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# Drivers' handbook

## Introduction

Your vehicle is an asset. You the driver have the responsibility to drive safely and to look after your company vehicle as if it were your own. It is vital that you maintain the vehicle in a first-class condition at all times. If it is kept in good order, it will be a good advertisement, not only for you but also for us.

This handbook sets out our requirements on using, servicing, running and maintaining a company vehicle. Please read it carefully and make sure you understand the contents fully. If you have any questions, please contact your manager.

The employer has the right to amend any of the procedures and rules at any time. The employer will tell drivers by sending them amended pages for this handbook.

We wish you a trouble-free and safe motoring.

## Procedure

This handbook deals with the following.

- Drivers' responsibilities
- Driving license
- Driving regulations
- Drivers and passengers
- Using company vehicles
- Statutory regulations
- Speed limits
- Vehicle safety checks
- Tires
- Speedometer
- Breakdowns
- Theft
- Insurance certificate
- Accidents

### **Drivers' responsibilities**

- Only authorized people are allowed to drive company vehicles.
- Make sure you are familiar with the vehicle and all its controls. Keep the manufacturer's handbook ready as a point of reference.
- Make sure your vehicle is roadworthy. You must carry out the vehicle safety checks and make sure the vehicle is serviced regularly.
- Maintain a good standard of personal cleanliness and appearance while on duty.
- Keep your vehicle clean and tidy.
- Always be polite and professional when making calls or deliveries.  
You reflect our image.
- Never drink and drive. If you do, we will take disciplinary action against you. You should always remember that it is still possible to be 'over the limit' from alcohol you drank the night before.
- You must tell us about any medical condition which might affect your driving ability.
- Never drive under the influence of certain types of drugs. It is an offence, and dangerous to do so. If you are taking prescribed drugs for any medical condition, you must tell your manager.
- Do not use offensive language. If you do, we may take disciplinary action against you.
- You must not alter the vehicle without your manager's approval.

### **Driving license**

- Operations will check driving licences and keep a record once you become employed and each year after that (as a requirement of the Road Traffic Act and our insurance cover).
- Make sure your driving licences are valid.
- If you receive an endorsement or penalty point on your licence, you must tell your manager.

### **Driving Regulations**

- You must follow the Department of Transport regulations for driving hours. Drivers are subject to maximum driving hours of 9 hours daily and not more than 90 hours a fortnight. Also Drivers must take a 45 minute break for every 4.5 hours driven. The employer would also recommend that drivers take an 11 hour rest period before commencing driving on the following day.

### **Drivers and passengers**

- Never carry unauthorised passengers.
- All people travelling in company vehicles must use the seat belts provided.
- Never carry more passengers than there are seats in the vehicle.

### **Using company vehicles**

- You can only use the vehicle for company business
- If you want to use a company vehicle for private purposes, (social and domestic use) you must get your manager's approval.
- Never carry passengers for hire or reward.
- You should not take vehicles home or park them near your home overnight without your manager's permission.
- Provisional licence holders, unless authorised by a manager, may not drive company vehicles.
- You must not use company vehicles for teaching someone to drive.
- Never drive vehicles that we don't own, lease or hire. For example, another vehicle is blocking an entry or exit, please find its owner or driver and ask them to move it out of the way.

## **Statutory regulations**

- You should thoroughly understand and follow the rules of the road, and current laws and regulations which cover using cars.
- You must report all incidents (including those arising from personal business) which may result in a prosecution under the Road Traffic Act to your manager.

## **Speed limits**

- Never drive faster than the speed limit and never drive too fast for the road conditions. If you do, you could be prosecuted, which can lead to losing your licence and a fine. You will also have to pay the fine yourself, and we may take action against you.

## **Vehicle safety checks**

- Make sure your vehicle is roadworthy. Use the safety checklists to help you do this.
- Report any faults or problems immediately to your manager.
- Never use the vehicle if there is a fault or a problem which might make it unroadworthy.
- Vehicles must be serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

## **Tyres**

- The life of tyres depends on how the vehicle is driven. Excessive speed, braking or acceleration will cause tyres to wear away. If they are repeatedly driven against kerbs or large stones, the walls of the tyres will weaken.
- If tyres are not maintained at the manufacturer's recommended pressures, they will also wear away. You must pay particular attention to these points. You should regularly check tyres. If you are not sure, any authorised tyre depot will check all your tyres and tell you whether or not they need replacing.
- You could be prosecuted by the Gardai if your vehicle's tyres are faulty or do not have enough tread.

- We have arrangements for replacing tyres. If your tyres need repairing or replacing, please contact your manager.

### **Speedometer**

- It is an offence to drive the vehicle when the speedometer is faulty. You must make sure that the speedometer is in proper working order at all times.

### **Breakdowns**

- Report breakdowns immediately to your manager, giving as much information as possible about the problem and the location of the vehicle.
- When a breakdown means your vehicle has to be towed, please remember that towing a vehicle a long distance can cause major damage to the drivelines.

### **Theft**

- If your vehicle is broken into or stolen, you must report the circumstances to the Gardai and your manager immediately.

### **Vehicle security**

You must follow this general security advice.

- Unattended vehicles - Whenever you leave your vehicle, for however short a period, you must lock it. If an alarm or immobilizer is fitted, you must use it. You must also use the steering-wheel lock.
- Theft from vehicles - Make sure you lock all personal belongings or expensive items or equipment out of sight whenever possible. If possible, remove them from the vehicle. Personal belongings are not covered for theft under the companies motor fleet insurance. If you normally carry valuable items, make sure you have enough cover on your household policy or some other type of insurance.

- Long-term parking - If you are parking your vehicle overnight or long term, you should avoid using high-risk sites such as multistory or railway station car parks, unlit side streets and so on.
- Do not leave attractive items (such as portable phones, laptop computers, tools, briefcases, jackets and so on) on display.

### **Accidents**

- You must report accidents involving injury to the local Gardai within 24 hours.
- You must report all damage resulting from accidents, thefts, fire, vandalism and so on (however minor) involving a company vehicle or replacement to your manager immediately.
- You must take the following action at the scene of the accident and afterwards.
  - a) Get the names, addresses and, if possible, motor insurance details from each driver involved in the accident. Make a note of the make, description (for example, van, car or bus) and registration details of every vehicle involved. If any vehicle is, or appears to be, owned by a company or business, get the name and address of the owner.
  - b) Give your name and address, company name to the other drivers. Tell them that the Insurance Department will provide the necessary insurance details.
  - c) At no stage should you admit responsibility. Make no comment or statement on the accident (except to a Garda officer).
  - d) Tell the Gardai if anyone has been injured in the accident or if the other driver did not stop or drove off before giving you personal details.
  - e) Get the names and addresses of as many independent witnesses as possible.
  - f) Measure the position of vehicles on the road and take pictures of the scene, if possible.
  - g) Do not try to remove your vehicle if this could cause further damage. Contact the leasing company concerned, who will make arrangements for the vehicle to be removed.
  - h) Fill in the accident report provided.




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