**CVT: 031**



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**Volunteer Driver’s Handbook**

**………. Community Vehicle Trust**

**September 2019**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Thousands of people provide their time and services as volunteer drivers to help others. This is vital, community-spirited work which provides immense benefits to individual who can no longer drive or have no transport and who reside in our rural communities.

Voluntary organisations have a duty of care under health and safety law to ensure the safety of their staff, volunteers, passengers and anyone else (e.g. ,other road users) who may be affected by their activities. They have the same legal responsibilities toward their volunteers as to their paid staff, and this applies whether the vehicles used are owned by the organisation, by the volunteer or by any other party.

When anyone drives for work, including people who do so as volunteers, both the employer and the individual employee or volunteer share the responsibility of making sure that the risks are properly identified and managed. This requires effective planning.

It is essential that volunteers play their part, and this booklet is designed to help you work with your Community Vehicle Trust to avoid accidents and injuries to yourself, your passengers and other people on the road while you are driving as a volunteer.

This booklet will help to make you aware of NAME of Vehicle Trust policies on driving practices and there is space provided on each page to make notes about those policies and how they apply to you. You can then refer back to them at any time.

You can also keep note of any road safety problems that you encounter – including incidents such as near misses and other vehicle issues. By keeping a record, it will help you when you report back any issues to your Board of Trustees.

**LEGAL MATTERS**

……. Vehicle Trust needs to know that you are:

● legally entitled to drive the vehicle you are using

● using a vehicle that is safe and road legal

● properly trained and competent to drive it safely

● using it for suitable purposes.

If NAME of Vehicle Trust provides the vehicle, they will ensure that it is properly registered, has a Certificate of Fitness, serviced and insured. They may wish to check your driver’s licence when you start as a volunteer driver and at intervals afterwards.

**Using Your Own Vehicle**

Even if you are using your own vehicle, NAME of Vehicle Trust has the same legal duty to ensure it is safe and legal when it is being used to provide a service for them. Therefore, they may wish to check that your vehicle has a Certificate of Fitness and has been serviced and that you are insured to drive it for voluntary purposes.

**Motoring offences**

Motoring offences, including cautions, summons or convictions, should be reported to NAME of Vehicle Trust Board of Trustees.

Use the space below to insert your NAME of Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy:**

Driving Licences will be checked

Insurance will be checked

Certificate of Warrant will be checked

Service Documents will be checked

Other

**JOURNEY PLANNING**

It is important to plan your route before every journey. The more planning in advance you can do, the less that unforeseen and risky circumstances will arise, and you will be better prepared to deal with them if they do.

Avoid driving in poor conditions and check the weather forecast before you set off, especially if there has been recent bad weather. If the reported advice is to only make essential journeys then you should follow it.

Preventing driver sleepiness is something that NAME of Vehicle Trust can help you manage. Crashes caused by driver fatigue are most likely to occur:

● On long journeys on monotonous roads

● Between 2am and 6am

● Between 2pm and 4pm

● After having less sleep than normal

● After drinking alcohol

● After taking medicines which cause drowsiness

● On journeys home after dark

As a general rule, drivers should take a …minute break after driving for .. hours. You need to examine work schedules in advance to ensure that you will not be pressured by time.

Use the space below to insert NAME of Vehicle Trust policy.

Our policy is:

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**FITNESS TO DRIVE**

NAME of Vehicle Trust needs to know that you:

● are fit to drive at all times

● do not drive when affected by alcohol, drugs or medicines

● do not drive when affected by illness

● do not drive when you are too tired to do so safely.

You should inform NAME of Vehicle Trust about any health issue or personal circumstances that may affect your driving . You are also legally required to inform the NZTA of any medical condition that may affect your ability to drive safely.

**Eyesight (Source: NZTA website)**

Good vision is essential for road safety. If you can’t see properly, you can’t drive safely. Statistics show that one driver in 14 has a vision defect that may affect their driving. If you think your eyesight may not be adequate, visit your optometrist or health practitioner and get it checked now. The health practitioner could be your usual doctor (GP), a registered nurse or nurse practitioner, or a specialist if appropriate. Don’t wait until it’s checked when you renew or apply for your driver licence.

Safety Recommendations

* Keep windscreens, glasses, sunglasses and lights clean
* Frequently look in your rear vision mirrors and scan the verges of the road while you’re driving
* Keep your speed down if conditions reduce visibility
* Use your sun visor on bright days and consider having a pair of tinted glasses made to your prescription
* Never wear sunglasses for night driving
* Avoid excessive speed.

Your eyesight will be checked by a driver licensing agent:

* when you apply for a licence, a new licence class or a new licence endorsement
* each time you renew your licence.

