



Severn Group

# Driver's Handbook

This Handbook applies to all UK employees

JUNE 2023

# Introduction

Driving at work is an essential part of business. Meeting the needs of our customers can mean a significant amount of driving for many of us. To reduce congestion, improve environmental quality and encourage more active and healthy lifestyles, the Company will support measures that promote more sustainable transport choices.

A high number of incidents occur whilst driving and it is estimated that up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve someone who is working at the time. This can result in unnecessary pain and injury, and could be fatal to you and members of the public. Accidents can also damage our profitability and brand. Our aim is to ensure your safety, and the safety of others, whilst a vehicle is being driven on Company business.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this Handbook is to establish driving at work as an integral part of our everyday health and safety practice, which must be managed in the same way as other occupational risks.

This Handbook has been designed to outline our driving policy for all of our UK entities and provide advice on best driving practice to assist in the prevention of accidents and ill health.

We recommend all those who drive Company vehicles or any vehicles on Company business, to adopt best practice and always drive in a safe and considerate manner.

This Handbook details requirements on the use, servicing, running and many other aspects of driving for work, including your safety, which is paramount.

Please read it carefully and make sure you understand the contents fully. You may keep a copy of this Handbook readily accessible on your mobile device(s) for reference. If you have any queries regarding the content of this Handbook, please contact your Line Manager, or responsible person for Health & Safety in your business area.

# Introduction

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# Introduction

## 1. Handbook Statement

This Handbook and the following practices apply to all employees who are required to drive cars or commercial vehicles for business use. This includes:

- People provided with a vehicle essential for business use.
- People provided with a vehicle as part of their benefit package.
- Occasional 'hired vehicle' or company car users.
- People authorised to use their own vehicles on company business.
- Other approved non-employee drivers.

Drivers must always drive within the law, safely and with due care and consideration for other road users and pedestrians. Individuals who represent a risk to their own safety and the safety of others may be required to undertake driver awareness training.

Examples of serious breaches of this Handbook include driving whilst disqualified, causing an accident or injury as a result of reckless or dangerous driving, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. These examples are not exhaustive, and each case will be treated in the context of its circumstances.

# Introduction

## 2. Definitions

Company provided vehicles: any motor vehicle owned, leased, operated, and maintained by the Company for use in conducting its business.

Privately owned vehicles: any motor vehicle owned, leased, and maintained by the employee (must be covered by fully comprehensive insurance that includes use for business purposes).

Rented vehicles: any motor vehicle rented or hired by the Company for use in conducting its business.

Driver: any person authorised by the Company to drive a motor vehicle in the conduct of its business, who holds a valid full UK driving licence.

Substance abuse: shall include, alcohol, drugs (recreational, medicinal, and prescribed) as well as any substance, inhaled, ingested, or injected for purposes not of design or intended purpose.

Business use: in pursuit of the Company's business interests.

Insured: Company held Certificate of Motor Insurance covering any motor vehicle the property of the policyholder or in their custody or control or for which they are legally responsible; Certificate of Motor Insurance held by the employee in respect of their private vehicle including use for business purposes.

## 3. Company Vehicle Driver Capability

Drivers must fit the following categories in order to drive a Company vehicle:

- Drivers must possess a full UK valid driver's licence.
- Should not be a newly qualified driver.
- Not been disqualified for motoring offences in the last five years as per list; however, the list is not exhaustive; death by dangerous driving, drinking, and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, dangerous or reckless driving etc.
- Must have consent and authorisation of the Company.
- Must not be suffering from any known medical condition or visual impairment that could impact your safety and fitness to drive.

# The Approach

## 4. Vehicle Roadworthiness

It is the responsibility of the Company and its delegated responsible person(s) to ensure all vehicles under its direct control and operation are maintained, serviced, tested, and insured according to legal and Company requirements. It is the responsibility of the authorised driver(s) that these vehicles must be subject to daily pre-use checks and inspections, as with any work equipment, where any defect is identified and rectified before using. These daily/pre-use checks to include but not limited to:

- Tyres.
- Windows, windscreen, and wipers (function and blades).
- Lights and indicators.
- Fuel/Power (sufficient for the activity).
- Seatbelts (condition and operation).
- Mirrors (reversing and rear-view).
- Update of the company vehicle mileage log (start and end mileage from odometer).

