

# Safe Driving and Use of Department Vehicles Policy

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Next Review Date: **September 2016**  
Approved by: **ELT**  
Owner: **DCE Corporate Services**

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy and [Schedule 1](#) is to:

- i) set out the safety requirements for using Department vehicles including compliance with the Code of Conduct;
- ii) ensure that all vehicle use reflects genuine business and operational requirements and minimises the Department's exposure to unnecessary risk or costs; and
- iii) ensure that employees and managers have access to information about their responsibilities and the potential employment consequences of failure to comply with this policy.

## Policy Statement

The Department of Corrections is committed to the safety of all staff, offenders and the public. This includes driving and the operation of Department vehicles on public roads and Department land.

Motor vehicles represent a significant investment and asset for the Department, and all employees are expected to use them responsibly and cost-effectively, and to support the efficient operation of the vehicle fleet.

All use of a Department vehicle is subject to our [Code of Conduct](#) which sets out the high standard of personal and professional behaviour expected from Corrections staff, and in particular states that Corrections staff must:

- Comply with the law at all times;
- Uphold the policies, procedures and standards of Corrections;
- Advise their manager of any criminal charge laid under any law, statute or regulation;
- Use Corrections resources lawfully, responsibly, appropriately, effectively and efficiently to provide better public value;
- Show a commitment to their health and safety and the health and safety of others

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees driving and using Department vehicles.

**Note:** For Department policy relating to the supply and maintenance of vehicles, refer to [the Vehicles Policy](#).

## Policy

Every driver of a Department vehicle is responsible for:

- Holding and maintaining a current licence to operate the type of vehicle being used;

- before driving the vehicle, checking the condition of the vehicle to ensure it meets obvious legal and safety requirements e.g. registration and warrant are current and the tyres are in reasonable condition;
- planning long journeys in advance to ensure adequate time is available to accommodate rest breaks and unexpected delays, and take regular rest breaks (2 hourly or less if the driver is becoming fatigued)
- driving the vehicle in accordance with the [Code of Conduct](#), and all relevant legislation and road-user requirements, including speed restrictions and parking controls
- complying with the [Drug and Alcohol Policy](#) including any requirement to undergo a drug test post incident or accident
- operating the vehicle within its design and intended purpose, i.e. the manufacturer's specifications and recommendations at all times;
- complying with the "Requirements for Operating Department Vehicles" and the specific provisions of this policy below, and maintaining the vehicle as a smoke free environment;
- working collaboratively and courteously with other employees, to maximise the availability and efficient use of pool vehicles, and support effective work practices. This includes using / respecting booking arrangements; and ensuring cars are returned when scheduled, or notifying the office of any delay so other staff can make alternative arrangements;
- notifying any change in their driver's licence status to their manager, for example if it has expired, been suspended or cancelled, or has limitations placed on it;
- immediately notifying their manager and the relevant cost centre manager of any accident while using a Department vehicle;
- notifying their manager of any infringements incurred while using a Department vehicle
- promptly paying any infringements or fines incurred while using a Department vehicle;
- promptly reporting to the relevant cost centre manager any incident or mechanical or other concerns that could affect the safe operation of the vehicle

The Department will ensure that:

- employees are informed of their safety responsibilities and the expectations placed on them when driving a Department vehicle
- vehicles provided for employee use are fit for purpose and regularly maintained to ensure safe operations
- managers and HR are notified where infringement notices are received in respect of their staff;
- infringement notices, and any other behaviours that do not comply with this policy are addressed promptly with the staff member concerned, and disciplinary action taken in line with the [Department's Code of Conduct](#) and [Responding to Employee Conduct and Behaviour](#) procedures where appropriate;
- driver safety training, awareness and education are provided as appropriate

## Requirements for Operating Department Vehicles

### *General*

All use of a vehicle (mileage) and the purpose of the travel must be accurately recorded the vehicle's log book for monitoring use of the vehicle and the Department's FBT liability.

