Safety Best Practices for Employees Driving for Restaurant Business

When employees drive for restaurant business purposes, whether delivering food, purchasing supplies, traveling between locations, or attending meetings, safe driving practices are essential to protecting employees, customers, and the company.

It is recommended that all companies implement a Driving/Fleet Policy that addresses:

+ Driver safety expectations and responsibilities
+ Driver selection and qualification guidelines
+ Vehicle safety, maintenance, and insurance requirements
+ Accident reporting and response procedures
+ Mobile device and distracted driving expectations
+ Motor vehicle record (MVR) review requirements, where applicable

Verify that the company has disclosed employee driving activities to its insurance carrier. The carrier should review existing policies to ensure appropriate coverage and identify any potential liability gaps.

Click the link below to review a Fleet Operations template.

BEFORE DRIVING

+ Ensure company has notified insurance executive to communicate that they have employees driving for company business. They will review your policies to identify any liability issues.
+ Only drive if you have a valid driver's license and are authorized by the company.
+ Ensure the vehicle is properly maintained and in safe operating condition.
+ Conduct a quick vehicle inspection before driving:
  - Tires properly inflated
  - Lights functioning
  - Mirrors adjusted
  - Windshield clean
  - Brakes operating correctly
+ Secure food, supplies, and equipment to prevent shifting during transit.
+ Plan your route in advance to reduce distractions while driving.

WHILE DRIVING

Follow Traffic Laws

+ Obey all speed limits and traffic signs.
+ Wear a seatbelt at all times.
+ Maintain a safe following distance.
+ Use turn signals when changing lanes or turning.
+ Never drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medications that impair driving ability.

Avoid Distracted Driving

+ Do not text, email, or use handheld devices while driving.
+ Program GPS directions before starting the trip.
+ Pull over safely before making calls or responding to messages.
+ Avoid eating while driving.

Drive Defensively

+ Stay alert to other drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and changing road conditions.
+ Anticipate potential hazards and be prepared to react safely.
+ Be especially cautious in restaurant parking lots and delivery areas where pedestrian traffic may be high.

During Deliveries

+ Park legally and safely.
+ Avoid rushing to meet delivery times.
+ Use caution when entering unfamiliar neighborhoods or buildings.
+ Keep valuables out of sight and lock the vehicle when unattended.
+ Be aware of surroundings, especially during evening and nighttime deliveries.

Adverse Weather Conditions

+ Reduce speed during rain, snow, ice, fog, or high winds.
+ Increase following distance.
+ Turn on headlights when visibility is reduced.
+ If conditions become unsafe, stop driving and notify your supervisor.

Fatigue Management

+ Never drive when overly tired or drowsy.
+ Take breaks during longer trips.
+ Report fatigue concerns to your supervisor.
+ Get adequate rest before shifts that involve driving.

Accident and Incident Procedures

If involved in an accident:

1. Stop immediately and check for injuries.
2. Call emergency services if needed.
3. Move to a safe location if possible.
4. Exchange information with involved parties.
5. Take photos of the scene when safe to do so.
6. Notify your supervisor as soon as possible.
7. Cooperate fully with law enforcement and company reporting requirements.

Key Reminder

No delivery, errand, or customer request is more important than employee safety. Employees should never sacrifice safe driving practices to save time or meet deadlines.

Hired/Non-Owned Fleet Safety Policy

The objective of our Fleet Safety Procedures is to direct the manner in which non owned vehicles are operated on public and off-road applications that are being used for work operations. Our employees MUST understand that the manner in which they operate their vehicles can significantly affect their own personal safety and well-being as well as that of the general public.

We have worked very hard to establish and protect our reputation in this community as a responsible employer and citizen of the community, and management will not tolerate that reputation being jeopardized by the irresponsible actions of employees in our company vehicles.

Employees who are granted the privilege to drive a non-owned vehicle must understand that their actions in their personal time DOES affect their privilege to operate a vehicle for COMPANY NAME. If their driving experience in their personal vehicle precludes them from our driver criteria, their privileges will be withdrawn until such time as they can demonstrate a consistent track record of safe driving.

What exactly does "hired auto" mean?

+ When a company rents, hires, leases, or borrows a vehicle other than a vehicle belonging to an employee or partner of the company, a hired auto exposure is created. Examples include a marketing manager renting a car while on a business trip or a software company leasing a truck to move property from one building to another.

What does "non-owned auto" mean?

+ When a vehicle is used for company business that is not owned, leased, rented, hired, or borrowed, a non-owned auto exposure is created. A sales representative operating their own personal vehicle to drive to customer sites on behalf of the employer is a prime example. This is commonly referred to as use of a personal car for company business.

Driver Authorization and Qualification

Any employee driving for company business will be authorized and qualified by COMPANY NAME.