Weekly checks should include all of the above, including:

- Fluid levels (oil, water, coolant, hydraulics etc).
- Top up windscreen washer reservoir and appropriate additive.
- Check tyre pressures.
- Visual inspection of engine.
- Overall inspection of bodywork, fittings, and latches (including cargo securing points/ISO fixings).

It is recommended that all of the above checks are conducted on privately owned vehicles as well in order to ensure the safety of all drivers, road users and pedestrians, whilst maintaining legal compliance for road use.

Company vehicles should be kept clean and tidy, and it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that, after their use, the vehicle is returned with any rubbish removed and responsibly disposed of, and that the vehicle is left clean, tidy, and safe for the next driver to use.

## 5. Cargo, Loads, Luggage, and Personal Belongings

Always ensure that any form of cargo or loads, including luggage, are appropriately restrained, and secured so as to allow no movement or shift in the event of both general travel or more evasive actions e.g., harsh breaking or sudden swerve. Personal belongings should also be so secured as to not pose a danger, such as during emergency braking or falling into the footwell and impeding the safe operation of pedals, including brakes.

# The Approach

## 6. Driving Ergonomics

Before embarking on any travel, ensure that your seat position allows for safe and efficient operation of all controls and pedals and that maximum visibility is gained through windows and with mirrors. Nothing should impede access to, or operation of, the vehicle's equipment.

## 7. Parking and Vehicle Security

If you have been allocated a designated parking bay on-site, you are responsible for ensuring the vehicle is parked within that designated bay. Be aware that many workplace car parking has a 'reverse parking' requirement; these facilities should be signposted accordingly, and reverse parking must be conducted (unless for loading and unloading).

If parking in a public or private car park or by the roadside, ensure the vehicle is locked; does not pose an obstruction; that personal belongings and anything of valuable are not visible (preferably removed from the vehicle); and if parked during hours of darkness, try to park under lighting and/or CCTV to afford best security. Locks and immobilisers should be engaged when not present with the vehicle.

Vehicle keys should never be left within an unattended vehicle, with or without the engine running. Where contactless keys allow entry and operation of the vehicle, it is recommended that keys be kept in a 'Faraday/RFID' pouch when not in use. Particularly for night-time parking, this denies thieves the opportunity to clone the key's signal with specific equipment and gain access to the vehicle. Keys should be kept out of sight and secure.

## 8. Reporting of Accidents and Accident Investigation

In the unfortunate event of being involved in an accident whilst driving for work, where able to, you must ensure your own safety and that of other road users. Where necessary and relevant, you should call the police and remain calm.

As soon as safe, take photographs of the scene, the damage, other vehicle(s) involved (including registration numbers), include a picture of the other driver(s) with their car(s) and also any skid marks on the road or obstruction(s) that may have been part cause of the accident. After you have exchanged details with those involved, arrange for emergency recovery where necessary, or if the vehicle is still safe to drive, proceed on your journey with caution as you will probably be suffering from shock.

Report the accident to your Line Manager as well as the People Team. All road traffic accidents related to business travel (excluding routine commuting) will be investigated and reported in accordance with the accident and investigation procedure.

# The Approach

We do this in order to establish the cause of the accident and where applicable, we will take the steps to eliminate or reduce the risks to drivers.

## 9. Emergency Breakdown (Company Vehicles)

The AA (Automobile Association) provides emergency response and assistance for our Company vehicles. Please ensure that you have the relevant information in the vehicle during pre-use checks so as to enable their earliest services, should they be required.

## 10. Alcohol & Drugs (Substances)

It is strictly forbidden to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or after taking medicines that could adversely affect driving performance. It is also an offence to drive a vehicle if your ability to do so is impaired by the use of recreational drugs, or even prescribed or non-prescribed drugs. Always check that prescription medicines will not affect your ability to drive.

