



NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL

DRIVING AT WORK POLICY

The Good Driver

An employee's responsibilities in connection with the driving of a vehicle carry significant obligations.

From the commencement of driving duties or carrying out the vehicle checks before moving off the driver is responsible for safety. Safety for the vehicle and its load and safety to other road users.

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1. THE DRIVER CODE

- All driving offences and endorsements/fines must be reported to your line manager.
- The procedure for new drivers to be enrolled on to the list of authorised drivers requires each driver to produce their driving licence in person, to Fleet Management Team and sign the conditions of driving. Drivers will then be authorised to drive those council vehicles in the categories listed on their driving licence.
- Driving licences must be renewed at the appropriate time and made available for annual inspection by the Council's Fleet Management Team.
- Smoking is not allowed at any time in any council vehicle.
- Unauthorised persons are not to be carried in vehicles.
- Statutory breaks in line with driver's hours and the correct completion of driver logbooks has to be complied with.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times (except under exemption rules).
- Courtesy at all times is essential, both on the road and on Council premises. All drivers and crew should remember that they are representatives of the Council and conduct themselves accordingly.
- Uniforms when issued should be worn at all times when on duty.
- The driver is responsible for the security of loads at all times.
- Drivers are to comply with all national speed limits and traffic signs and ensure vehicles are parked safely.
- Check vehicle for damage and report any damage to your supervisor or the motor vehicle workshop.
- Check levels of oil, water, fuel, brake and clutch fluid and screen washer bottle regularly and frequently. (Mark)
- Do not drive any vehicle with defective brakes, steering, tyres or lights. (Mark)
- Check that the vehicle is roadworthy; including lights, tyres, brakes, steering, jack and wheel brace. (Mark)
- Locate fire extinguisher and first-aid box and check contents (where applicable).
- Keep windscreen, mirrors, lights, reflectors, and number plates clean at all times.
- Check vehicle is displaying a current excise licence.
- Never leave a vehicle unlocked or leave the engine running whilst the vehicle is unattended, except in the circumstances of specialist vehicles.

2. ECONOMIC DRIVING

The Council is aware of its responsibilities in the conservation of fuel and the reduction of vehicle emissions. Drivers play a key role in helping us to achieve our aims. We will monitor fuel consumption on a regular basis with the aim of improving our fleet efficiency.

Some of the ways to improve fuel consumption are listed below:

- Check oil and water levels daily
- All vehicles are to be filled after each shift. Filling should take place until the fuel reaches the bottom of the filling neck and no further. If you over-fill then in warm conditions the fuel will expand and can leak from the filler.
- Tyres must be maintained at the correct pressure. 10% low equates to 1% increase in fuel consumption.
- Never leave an engine running if it is not required; on average, for each hour of idle running an engine can use in excess of 1 gallon of fuel.
- Never 'over rev' an engine when starting up. Start up and move off to warm the engine up.
- For those employees who drive vehicles equipped with manual gearboxes skip or block change and don't double de-clutch.
- Do not speed. A 5% increase in speed increases fuel consumption by up to 20%.
- Report all defects; brakes that are binding can increase fuel consumption up to 15%.
- Use the correct gear when moving off.
- Keep the engine revs in the "green band" for as long as possible.

3. DRIVERS HOURS RULES AND REGULATIONS

North Tyneside Council operate under Domestic Rules and Regulations. Domestic legislation in the form of the Transport Act 1968 Part VI, as modified applies to drivers of vehicles which are exempt from EU law.

4. DEFECT REPORTING

Operators are required to maintain their vehicles in a fit and roadworthy condition. One of the key elements is the driver daily check, which has to be carried out prior to the vehicle being used.

Daily checks carried out by the Caretaker have to be supported by the defect-reporting sheet. Any defects found during the driver's daily check have to be documented on the defect sheet and reported to their supervisor or workshop prior to the vehicle being used.