AUTHORIZED DRIVERS

In order to be an authorized driver of a Company vehicle you must:

1. Be an employee of the Company.
2. Must be at least 21 years of age.
3. Have at least one year of experience in the class of vehicle operated.
4. Have a valid driver license for the class of vehicle operated.
5. Must meet the Company Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) criteria.

MVR CRITERIA

The minimally acceptable MVR Criteria that Authorized Drivers of the Company must meet are as follows:

1. No Major violations within the past five (5) years.
2. No more than two (2) Minor violations within the past three (3) years.

Major violations are defined as convictions for any of the following:

+ Drag racing or speed contest
+ Fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer
+ Reckless, Careless, Improper or Negligent Driving
+ Driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics (DWI or DUI)
+ Refusal to take alcohol test
+ Open Alcohol container
+ Using a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony
+ Leaving the scene of an accident
+ Speed in excess of 20 mph over the posted speed limit

Minor violations are defined as convictions for any of the following:

+ Failure to yield
+ Speeding less than 20 mph over posted speed limit
+ Illegal passing
+ Improper turn
+ Defective Equipment—it is well known that defective equipment convictions on an MVR are nearly always speeding tickets that are pleaded down to this category.

This criterion may change based on recommendations of our Auto Insurance Carrier.

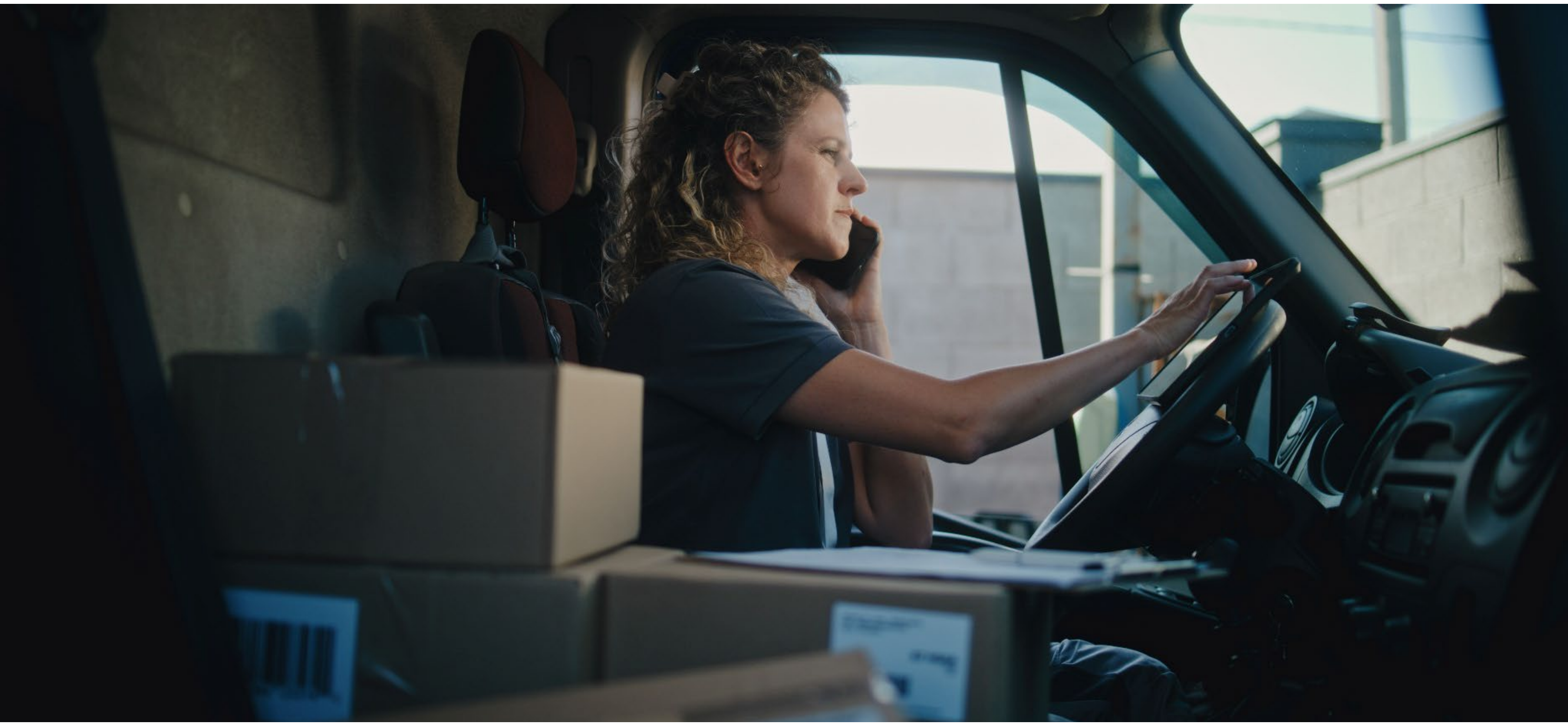
MVR REVIEW

State Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) will be used as the source for verifying driver history. MVRs will be obtained and reviewed continuously throughout an employee's tenure with COMPANY NAME. Driving privileges may be withdrawn or suspended and/or the Company vehicles removed for any authorized driver not meeting the above requirements. In addition, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

