

HARLOW COUNCIL

Addendum to Health and Safety Policy

Driving At Work

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General Statement

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places specific duties on employers to ensure, as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees, as well as the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by their work activities.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers must assess significant risks to the health and safety of both employees and other persons who may be affected by their work activities. This includes a responsibility to ensure that others are not put at risk by your work-related driving activities. There should be safety measures in place for staff using their own, or Council vehicles, for work purpose.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy is a disciplinary offence.

Introduction

In addition, as an Employer complying with the above Regulations and Act, you are required to adhere to the Road Traffic Act and Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations. These regulations are administered by the police and other agencies such as the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency.

Case studies and research have shown that benefits from managing road safety include;

- Fewer work days lost due to injury
- Reduced stress and improved morale
- Reduced running costs through better driving standards

Harlow Council will take steps to set up safe systems of work in order to control and manage any risks which cannot be eliminated. Promoting good health and safer driving practices, and a good safety culture at work, should enhance employee's driving, reducing the chances of injury inside and outside of work.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all Council employees/agency workers/contractors to ensure their own vehicle, or designated fleet vehicle, is maintained to a road worthy condition. Any defects to fleet vehicles should be reported to your Line Manager. Any defects to your personal vehicle should be made safe and rectified; you should never drive defective vehicles.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees, within their teams, will confirm on an annual basis the following;

- Employee has a current, valid driving licence and MOT certificate (if applicable)
- Employee has informed and declared any changes in circumstances such as penalty points, endorsements, use of any prescription medication or changes to health that could affect their ability to drive safely. This includes:
 - Medical conditions notifiable to the DVLA such as defective vision or hearing, heart condition, epilepsy, diabetes or any other physical mental disability or infirmity
 - Convictions during the past 5 years of any of the following offences: Manslaughter, reckless driving, causing death by reckless driving, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or any other offence or combination of offences which resulted in suspension from driving

- Whether employee has had motor insurance declined withdrawn or subjected to an increased rate or special condition
- Where driving their own vehicle for work, employee has appropriate insurance with cover for using their vehicle for business use

Any changes to the above between annual declarations should be notified to the employee's Line Manager immediately. This is to safeguard that no offences or other material changes have occurred following the yearly check.

Managers can request employees to produce original driver documentation at any time.

Your Line Manager will discuss and review your current driving at work status following the declaration of any of the above.

Due to DVLA changes, endorsements and penalty points are no longer recorded on paper driving licenses or counterparts. In view of insurance requirements, the Council may seek to check these details in addition to requiring employees' confirmation on the Annual Declaration Form.

Managers/Team Leaders should ensure that Harlow Council employees, including contractors, apprentices, casual staff and any individuals who use their own vehicles to carry out Harlow Council work duties, (grey fleet), or alternatively drive a Council fleet vehicle, who may/may not claim mileage, must annually complete a Driving at Work Declaration form. This ensures that the Council is complying with its Driving at Work Policy.

The Driving at Work Annual Declaration Forms are divided into two types; Water Garden/Car Park Permit Users, which are sent out automatically from the Car Parks Team. Non-Council car park users, (employees who may need to drive a vehicle on official work duties), will be sent a letter individually as identified from their Manager/Team Leader.

Safer Driving

All drivers should adhere to the following while driving on Council business:

- While driving a Council fleet vehicle, the vehicle/plant log book must be retained in every vehicle and completed prior to use. Any maintenance issues should be reported to your Line Manager to arrange a service/repair. Adequate maintenance checks must be recorded and monitored
- Be aware of what action needs to be taken in an emergency situation – exchange names and addresses – supply insurance details
- In the event of an incident or accident, ensure your Line Manager and the Insurance Team are informed immediately
- Ensure that you are physically fit to drive. Human Resources will refer employees as required to Harlow Occupational Health Service for any matters that may require further assessment
- Never drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs - some prescription drugs can adversely affect the ability to drive – check with your doctor or pharmacist
- Have regular eye tests and ensure that any necessary corrective eyewear is worn
- Do not use a mobile phone whilst driving (unless hands free – also be cautious of this action)
- Drive within speed limits and to the speed dictated by the road conditions, which may mean driving at less than the limit
- All fines are the responsibility of the driver
- Follow advice on route planning if supplied by line management
- Ensure if you are undertaking a long journey that suitable breaks are taken to avoid fatigue

- Allow extra journey time if required to allow for bad weather/conditions and/or traffic congestion - Consider alternative means of transport i.e. train for long journeys and plan adequate rest breaks
- Stay calm and relaxed while driving and try to avoid situations which could lead to stress or road rage
- Be aware that fatigue is more of a problem at certain times of the day and when nearing the end of a long journey. There is an increased likelihood of falling asleep in the afternoon and in the early hours of the morning – ensure you have realistic time schedules
- Plan ahead and consider how, as a driver, you would take responsibility for vulnerable passengers or cargo in the event of a breakdown or other emergency
- Never leave the vehicle unlocked when unattended
- When using a personal vehicle for work duties, and subsequently claiming mileage allowance, the mileage form reiterates the declaration above

Information and Instruction

- Airbags, if installed, must be switched on and seat belts are to be worn at all times – ensure good posture, comfortable seating/pedal position
- All drivers to adhere to the Highway Code www.highwaycode.gov.uk
- Any employees that use a motorcycle, moped or bicycle must wear helmets and appropriate protective clothing
- Regularly read the Driving at Work generic risk assessment to prompt good practice
- The Driving at Work Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure suitability

Driver Competency

Employees should be competent and capable of carrying out driving duties which are safe for them and for other people.

Any employee required driving a fleet vehicle, who has previously been involved in a severe accident or multiple accidents, may be asked by their Line Manager/Health & Safety Team to carry out a driving skills competency session. This would be carried out externally to assess observation, reaction and driving skills to ensure maximum safety on the roads. The employee's manager will further assess where measures can be put in place to assist any contributory factors; i.e. are journeys necessary, can anyone else undertake this duty etc. to eliminate risks and ensure that driving is carried out responsibly and safely. Human Resources are to be supplied with any copy records for the personal file.

Managers will consider:

- Does the job require anything more than a current driving licence, valid for the type of vehicle to be driven – additional driver training in some areas – i.e. MIDAS minibus training, use of a trailer. (MIDAS Training is an external training course to test the competency and skill of drivers using a minibus including the use of rear wheelchair access lifts etc.) In some areas of work there must be an accepted MIDAS pass achieved to continue service.

Summary

The key to ensuring the health and safety of all drivers at work, either in their own vehicles or Council fleet vehicles, is to ensure that the procedures within the policy are implemented:

1. Managers are responsible for carrying out appropriate checks on vehicle related documents, driving licence validity and annual reviews thereafter, and ensuring they are aware of the Driving at Work Policy requirements.
2. All employees are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the Driving at Work Policy and its requirements.
3. The Driving at Work Policy, and the related risk assessment are to be reviewed regularly to ensure both the employer management and employee are confident that driving duties are being carried out safely and competently.

Any concerns you may have with a Council vehicle that could compromise you, or others safety, should be reported immediately to your Line Manager, or if in relation to your personal vehicle, rectified as a matter of urgency. If in any doubt, do not use the vehicle in question.

Health & Safety Team
April 2020

Revision History

Revision date	Previous revision date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
September 2015	None	Original document	
April 2020		Revised and updated date/names/removal of references to Infonet	No