The eyesight screen check aims to make sure you can see well enough to drive. It will pick up a blurry or ‘lazy eye’, or poor side vision. (The check isn’t a full examination and shouldn’t replace regular tests by a qualified optometrist or ophthalmologist.)

**Alcohol**

Avoid drinking alcohol in the hours before you will be driving (for example, at lunchtime).It can take several hours for alcohol to be removed from your body, and you may still be over the limit, or affected by alcohol the morning after you have been drinking. Alcohol impairs judgement, making drivers over-confident and more likely to take risks. It slows their reactions, increases stopping distances, impairs judgement of speed and distance and affects vision. Even a small amount, well below the legal limit, seriously affects the ability to drive safely. The risk increases massively when over the limit. NAME OF Vehicle Trust has a zero-tolerance drinking policy.

**Drugs**

Do not drive if you have taken any illegal drugs. They can affect your decision-making and driving skills, as well as your physical and mental condition and behaviour. NAME OF Vehicle Trust has a zero-tolerance drinking policy.

**FITNESS TO DRIVE**

**Medicines**

Check with your GP or pharmacist whether any over-the-counter or prescribed medicines you are taking are likely to affect your driving (for example, by causing drowsiness).If so, ask for an alternative that does not, or avoid driving.

Always check the label of medicines and the Patient Information leaflet to see if there are any warnings. If the label says that certain side-effects may occur, assume that they will do so.

**Illness**

Illness can also affect our ability to drive. We can often be tempted to ‘soldier’ on, when in fact it would be safer for everyone concerned, not to drive until we are feeling better.

**Fatigue**

Consider whether you are likely to be drowsy or sleepy while driving. Tired drivers are more likely to crash, especially on long monotonous journeys, and in the early hours of the morning. If you are driving as a volunteer in the evening after a full day’s work in your normal job, you may also be more tired. Discuss any …….Vehicle Trust. Use the space below to insert …….Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy on Fitness to Drive:**

Alcohol-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Drugs------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Medicines-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Illness------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Eyesight---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Fatigue----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**SAFE SPEED**

Drivers who travel at higher speeds have less time to identify and react to what is happening around them. It takes them longer to stop. And if there is a crash, it is more severe, causing greater injury to the occupants and any pedestrian or rider they hit.

Higher speeds also magnify other driver errors, such as close-following or driving when tired or distracted, thus multiplying the chances of causing a crash.

The single biggest road safety issue in New Zealand today is speed – drivers travelling too fast for the conditions.

Speed affects all crashes. It can be a factor in causing them and it has a direct effect on the damage done in a crash. It is clear from the crash statistics that many people underestimate how changing conditions, such as wet weather, can increase road risk.

In 2018, speeding was a contributing factor in 102 fatal crashes, 417 serious injury crashes and 1,521 minor injury crashes (Source NZTA)

Speed limits set the maximum speed for that road. But there are many circumstances when it is not safe to drive at that speed (for example, around schools at opening and closing times, on busy, narrow roads, on rural roads which are bendy and hilly and visibility is restricted).

Make sure you know the speed limit of the roads you are using. Far too many drivers who have been caught speeding, complain that they thought the road had a higher speed limit (80kmph instead of 100 kmph).

In many cases, the nature of the road does not indicate the speed limit. In urban areas, for example, dual carriageways can have limits of 30 kmph,40 kmph,50 kmph,60 kmph or 70 kmph.

Speed limit signs tend to be placed at junctions or at the entrance of a town because this is often the point at which the limit changes. However, junctions are also where you need to absorb a wide range of different information and it is easy to miss a speed limit sign when concentrating on one or more other things (e.g., which way am I going, is that driver going to pull out, etc). So you need to get into the habit of checking for speed limit signs at junctions, and looking for repeater signs after the junction, especially if the nature of the road has changed.

If you are not sure, assume the limit is lower until you see a sign.

**Give Yourself Time**

Plan your journey to allow sufficient time to complete it (include rest breaks and take account of foreseeable weather and traffic conditions) at safe speeds and without needing to exceed speed limits.

The time it takes to complete a journey is determined much more by your average speed during the whole journey, rather than the maximum speed you achieve for part of it. This is especially true in urban areas, where you constantly have to slow down for junctions, traffic lights and other road users. The faster you drive, the sharper you have to brake. This also uses much more fuel and so makes driving more expensive.

Knowing that you have plenty of time to complete your journey will help you to relax and avoid the temptation to push your speed.

Use the space below to insert NAME of Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy is:**

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**DISTRACTIONS**

Driving requires your full concentration all of the time. Trying to do something else while driving will distract you, slow your reactions and increase the risk of crashing.

**Cell Phones**

Using a hand-held or hands-free cell phone while driving is a significant distraction, and substantially increases the risk of the driver crashing.