Personal Use Policy

Vehicles are provided primarily for use on organization business. However, personal use is permitted provided that prior approval from the Company President or CEO is obtained and the Personal Use Acknowledgement form has been signed by the employee granted permission to drive company owned vehicles for personal use. Examples of such use include:

+ Personal errands while en-route to or from a business-related activity, provided that the errand is done on the driver's own time (e.g., authorized break or lunch hour).
+ When authorized in advance by the employee's immediate supervisor.
+ Commuting to and from home.
+ On evenings, weekends, vacations, etc., provided these miles are accurately reported to the Company on a monthly basis, and the company is reimbursed for this personal use at a rate of (the organization should decide what this amount is to be).



In addition, the following requirements pertain to all organization vehicles:

+ Employee must supply evidence of an enforce personal auto policy for the vehicle used for business. A copy of the declarations page and certificate of insurance must be provided to COMPANY NAME as of the policy effective date.
  - The policy must be in the name of the employee.
  - The personal auto policy must have minimum limits of $100,000 per person, $300,000 per occurrence and $100,000 property damage. In the case of combined single limits, at least $300,000 is required.
  - The personal auto policy must include coverage for Under / Uninsured Motorists (UM/UIM) at the above limits
+ No one except for an authorized employee may drive an organizational vehicle. This includes immediate family members and friends, except in emergency situations.
+ Some organizations permit driving by family members, but typically limit it to spouse, or significant other living in the same household in a committed relationship. All requirements for driver qualification (MVR standards) and training (e.g., defensive driving classes) must also apply to the family members.
+ Drivers must comply with all applicable state laws and regulations.
  - All fines, defense costs and other legal penalties arising out of ticketed offenses are the responsibility of the driver. You will be responsible for any deductibles that must be paid resulting from any accidents that occur during non-business use, regardless of who is at fault.
+ A company vehicle being used for personal activity shall be operated in accordance with our established rules of operation for business activity which include but are not limited to:
  - No transporting of hitchhikers or any unauthorized passengers.
  - No towing of trailers of any kind.
  - No driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - No use of radar detectors
  - Seat belts must be used at all times
  - Do not use cell phones while operating company vehicles

COMPANY NAME reserves the right to withdraw this privilege at any time.

Rental Car Usage (Hired)

The operation of rental vehicles for business use:

+ Employees or others seeking to rent a vehicle for business use must receive prior authorization from the fleet manager.
+ All employees renting a vehicle for business use must have a current and valid driver's license and an acceptable driving record as determined by COMPANY NAME.
+ COMPANY NAME has procedures to ensure proper insurance coverage for each vehicle rental. This requires proof of personal auto insurance with adequate limits by the driver, the purchase of additional insurance from the rental company, or provision of coverage by the commercial auto policy of the company. Personal auto insurance and additional rental insurance limits would be required to meet or exceed those of the companies' commercial / business auto policy. The following are common insurance coverage offerings:
  - Collision Damage Waiver/Loss Damage Waiver – Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) or Loss Damage Waiver (LDW) ("the Waiver") is an agreement option that relieves the renter of financial responsibility if the vehicle is damaged (or stolen in some cases). Contract wording is not standard so a renter should carefully read the agreement. It is common for the Waiver to not be honored by the rental company if a renter is in violation of the rental agreement. The Waiver may have limits but typically covers up to the full value of the vehicle. Renters should verify whether the Waiver will cover "loss of use" which represents the amount of lost rental income when a vehicle is being repaired as a result of an accident.

Employees renting vehicles should:

Follow basic safe driving practices, which include use of seatbelts by all occupants, avoidance of impaired and distracted driving and observance of local traffic laws.

Rent a car of similar size and performance to what they typically drive and are capable of controlling. Avoid expensive and high-performance vehicles even if offered at the same price.