If you cannot drive because of medicines that have been prescribed to you, the company will seek alternative duties until you can commence driving.

You should be aware that drinking alcohol the night before a journey can result in you exceeding the legal blood alcohol limit for driving the following morning.

Current legal limits differ in the UK, with Scotland having lower legal limits and there is no failsafe guide as to how much you can drink and stay under the limit. The amount and type of alcoholic drink and your weight, sex, age, and metabolism will all play a part.

	England, Wales & N. Ireland	Scotland
Micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath	35	22
Micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath	80	50
Micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath	107	67

# The Approach

## 11. Elimination of Alcohol

Alcohol is eliminated from the body at a rate approximately equivalent to half a pint of beer each hour – so it takes two hours for the body to eliminate one pint of beer; however, everyone's body reacts differently therefore the two hours may take longer or less.

Remember your blood alcohol level peaks one hour after you stop drinking and before the body starts the process of elimination. It takes your body at least 48 hours to recover after getting drunk.

One unit = half a pint of regular strength beer or small glass of wine or single pub measure of spirits.

## 12. Smoking (Including: Cigarettes / Vaping / E-cigarettes)

It is illegal to smoke in a Company vehicle at any time.

Should you be caught smoking in a Company vehicle a fine of up to £2500 could be incurred to the Company and £200 fine for the employee. Also be aware this could be subject to Disciplinary Action being brought against you.

Company vehicles will be subjected to inspection and evidence of smoking e.g., strong smell of tobacco or cigarette burns on the upholstery etc, you may be liable for the cleaning and repairs required. Passengers in Company vehicles are also not permitted to smoke and it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that any passengers do not smoke. No smoking signs will be displayed in the vehicles and the signs should not be removed.

If you are driving your own car and you smoke, it is legal to do so providing you have no passengers below the age of 18 years. However, we ask for your courtesy to refrain from smoking, even in your own car if you have passengers who are over 18 years of age. Passive smoking is harmful to others, particularly in confined spaces.

## 13. Mobile Phones

The use of a handheld mobile phone whilst driving is illegal. You can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free mobile phone if your actions lead to an incident. Remember if you are involved in an incident, it is possible the police will seize your mobile phone for evidence as part of their investigation.

# The Approach

Mobile phones must only be used whilst driving when connected via a hands-free operating system however, it is recommended that you find a safe place to stop to make and/or receive calls when not driving or preparing to drive. Conversations on the phone whilst driving can reduce your focus and be distracting to your road awareness.

## 14. Commuting

Where you have a two hour or more commute to your usual place of work, this routine should be reviewed with your Line Manager in order that, where possible, remedial plans may be put in place. The Working Time Directive must be included in the consideration of such remedial plans.

## 15. Working Time Directive (WTD)

Whilst specific to full time and professional drivers, the WTD should be used as 'best practice' for maintaining safety. Driving should be limited to nine hours per day, extendable to ten hours twice in a week. This period of driving does not include rest and break periods, which are recommended as 15 minutes in every two hours of driving and there must be at least eight hours rest period between the previous work shift or nine hour driving period.

If you have further onward travel following a long flight or train journey, consider alternative transport such as public (train, bus, taxi) as fatigue and driver tiredness is the significant cause of serious road traffic accidents. Do not undertake a journey if you are tired and where possible, if sharing the vehicle with another authorised driver, consider sharing the driving responsibilities.

## 16. Plan your journey

Plan your journey, fully considering all aspects that could affect your travel. Where fitted or available, use Satnav, ideally connected with a smartphone to enable up-to-the-minute Traffic Information on your proposed route. Consideration of, but not limited to:

- Weather variations en-route (adverse, bright sunlight, etc.). Where there are prevailing adverse weather conditions, proceed only if absolutely necessary ensuring that you have suitable and adequate provisions and equipment should your journey be impeded e.g., warm blanket, suitable spare footwear, drinking water, hot drink, and snacks.
- Road works.
- Disruptions (including protests and public disorder, public transport and industrial action, etc).

