

Domiciliary Care Driving Policy

This policy ensures that standards set by Spinal Homecare Services Ltd reflect the DVLA rules and regulations and complies with Company Insurance cover. All staff are to have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities; carers are expected to drive their own vehicle as part of their role as a care worker and if required for driving clients, to do so in a safe and professional manner.

Driving is among the most hazardous tasks performed by employees. Legislation places a duty on the employer to provide a safe working environment; this is also extended to driving on business. It is a requirement for staff to follow safe driving practices. This includes steps to ensure the driver's total concentration and safe operation of vehicles, such as determining clear directions before departing, refraining from operating equipment such as mobile phones while the vehicle is moving, and not operating a vehicle when the driver's ability is impaired. Drivers are expected to follow defensive driving principles, driving regulations i.e. The Highway Code to prevent accidents.

Code of conduct

Spinal Homecare Ltd expects all staff whilst driving on Company Business to comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety habits when driving. The following actions will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct:

- Drinking or under the influence of drugs while driving
- Driving while disqualified, or not correctly licensed
- Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury
- Failing to stop after an accident
- Any actions that warrant suspension of licence

Responsibility as an employee

Staff, who drive on Spinal Homecare Ltd business, will:

- Ensure that their car is covered for Business purposes and that a copy of the Insurance Policy is held on file and updated annually.
- Ensure they hold a current driving license
- Immediately notify their line manager if their driver license has been suspended or cancelled or has limitations placed on it
- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when driving on business
- Assess driving hazards and anticipate "what if scenarios"
- Wear safety belts
- Drive within legal speed limits

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- Comply with traffic legislation
- Do not use a mobile phone (including hands free kit) when driving – see *instructions for mobile phone use*
- Check vehicles prior to the journey to ensure that vehicles are within safe operating conditions. Checks should include proper inflation of tyres clean windows, mirrors properly adjusted, brakes, lights in working order, windscreen wipers and wash in working order.
- Report any Accident or near miss incident to the Office and your line manager, including those that do not result in damage or injury.
- Complete an accident report form on all accidents and report to the police, your line manager immediately (where reasonably practicable)
- Take regular and adequate rest breaks
 - o At least 15 minutes for each 2 hours continuous driving
 - o Stop when tired
- For own vehicle the following should be observed
 - o Ensure that your vehicle has a valid MOT certificate and is in a roadworthy condition
 - o Ensure that your vehicle has valid road tax.
 - o Ensure your insurance covers business travel
 - o Spinal Homecare Ltd will not accept liability for any damage to privately owned vehicles
 - o Ensure that you are not taking any medication that may impair your driving ability

Staff should have their licences with them at each supervision. The manager will record that they have reviewed the licence and any endorsements changes in eligibility to drive noted on the staff members file. Should a member of staff no longer be able to drive due to eligibility or disqualification the company reserves the right to stop providing placements.

Procedures

Instructions for Mobile phone use

A substantial body of research shows that using hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving is a significant distraction and substantially increases the risk of the driver crashing. Research shows that individuals are four times more likely to crash, injuring or killing themselves and/or other people.



Using a hands-free phone while driving, does not significantly reduce risks, because the problems are caused mainly by the mental distraction and divided attention, (RoSPA).

Mobile phones cause distractions in three ways:

- Taking hands off the wheel
- Becoming engrossed in a conversation and not concentrating on the road
- Mental distraction

The use of mobile phones whilst driving is not acceptable except where a legally compliant hands free unit is installed, and even then it is strongly advised against. Staff should adopt the following principles:

- You must never use a mobile phone whilst driving unless you have a fully legally compliant hands-free unit and are an experienced driver used to handling such equipment: even in such cases you should never initiate calls whilst driving.
- Unless you have a hands-free unit your phone should be switched off, with divert all calls to voicemail and check messages when your vehicle is stationary.
- Never make calls, dial numbers or text while driving, even with a hands-free unit.

From a safety point of view, all use of mobile phones should be avoided while the vehicle is being driven, even with hands-free units, as drivers cannot fully concentrate on driving if they have to process and respond to phone calls. If the phone has to be left on (and this may only be the case where a legally compliant hands-free unit is installed), the driver should pull off the road (in a safe position) to make a call or take a call for any length of time. If in such conditions you receive a call you should indicate that you are driving and that you will call back when stationary.

Drivers should also be aware that if you have an accident whilst using a hands-free device you may be prosecuted for driving without due care and attention.

What to do if you have an accident or near miss

Stop your vehicle at the scene or as close as is safe, always ensure your safety first. Complete the accident report form (Annex B) by collecting the following information at the scene:

- Details of other vehicle
- Name and address of other driver
- Name and address of any witnesses
- Name of insurer
- Description of incident

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Contact the police:

- If there are injuries
- There is a disagreement over the accident
- If you damage property other than your own
- If you feel unsafe
- To get the incident reference number

Contact the office and inform Care Manger

- Notify travel of any/all injuries and vehicle damage sustained
- Hand in completed accident report form

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Jones'.