Under the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 drivers can't use, while driving, a hand-held cell phone to:

* make, receive or terminate a telephone call
* create, send or read a text message or email
* create, send or view a video message
* communicate in a similar or any other way.

Penalties are an $80 fine and 20 demerit points. Name of Vehicle Trust has a zero tolerance on using Cell phone whilst driving unless:

* it is an emergency situation and unsafe or impracticable to stop the vehicle to make the call (source: Police.govt.nz)

**Other Equipment**

An increasing number of vehicles are being fitted with various devices designed to help the driver, with Satnavs and Dash cams being the most common. While these devices can, if used properly, reduce the risk of drivers crashing, they can also increase the risk (e.g., by distracting the driver) if not used properly.

If your vehicle is provided with any technology (such as Satnavs) and you are unsure on how to use it, ask a member of your Vehicle Trust for training in how to use it safely. In particular, you should not adjust or operate devices while actually driving. For example, routes in the SATNAV should be set before the journey starts. If it is necessary to make adjustments or to input new information, only do so when stopped in a safe place.

**DISTRACTIONS**

**Eating, Drinking, Smoking, Tuning the Radio**

Many other things, that might seem simple and innocent, can be distracting when driving. Fatal crashes can, and do, occur because a driver chose to unwrap a sweet, take a drink or light a cigarette while driving.

Safe driving needs concentration; avoid unnecessary distractions.

Use the space below to insert …….Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy is:**

Mobile Phones-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Other Devices-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Eating, drinking----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Smoking-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**DRIVER TRAINING**

Almost all crashes are caused by, or involve, driver error. This ranges from simple mistakes and mis-judgements to careless, reckless or aggressive driving. Our ability to anticipate and cope with the mistakes and misbehaviour of other people is just as important as our own driving skills and attitudes.

We all develop our own driving style and habits over time, and often do not realise that we could improve our driving.

Organisations that have clear driving standards, excellent driver training, and a policy to try and learn from driving accidents have lower accident rates than those that do not. Driver training can help us to avoid making mistakes, and to better anticipate and cope with the unexpected, including the errors of other road users. It can make driving safer, less stressful and more enjoyable, as well as reduce costs, such as fuel consumption, vehicle wear and tear and, often, lower insurance premiums.

Check your Vehicle Trust policies on assessment and training – they may be able to assist you in undertaking some refresher or further training. This can take many forms, ranging from classroom sessions to in-vehicle training.

They may provide driver assessment or driver training when you start as a volunteer, on a regular basis, after an accident or motoring conviction.

Driver training is particularly important if you are driving a vehicle, such as a minibus, that you do not normally drive.

Learning from experience, including near misses, is an important part of safe driving. If you have been involved in a near miss or were unhappy with something that happened when you were driving, think about what else you could have done. Try and identify common themes and whether it was partially due to the way you or the other driver acted and what you might have done better.

Use the space below to insert your organisation’s policy.

**Our policy:**

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**OCCUPANT SAFETY**

**Seat Belts**

The most effective way of protecting people inside vehicles is to make sure that every occupant always wears a seat belt on every journey, no matter how short the journey. It is just as important for passengers in the rear to wear seatbelts as those in the front. The force on seat belts can be as much as 20 times your weight - this is how hard you'd hit the inside of your vehicle without restraint. They are thrown about inside the vehicle, injuring themselves and quite possibly seriously injuring (or killing) other people inside the vehicle. They could also be ejected from the car through one of the windows. **Seatbelts save lives.**

All modern cars in New Zealand must be fitted with seat belts and older vehicles may require [webbing clamps](https://nzta.govt.nz/vehicles/choosing-the-right-vehicle/features-that-protect-you/seat-belts/webbing-clamp-safety-belt-replacements/) to improve the 'hold' of their belts.

Specifically, in New Zealand the requirements are that:

* front and back seats in all modern cars must be fitted with seat belts
* if you sit in a seat with a seat belt you must wear the seat belt
* all children aged under seven must be secured in an approved [child restraint](https://nzta.govt.nz/safety/vehicle-safety/safety-belts-and-restraints/child-restraints/using-child-restraints-in-new-zealand/) when travelling in cars or vans
* children aged seven must use a child restraint if available. If not available, they must use a seat belt. If a seat belt is not available, they must travel in the back seat
* children aged between eight and 14 must use seat belts if available. If not available, they must travel in the back seat
* people aged over 14 must wear seat belts where they are available.
* If you're 15 years or over and drive or ride in a vehicle without wearing seat belt you can be fined.

If you're the driver you can be fined if you have a passenger aged under 15 riding in your vehicle without wearing a seat belt or child restraint. (Source: NZTA)

**Head Restraints**

Adjust your head restraint correctly and check that every passenger has their head restraint correctly adjusted. Properly adjusted head restraints help to protect against whiplash and prevent long-term injuries. The top of the head restraint should be level with the top of your head, and it should be as close to the back of your head as possible.