Any defect found has to be inspected by a workshop fitter and action taken to ensure the vehicle is made roadworthy.

5. THE DAILY DEFECT SHEET/REPORT

Caretaker to complete a daily Defect Report by ticking each item listed on the defect sheet indicating that the item inspected is serviceable marked with a tick () or not serviceable by indicating with a cross (x). The defect sheet still has to be completed by the Caretaker even if no defects are found on the vehicle.

If the defect sheet is a daily sheet it has to be handed to the line manager at the end of the working day. If the defect sheet is a weekly sheet and the same

driver uses the vehicle all week the defect sheet has to be returned to the supervisor/manager at the end of the working week.

If a service uses a weekly defect sheet and the vehicle is driven by different drivers the defect sheet is to be handed in on the last day the driver was responsible for the vehicle.

Any defect found and entered onto the drivers' daily defect sheet has to be entered into a workshop defect log when reporting to the workshop. Defect sheets become part of the maintenance records and must be kept by the operator for 15 months.

6. ROAD ACCIDENTS

What the driver of the Council will be required to do:-

If you are involved in a traffic accident you should stop whether or not the accident is your fault if: anyone, other than themselves, is injured; or another vehicle, or someone else's property (a wall, a gate, garage etc. is damaged; or an animal in another vehicle or running across the road is injured; or a bollard, street lamp or other item of street furniture is damaged).

What to do if another driver is involved in the accident:

If you have an accident, stop your vehicle and remain near your vehicle long enough for anyone who is involved directly or indirectly in the accident to ask for details. This could be, for example, the driver or passenger of the other car, a witness to the accident or the police. You must then give your name, the name and address of the owner of the vehicle (if the driver is not the owner); you will also need to give your registration number of the vehicle. All the information you will be required to give is on Form B of the accident kit, (every vehicle should have an accident kit in the first aid kit. If your vehicle does not have a first aid kit or an accident kit please advise your supervisor/manager as URGENT and they will arrange to have a first aid kit/accident kit fitted), complete this and give it to the other party asking them to contact the Risk & Insurance Department. You will also need to ask the other driver to complete form A of the accident kit, this ensures we have all the other persons (third party) details so we can process the claim quickly. Once the forms have been exchanged you will need to keep form A and give it to your supervisor who will give it to Risk and Insurance as part of their investigation. If the other party refuses to give their details, the Council driver should still write the third party's registration number on form A, this is VERY IMPORTANT as this will enable Risk and Insurance to process the claim.

NEVER admit that the accident was your fault at the accident scene. Risk and Insurance or our insurance company will decide who is at fault for the accident.

NOTE The accident kit template is on the intranet available to be printed.

What to do if nobody else is involved in the accident:-

If nobody else is involved in the accident you will still need to check the damage and report the incident to Risk and Insurance as an insurance claim.

Drivers of Council vehicles are responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and must take due care to avoid confrontations or accidents. Drivers must be aware of relevant traffic, road conditions and drive in accordance with weather conditions.

If you are unable to exchange details at the accident scene:-

If the owner of the vehicle or property is not at the accident scene, you will be required to complete form B of the accident kit and either leave it on the windscreen of the other persons damaged vehicle or if you have damaged a wall or property you can post the form through the letterbox of the damaged property.

Reporting incidents to the police

You may have to report the accident to a police officer or at a police station, in person, as soon as you are able to and in any case within 24 hours. This will have to be done whenever the driver has not given their name and address at the scene of the accident, whether or not they were asked to do so. Your supervisor will report the accident to the police.

If any personal injury is caused to another person, dog or farm animal in the incident the police must be informed **as soon as possible** and within 24 hours. The Council driver should note any name and number of the attending police officer along with the police reference number. Once you have called the police, call for an ambulance for the injured person.

Reporting an accident Out of Hours

If you have a road traffic accident outside working hours and require assistance contact the workshop on **0781 128 4302** or **0781 381 2186**.