The Fuel Card specific to the vehicle issued by the National Fleet Manager must be used for all fuel purchases in line with instructions and vehicle odometer (mileage) figures entered at all Service Stations when purchasing fuel. The Fleet Management team should be contacted in the event of any Fuel Card loss or other issues or concerns.

All reasonable efforts must be made to ensure the security of Department and personal belongings, and to deter potential theft. Drivers must ensure that confidential Department material and any belongings or valuable items (including all electronic devices, wallets, bags and other potentially attractive items) are locked in the boot if possible, or stored out of sight in a locked vehicle.

Each vehicle must be returned to its approved car park or storage facility at all sites each night and weekends, unless the driver has obtained prior written approval from the appropriate manager for any use of a vehicle outside normal business hours

- If prior written approval is not possible due to unplanned circumstances when the vehicle is already off-site, the employee must at the first reasonable opportunity make a written submission to the manager explaining the circumstances that required the unplanned use out of hours and requesting retrospective approval.

Fines for speeding, or other traffic infringements or offences and parking are incurred by the employee driving the vehicle and the employee is responsible for prompt payment of these.

### **Accidents / Insurance**

Any accident, no matter how minor, must be reported to the Department's insurer, the General Manager Corrections Services and the National Fleet Manager

For further information in the event of procedures to be followed in the event of an accident, employees should refer to [the Insurance and Claims Procedure Manual](#): on the Department's intranet. A drug and alcohol test will be required for the driver of any motor vehicle involved in an accident, see the [Drug and Alcohol Policy](#).

### **Vehicle Repairs**

Where a vehicle requires a non-routine repair, the employee must contact the cost centre manager or their own manager in the first instance. The cost centre manager or manager is then required to contact the National Fleet Manager for advice before committing to any non-routine costs or repairs

No employee may commit to non-routine vehicle costs repairs without the prior agreement of the National Fleet Manager.

### **Use of Department Vehicles limited to approved business reasons**

Employees' entitlement to use a Department vehicle is restricted to business purposes, within working hours, except that: Managers may authorise use of a vehicle outside working hours to meet a demonstrable business need. Employees are required to obtain such approval in advance.

- Any manager giving approval by telephone must follow up immediately with a confirming email to the employee, copied to the relevant cost centre manager.
- Any employee using a vehicle outside working hours is required to enter in the log book the purpose of the travel and the name and designation of the approving manager

### **Alternative options to using a Department vehicle**

Employees and their managers should consider the alternative options outlined in the Department's [Travel Policy](#) in preference to using a vehicle to meet their business requirement.

### Use of employee-owned vehicles

Employees are generally expected to organise their own arrangements for travelling to and from work, and to take responsibility for ensuring that the vehicle meets legal and safety requirements. The use of an employee's private vehicle for any Corrections business is strongly discouraged and should only be considered as a last resort where no other option is available.

Procedures, conditions and insurance provisions relating to the use of employees' own vehicles are set out in the Department's [Travel Policy](#), [Travel Operations Policy](#) and [Travel Procedures](#).

### Failure to comply with Department policy and the conditions of use

Any employee who fails to comply with the provisions of the Safe Driving and Use of Department Vehicles policy may be considered to have failed to meet expected standards under the Department's [Code of Conduct](#) and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Any employee who drives a Corrections vehicle in an unauthorised manner, or who allows an unauthorised person to drive or travel in a Corrections vehicle, may be held personally liable for all costs in the event of any damage or loss that occurs.