Use the space below to insert your …….Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy**:

Seat Belts -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Child Seats ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Head Restraints ----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**SAFE VEHICLE**

Vehicle defects are only involved in a small proportion of crashes. However, the type of vehicle also has a major influence on the likelihood and severity of injuries when there is a collision.

NAME of Vehicle Trust has a clear rule that any vehicle that is, or suspected to be, in an unsafe or illegal condition will not be used until all necessary repairs have been completed.

As the driver, you are also responsible for ensuring that the vehicle you are driving is safe and legal.

Before driving any vehicle, check:

* tyres are undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure for the number of passengers or equipment being carried and have enough tread depth.
* The minimum legal tread depth is 1.5mm within all principal grooves that contain these moulded tread depth indicators. These must be at least 1.5mm around the whole circumference of the tyre.
* there are no signs of vehicle damage
* oil, coolant and windscreen wash levels are correct(check when cold)
* you know the correct type of fuel for the vehicle
* brakes are working ● lights and indicators are working
* windscreen and windows are not damaged
* washers and wipers are working
* mirrors are correctly positioned
* all occupants are using their seatbelts and head restraints are adjusted correctly
* loads are securely restrained.
* If in any doubt how to check any of the above, read the vehicle’s handbook, and/or ask someone to show you.
* Ask your organisation if they provide a pre-drive checklist.

If you find any problem during the check, complete the defect report form (CVT 015) and report it to NAME of Vehicle immediately.

**SAFE VEHICLE**

Driving Position

You should be able to see and reach all of the controls comfortably. Good all-round, unobstructed, visibility is vital. Check whether the pillars between the front and side windows and the space taken up by the door mirrors still allow you to see forward without moving your head.

Also check that your view is not obstructed unnecessarily by objects such as stickers or devices such as Satnavs and webcams and that they are not placed where they might be hit and flung forwards by an airbag.

Look at the dashboard when you start the car, check which lights illuminate and then go off. If you are not familiar with the vehicle, check the handbook to ensure you know what the different lights mean.

Finally, consider whether the vehicle is suitable for the task – for example,

● If carrying passengers, is there a seat belt for each occupant

● If carrying children, is there an appropriate child seat for each child that needs one?

Use the space below to insert …….Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy is:**

Vehicle Condition---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Pre-drive Checks---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**ACCIDENT,BREAKDOWN AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

NAME of Vehicle Trust has procedures for emergencies, such as accidents or breakdowns. It is essential that you are familiar with ,and follow, these procedures, if an emergency occurs.

In the vehicle, keep copies of :

● The emergency procedures

● Contact details for the person(s) to whom you should report emergencies

● Contact details of the breakdown firm your organisation uses and any reference numbers that you may need to quote.

Make sure you have a fully charged mobile phone to summon help if necessary. Do not use the phone while driving.

A summary of the main points to remember is below. But you should always follow the procedures set down byNAME of Vehicle Trust.

**Accidents**

● use hazard warning lights and switch off your engine

● do not move injured passengers unless they are in immediate danger of further injury from other vehicles or from fire or explosion

● call the emergency services immediately; provide them with information about the situation, any special circumstances (for example, if carrying oxygen bottles) and if any passengers have special needs

● if child passengers are present, ensure an adult remains with them

● if the emergency services are called, stay at the scene until they allow you to leave

● obtain the names and addresses of all independent witnesses (if possible)

● ensure the vehicle is roadworthy before continuing the journey

● if there is any injury or the names of people involved are not exchanged, you must report the accident to the Police as soon as possible or in any case within 24 hours.

Following an accident, you may need to discuss the details with NAME o fVehicle Trust at the next appropriate moment. This will help us ensure that any risk assessments that they have made are relevant and up to date.

**ACCIDENT,BREAKDOWN AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Breakdowns

● Move the vehicle off the carriageway (onto the hard shoulder on a highway) and switch on the hazard warning lights

● If this is not possible, move it as far away from moving traffic as you can

● Move passengers out of the nearside of the vehicle and as far away from it and other traffic as possible. No one should stand between the vehicle and oncoming traffic

● On highways or other busy roads, passengers should be taken onto the embank mentor grass margin and as far from the traffic as is practicable

● Keep passengers together, keep children under constant supervision

● Telephone the emergency services, or breakdown firm, giving them accurate details of the vehicle's location, and whether children or passengers with mobility problems are being carried

● Telephone your nominated contact person to tell them what has happened

Use the space below to insert …….Vehicle Trust policy.

**Our policy is:-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**USEFUL WEBSITES**

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/safety/>

<https://www.police.govt.nz/advice/driving-and-road-safety>