when they've seen a vehicle approaching
- Drive slowly, especially at night and when other cars are approaching with their headlights on
- Give animals grazing by the side of the road a wide berth
- Take extra care when there are animals on the verges on both sides of the road – they may cross
- Deer can easily jump the fences alongside roads; when there is one deer more will usually follow

If you witness or are involved in an accident involving an animal, call the Police (999 or 112 for an emergency or 101 if it's not an emergency) ensuring that section 8.1 (mobile phones) of this policy is adhered to.

It is recommended that drivers carry animal emergency hotline cards which give the numbers to call if you see sick, injured or distressed animals.



## 20 ACCIDENTS

The law requires drivers to STOP if there is injury or damage to any person, vehicle, property or animals.

If the accident involves injury or damage to any person, property or animals you must report it to the police and present the insurance certificate.

Drivers must notify their line manager, HR and business support officer of all accidents (including non-injury accidents) or near misses whilst driving at work regardless of vehicle ownership and insurance arrangements.

The Police will carry out initial investigations into road traffic accidents and will check the mechanical condition of the vehicle (regardless of ownership), the physical condition of the driver including signs of fatigue, their driving licence, tax disc, MOT and insurance.

Guidelines of what to do in the event of an accident are provided in appendix 2, all drivers involved in an accident must complete the accident report form (appendix 3).

More detailed information can be found in the [Highway Code](#).

## 21 BREAKDOWNS AND PUNCTURES

If the vehicle you are driving develops a fault or has a puncture try to stop in a safe place off the road if possible and make yourself visible to other drivers.

Drivers should not attempt to repair a vehicle or replace a flat tyre on the roadside as they risk being struck by other traffic.

If you need assistance to repair a vehicle or replace a tyre contact a breakdown recovery service. The breakdown company will recover the vehicle and take you to your destination (normally home or the office).

All Authority vehicles are covered by a breakdown recovery service policy, details of which can be found in the vehicle folder.

If you experience any difficulty getting home take a taxi and reclaim the cost via expenses.

Further guidance on breakdowns and punctures can be found in appendix 4.

## **22 AUTHORITY VEHICLES**

The Authority has a range of vans, information and pool vehicles to help deliver its work around the national park and aid the smooth running of the day to day business of the organisation.

Pool vehicles provide a visible presence for the Authority and are branded with elements of the National Park corporate identity. They provide staff, members and volunteers who commute to Lymington Town Hall car free access to a vehicle to attend meetings, site visits etc.

Authority vehicles should not be used for personal journeys e.g. shopping trips, school runs, moving items etc. or transporting persons not connected to the business of the Authority.

Authority vehicles can be kept overnight at a home address where it is required for work purposes first thing the following day or when returning late. Drivers may stop to make purchases on the way home for example when returning late and needing to buy food.

## **23 USING AUTHORITY VEHICLES**

A record sheet is kept in each vehicle and must be completed for each journey.

A parking clock is provided for every vehicle either with the keys or in the vehicle and should not be removed. Additional parking clocks and long stay parking clocks are available from Business Support.

Accident forms, insurance details, service log, MOT certificate, vehicle handbook, a copy of this policy and breakdown information and accident guidance are kept in each vehicle.

Other useful items that should be found in the vehicles are:

- torch
- de-icer and ice scraper
- first aid kit and fire extinguisher
- high visibility clothing and warning triangle
- screen wash
- tyre inflator
- disposable camera

If any items are missing Corporate Services should be informed.

## **24 BOOKING POOL VEHICLES**

Pool vehicles have reserved parking spaces so that they are easy to find, keys are held in the systems support office and are available for collection during office hours.

Pool vehicles must be booked through Outlook, include the amount of time required to travel to and from the destination, your name and location of meeting/site visit.

When booking pool vehicles, try to book morning or afternoon slots so that availability is maximised.

Authority staff who do not receive essential user mileage allowance have priority when booking pool vehicles.

## **25 FUELING AUTHORITY VEHICLES**

A fuel card is supplied with the keys for each vehicle to pay for fuel. Under this arrangement, the cost of fuel is invoiced directly to the Authority. The fuel card is accepted in 95% of UK filling stations; please look for the 'allstar' logo which demonstrates eligibility.

If fuel is required but a garage with the allstar logo cannot be found, drivers will have to pay for fuel themselves and claim back through expenses. Vehicles should not be returned with less than a quarter of a tank of fuel remaining. Staff should follow forecourt rules and procedures when refuelling.

## **26 CLEANING AUTHORITY VEHICLES**

Staff should leave the pool vehicles in a clean and tidy condition, all personal belongings and rubbish must be removed once a journey is complete. Drivers must clean the pool vehicle prior to returning to the office if it has become particularly dirty.

The fuel cards in the pool vehicles can be used to pay for car washing if the car wash is owned by the petrol station.

If the car wash is not owned by the petrol station or a professional hand car wash is used (several near National Park HQ) costs can be claimed back through petty cash.

Checks on the vehicle cleanliness will be carried out by Business Support periodically to ensure staff follow this policy.

## **27 DATA PROTECTION**

Personal information collected in connection with this policy will be stored securely, shared internally, as necessary and deleted in accordance with the Retention Schedule.

The Authority may share your personal information with third parties, such as insurance companies, the Police, etc. for example in the event of an accident.