# The Approach

## 17. Documents

- Driver's Licence.
- Travel Requisition Authorisation (available as e-form in the Group Policy Hub).
- Driver's Declaration (available as e-form on the HR System).

Checks may be made via the DVLA to ensure the vehicle is taxed and has a valid MOT in respect of private vehicles.

## 18. Risk Assessments

Generic risk assessments are available for Driving at Work, however, there may be occasions when non-routine travel is required e.g., long distance, over-night, unusual load/cargo. Before commencing such travel, a non-routine risk assessment should be carried out. Your QHSE department will be able to advise and assist.

## 19. Use of Personal Vehicles for Business

Drivers may use their own car for business where there is no Company vehicle available, vehicle rental is not a viable alternative, or there is no reasonable alternative by public transport. Your own insurance must be adequate for business use. Please note that no insurance cover is provided by the Company for employees using their own car on Company business. Personal vehicle use is preferred before rental.

## 20. Non-compliance / Traffic Offences

"Health and Safety law applies to on-the-road work activities and the risks should be effectively managed within a health and safety system".

Changes in UK law introduced powers allowing the police to impose on-the-spot fines (or enforcement to attend Driving Awareness Courses) and three points on licenses for tailgating, middle lane hogging, using mobile phones, not wearing seat belts. Fines for such behaviour were also significantly increased.

Serious breaches including driving whilst disqualified, causing an accident or injury as a result of reckless or dangerous driving, or under the influence of drink or drugs will be treated accordingly by the Company in the context of its circumstances and are likely to result in termination of employment.

# The Approach

## 21. Breaches

Breaches of this Handbook may result in disciplinary action. In cases of serious misconduct, including but not limited to, health and safety related issues will result in disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal.

Any traffic offence, endorsements, imposition of penalty points etc., regardless of the vehicle and vehicle usage circumstances must be reported to your Line Manager who will in conjunction with other departments review the insurance implications. Failure to notify your Line Manager could invalidate insurance cover.

The payment of any fines resulting from motoring or parking offences regardless of vehicle use is your responsibility. If you drive a Company vehicle and fail to pay a fine, the charge will be deducted from your salary, and you may be charged an administration cost.

## 22. Fuel Cards / Fuel Accounts

Where a fuel card or account has been made available, purchases of fuel should only be made from these providers. Personal car users must note mileage (as per Travel & Expenses Policy) and make the authorised expenses claim, providing receipts where required.

Replacement fuel cards shall be arranged through the Finance department(s).

## 23. Company Vehicle Insurance

The insurance for Company operated vehicles covers 'any person who is driving with the policyholder's consent. The policyholder being Contour Holdings International Limited and MCE Group Limited and Subsidiary Companies. Personal belongings should not be left in Company vehicles as they may not be covered by the insurance policy.

## 24. Driver / Vehicle Packs:

- Risk assessment.
- First aid kit.
- Hi-vis vest.
- Torch (rechargeable/wind-up).
- Fire extinguisher.
- Emergency breakdown assist cover.

## Data Protection

For information about our processing of personal data under this Handbook, including details of our legal grounds for doing so, how long we retain such personal data, who your personal data is shared with, your rights under data protection law and who you should contact if you have any concerns, please see our Employee Data Protection Policy and Employee Privacy Notice, which can be accessed via the Group Policy Hub, the HR System or a member of the People Team.

## Agreement to follow this Handbook

This Handbook is fully supported by the Executive Team.

This Handbook is non-contractual, and the Company reserves the right to update it at any time.

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, ESG Policy, Employee Data Protection Policy, Employee Privacy Notice, Substance Abuse Policy and Travel & Expenses Policy.





At Severn Group, our business success flows from expertise – from technical knowledge and experience that position us as a leader in our field. Not everything, however, can be engineered. The Values which underpin that success stem instinctively from the culture we seek to sustain. Everything we do is tested against our Values, and our people are encouraged to apply them every day: they are the stewards of our brand, our reputation, our heritage, our ambitions.



**Customer**



**Integrity**



**Excellence**



**Accountability**



**SEVERN**  
Superior Valve Engineering