### Responsibilities

Person/Party	Responsibilities
Chief Executive and ELT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Approval of policy.</li><li>Consideration and determination of any change(s) to this policy, or its Schedules.</li></ul>
Deputy Chief Executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monitoring use of Department vehicles in their Group to ensure they are used safely</li><li>Monitoring infringement reports to identify trends, and HR reporting to ensure that infringements are being followed up appropriately.</li></ul>
National Fleet Manager / Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Management of the Departments vehicle Fleet</li><li>Initial processing of infringement notices.</li></ul>
Cost centre manager with responsibility for vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Business as usual management of the vehicles owned by their cost centre</li><li>Ensuring that regular maintenance is completed on schedule, and any reported safety concerns are addressed promptly.</li><li>Prompt, effective follow up of any safety or mechanical concerns raised by drivers.</li><li>Liaison with the Department's insurers and Fleet Management team re accidental damage to a Dept vehicle</li></ul>
Managers & HR Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Receiving infringement notices and following up with the employee concerned to determine the appropriate action in each situation in accordance with relevant Department policy, including Schedule 1 to this document.</li></ul>

### Definitions

Employee	For the purposes of this policy 'employee' includes any employee of the Department, and any other person who has been authorised to use a Department vehicle.
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## Safe Driving and Use of Department Vehicles Policy

### SCHEDULE 1: Guidance for managing Safe Driving and Driver Behaviour

Corrections is committed to the safety of all staff, offenders and the public. This includes driving and the operation of Department motor vehicles on public roads and Department land.

We have a large Departmental vehicle fleet and a significant proportion of staff regularly drive a Department vehicle as part of their role. Our staff can be required to drive motor vehicles for a range of reasons, including:

- Community Work Supervisors transporting offenders on community work sentences
- Probation Officers carrying out home visits and implementing GPS-based sentences
- Corrections Officers escorting prisoners to hospital or court appointments.
- Instructors and Prisons staff using specialist vehicles on prison property.

Every driver of a Department vehicle should drive safely and courteously and:

- ensure they hold a correct and valid current driver licence for the class of vehicle they are driving and that this licence is carried by them when driving a Department vehicle.
- immediately notify their supervisor or manager if their driver licence has been suspended or cancelled, or has had any limitations placed upon it.
- be responsible and accountable for their actions when operating a Department vehicle or driving for the purposes of work.
- display the highest level of professional conduct when driving a Department vehicle.
- not use a mobile phone while driving (unless using a 'hands free' kit).
- Follow the Road Code and all legal requirements, including driving hours and particular requirements that apply to heavy motor vehicles

Accountable managers are responsible for day to day staff-management issues and for responding to employee conduct and behaviour issues that may warrant disciplinary action.

#### Code of conduct

The code of conduct sets out the high standard of personal and professional behaviour expected from Corrections staff in particular states that Corrections staff must:

- Comply with the law at all times
- Uphold the policies, procedure and standards of Corrections
- Advise their manager of any criminal charge laid under any law, statute or regulation
- Use Corrections resources lawfully, responsibly, appropriately, effectively and efficiently to provide better public value
- Show you are committed to your health and safety and the health and safety of others.

The Code makes it very clear that certain behaviour or conduct falls below our expectations and could result in disciplinary action including:

- **Actions that are unlawful**, Undertaking any form of unlawful behaviour or involvement (whether in the workplace or off duty).
- **Careless or unsafe behaviour**. Any behaviour resulting in a potential or actual threat to the health and safety of any individual.

The following actions in Department vehicles do not meet our expectations and will be viewed as breaches of the code of conduct which may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal:

- drinking or being under the influence of drugs while driving.
- Speeding or failing to follow the road code, particularly where there is potential harm to others or Department property.
- driving while disqualified or not correctly licensed.
- reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury.
- failing to stop after a crash.
- acquiring demerit points leading to suspension of licence.
- any actions that warrant the suspension of a licence.

Managers need to raise **all** infringement notices with staff and should advise staff that **more than one** speeding fine could result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Regional FTC and HR Managers receive notification of the infringements and will provide them to the relevant manager to address the issue with the staff member concerned. If accidents occur a drug and alcohol test is to be carried out in accordance with the Drug and Alcohol policy immediately following the accident. Managers should seek advice from HR if they are unsure of how to address any vehicle related issues.