If you have concerns relating to the processing of your personal data or would like any further information please contact the Information and Data Protection Officer

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## APPENDIX 1: SAFETY CHECKS

**The following safety checks must be completed before starting a journey**

- tyres are undamaged, inflated to the correct pressure and have enough tread depth (1.6mm across central  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the tyre)
- lights and indicators are clean and working
- windscreen and windows are not damaged
- oil level is correct
- coolant and windscreen washer levels are correct
- there are no signs of vehicle damage
- washers and wipers are working
- mirrors are correctly positioned
- seatbelts are in working order
- brakes work effectively
- warning lights go out once the engine has started (if they remain on investigate problem and seek help)

Before undertaking **long** journeys staff should **manually** check tyre pressure and fluid levels (oil, power steering, brake fluid, engine coolant, windscreen wash, and transmission).

Any driver who is unfamiliar with how to carry out the above tasks should speak to their line manager/HR and seek further training.

**Do not start a journey if the vehicle fails any of the safety checks or if it is unsafe to drive, investigate the problem and seek help.**

Breakdown details for Authority vehicles are provided in the vehicle folder/glove compartment.

## APPENDIX 2: ACCIDENT GUIDELINES

Always stop if you are involved in a road accident, **do not apologise or admit any liability.**

Unless there is a danger to traffic or other road users do not move vehicles until the police arrive or they advise otherwise.

If you are involved in an accident or stop to give assistance **take a few deep breaths and keep calm**, try to understand what is going on around you:

- use hazard warning lights to warn other traffic
- ask drivers to switch off their engines and stop smoking
- Call 999 or 112 or get a bystander to, and provide full details of the incident location and casualties
- on a motorway, use the emergency telephone which allows easy location by the emergency services. If you use a mobile phone, first make sure you have identified your location from the marker posts on the side of the hard shoulder
- move uninjured people away from the vehicles to safety; on a motorway this should be if possible well away from the traffic, the hard shoulder and the central reservation
- do not move injured people from their vehicles unless they are in immediate danger from fire or explosion
- do not remove a motorcyclist's helmet unless essential to do so
- do not give casualties anything to eat or drink
- do make casualties warm and comfortable
- be prepared to give [first aid](#)
- stay at the scene until emergency services arrive

If the police are not attending do not move vehicles until all parties have sketched or noted their positions. A disposable camera is stored in each Authority vehicle to take photographs.

You must provide your name, car registration, vehicle owner's name and address (or Authorities name and address as stated below if in a work vehicle) and insurance details to anybody with reasonable grounds for asking

If the police are attending you must show them your insurance certificate, if you don't have it then you must present it to your local police station as instructed.

**Complete the accident report before you leave the scene, make sure you take down any other registration numbers of vehicles involved in the accident.**

New Forest National Park Authority  
Lymington Town Hall  
Avenue Road  
Lymington  
SO41 9ZG

**APPENDIX 3: ACCIDENT RECORD**

In the event of an accident please record the following information.

Always **stop** if you are involved in a road accident, **do not apologise or admit any liability**. The Authority's insurance details are kept in glove compartment of each vehicle.

<b>Date of accident:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Vehicle registration:</b>	<b>Driver name:</b>
<b>Passenger name/s:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Road Conditions:</b>	
<b>Weather Conditions:</b>	
<b>Contact details of any other drivers involved (add additional drivers on separate sheet if needed)</b>	
Name:  Address:    Insurance details	Vehicle Registration:  Make:  Model:  Colour:
<b>Contact details of any witnesses</b>	
Name:	Address:
Name:	Address:

Site sketch of incident – if possible take photographs:

Description of incident – when possible make a brief note of what happened including who or what you think caused the accident:



## APPENDIX 4:        **BREAKDOWNS AND PUNCTURES**

If the vehicle you are driving breaks down, first think of other road users and try to:

- get your vehicle off the road if possible
- warn other traffic by using your hazard warning lights if your vehicle is causing an obstruction
- help other road users see you by wearing light-coloured or high visibility clothing
- put a warning triangle on the road at least 45 meters (147 feet) behind your broken-down vehicle on the same side of the road, take great care when placing or retrieving them, but never use them on motorways
- if possible, keep your sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor
- do not stand (or let anybody else stand) between your vehicle and oncoming traffic
- at night or in poor visibility do not stand where you will prevent other road users seeing your lights

**Drivers should not attempt to repair a vehicle on the roadside.** Contact a breakdown service, for Authority vehicles information is kept in the vehicle folder.

The breakdown company will recover the vehicle and take you to your destination, normally home or the office. If you experience any difficulty take a taxi and reclaim the cost via expenses.

### **PUNCTURES**

Wear reflective/high visibility clothing when changing or repairing a tyre so that other drivers can see you:

- Don't change your wheel on the hard shoulder of a motorway or at the side of a busy road.
- Turn off and find a safe place or pull over well away from the traffic and call a breakdown service
- Don't change your wheel on soft, loose or uneven ground
- Don't use the jack anywhere other than at the correct jacking points. You'll find these listed in the vehicle handbook

To save space and weight many new cars have a sealant kit and compressor consult the vehicle handbook and follow instructions before attempting a repair.

If you are unsure of how to change a wheel or seal a tyre then should contact the breakdown service. For Authority vehicles details can be found in the vehicle folder.