7. MEDICAL RULES

All drivers must have a medical test when applying for a provisional vocational entitlement and on renewal. Vocational entitlement is now any category above category B.

The renewal date for entitlements will be shown on your licence. Generally, entitlements gained with a car test will last until your 70th birthday and vocational entitlements will last until your 45th birthday when a medical test has to be carried out by your GP or the Council's Occupational Health Unit.

If you have a medical condition which has worsened since your licence was issued or if you develop a new medical condition, you must inform the Driver Medical

Unit, DVLA Swansea, SA99 1TU. Failure to do so is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to £1,000.

8. EYE SIGHT STANDARDS

It is a criminal offence to drive any motor vehicle if you cannot read a standard number plate in good daylight from 20.5m (67 feet), using glasses if necessary. If you need glasses or contact lenses to do this, you must wear them every time you drive.

It is also your responsibility to inform a Supervisor / Manager if you are experiencing eye sight difficulties.

9. YOUR FITNESS TO DRIVE : ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

It is a serious offence to drive or be in charge of a motor vehicle whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs. You must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when starting work or when driving or operating any vehicle or equipment.

10. PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND MEDICATION

You are not to undertake driving duties while taking drugs or medication that may affect your driving ability. If you are being treated by a doctor and are prescribed drugs or medicine, you are responsible to find out whether or not they are liable to affect your driving ability.

If medicines are likely to affect your driving you are to obtain a certificate stating this and report to your Supervisor / Manager.

11. ILLNESS WHILST DRIVING

If you become ill whilst driving you are to stop your vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so, and report the matter to your Supervisor / Manager.

12. LONG TERM ILLNESS

Some medical conditions may affect your entitlement to hold a driving licence for certain categories of vehicles. It is your responsibility to seek advice from your GP and inform your Supervisor / Manager.

13. MOBILE TELEPHONES

It is forbidden to operate a mobile phone whilst driving, refuelling or within the confines of a refuelling area and other restricted areas when identified by safety warning signs. Drivers are required by law to exercise proper control of the vehicle at all times.

14. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

When radios are fitted into vehicles they are not to be operated by the driver whilst driving.

15. PERSONAL EARPHONES/HEADPHONES

The wearing of personal audio system headphones whilst driving is forbidden.

16. PASSENGERS

It is forbidden to carry any unauthorised passengers in North Tyneside Council's vehicles.

17. SEATBELTS

The Law

Seat belts must be fitted and worn in cars and light vans. Goods vehicles exceeding 3,500kg maximum gross weight if fitted with seat belts they must be worn by drivers and passengers. However the law gives exemption from wearing seat belts as follows:

- Driving a vehicle when carrying out a manoeuvre which includes reversing.
- Holding a valid medical exemption certificate.

The responsibility for wearing a seat belt rests with each occupant of the vehicle but when children under the age of 14 are carried it is the driver's responsibility.

Failure to comply with the regulations is an offence.

Any driver failing to observe these conditions may be subject to corrective and disciplinary procedures.

18. UNATTENDED VEHICLES

No person shall leave, or cause or permit to be left, on a road a motor vehicle, which is not attended by a person licensed to drive it, unless the engine is stopped and any parking brake is effectively applied.

However, the regulations state that the stopping of the engine shall not apply in respect of a specialist vehicle:

- Being used to drive machinery forming part of or mounted on the vehicle and used for the purpose other than driving the vehicle.

19. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Employer's Responsibility

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) is the basis of all the present legislation dealing with the health of employees. In broad terms, the HSWA imposes a duty on all employers to accept responsibility for the safety of the workforce by providing a safe environment, suitable equipment and adequate training.

Employees Responsibility

Employees have a responsibility for their personal health and safety and that of others that may be affected by their work, including their fellow employees and members of the public.

Employees must not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided in the interests of health and safety, or take any action that might endanger themselves or others.