+ Spend a few minutes getting acquainted with the rental car. Identify location and proper operation of critical features such as: lights, wiper and washer, mirrors, seat, heat and AC, defroster, etc. Adjust mirrors and seat before beginning to drive.
+ Familiarize themselves with the dashboard, particularly the speedometer, temperature gauges, and fuel gauge.
+ Visually inspect the vehicle before leaving the rental car lot. If the vehicle is damaged, make a notation on the contract. Don't assume tires are inflated, fuel tank is full, or the wipers have fluid. Make sure the spare tire and tools are where they are supposed to be.
+ Test the brakes – with engine running – to get a feel for them. At the same time, get the "feel of the wheel" by testing the play in the steering wheel. Make sure the hand or parking brake works.
+ Plan ahead. Bring a map of the area or get electronic/internet directions before starting your trip. If you are driving in a country with laws different from yours, make sure you become familiar with them or let someone drive who is. Take extra caution in reading road signs and follow the speed limit. You may not have a feel for a different vehicle and not be aware of its capabilities or limitations.
+ Avoid storing luggage or valuables in the interior of the car. Place these items in the trunk.
+ Read the rental agreement for instructions on how to report an accident. Place rental agreement and other rental evidence in the glove compartment.
+ Keep the fuel tank at least half full of fuel to avoid roadside emergencies. You may not know how the fuel gauge represents the remaining fuel. Make sure you know which side of the car the fuel fill is on before you start the vehicle. The dashboard often includes an indicator arrow next to a fuel dispensing icon on the fuel gauge.
+ Keep keys with you at all times. Renters are typically provided only a single set. Losing keys can cause stress and contribute to distractions and accidents.
+ Avoid the use of cell phones while driving. Pull over to a safe location to make or receive a call or text message.
+ Contact the rental company immediately if the "check engine" or other trouble light activates.
+ Consider seating capacity and cargo space of the rental vehicle, especially if you will be transporting passengers or materials.
+ Write down the make, model, color and license number of your vehicle. Keep this information with you at all times and give a copy to those individuals who have your travel itinerary.
+ Always wear the seat belt

Use of Personal Vehicles for Company Business (Non-Owned)

General

+ The driver must receive pre-approval for business use of a personal vehicle.

No passengers, except those associated with business travel, are permitted in the car when it is being operated for business use.

+ No hazardous materials should be stored or transported while the vehicle is used for business.
+ All occupants of the vehicle must wear seat belts while it is being used in the course of business.
+ The vehicle must be operated in accordance with all applicable rules, regulations, laws and ordinances.

Driver

+ Must have a current, valid state driver's license with a minimum of three years driving experience. Loss of license must be reported to the fleet manager / supervisor immediately.
+ The driver must know and follow the traffic laws of the states of operation including DUI / DWI laws.
+ Motor Vehicle Record will be checked on annual or more frequent basis and must meet the driver qualification requirements established by the company.
+ All drivers must have completed an orientation program and defensive driving class.
+ At least once every 4 years, the driver must attend a defensive driving class.
+ Cell phone use must be in accordance with stated company policy and the laws of the state where the motor vehicle is being operated.

Traffic Offenses

+ Driver is responsible for all fines and other expenses associated with traffic or parking tickets.
+ The driver must notify the fleet manager or supervisor within 48 hours of any conviction of an offense that carries more than 4 points according to the company's point system.

Insurance

+ Employee must supply evidence of an enforce personal auto policy for the vehicle used for business. A copy of the declarations page and certificate of insurance must be provided to COMPANY NAME as of the policy effective date.
  - The policy must be in the name of the employee.
  - There must not be a business use exclusion on the personal auto policy. The vehicle used by the employee for company business must be rated as "business use" on the employee's personal auto policy.
  - The personal auto policy must have minimum limits of $100,000 per person, $300,000 per occurrence and $100,000 property damage. In the case of combined single limits, at least $300,000 is required.
  - The personal auto policy must include coverage for Under / Uninsured Motorists (UM/UIM) at the above limits

Accidents during business use

+ Report any accident to COMPANY NAME that occurs during use of the vehicle for business purposes.
+ The driver must follow proper procedures at the scene of the accident and provide proof of insurance
+ Any driver that is charged with an "at-fault" accident must attend an appropriate defensive driving program within 3 months of the accident.

Vehicle

+ The vehicle must be maintained in safe condition according to the operator’s manual and pass required state and / or company required inspections.
+ The vehicle must be properly licensed and titled with all required documents available.
+ The vehicle must be registered in the name of the employee.

Accident Procedures:

In the event of an accident:

+ Stop immediately, but do not obstruct traffic.
+ **Call 911**. Check for injuries. Render assistance only if there are life-threatening injuries. Remember, do not move any individual that might have a head or spinal injury. It's best not to move the injured at all unless the situation if life threatening.
+ Notify your supervisor and the Fleet Manager. Make sure to give your exact location, extent of injuries and assistance needed.
+ Get names and contact information from any and all witnesses. Take as many pictures of the accident as you can. Make sure to take pictures of all vehicles involved, the roadway, skid marks, and all parties involved.
+ Exchange only pertinent information with the other driver(s): name, address, insurance company name and number, and vehicle information (make, model, and license plates).
+ Do not argue or conduct "small talk" with the other parties involved. Speak only when spoken to, **DO NOT** admit fault, speak only to the supervisor on scene or the authorities.
+ Complete the Accident Kit, giving detailed descriptions and diagrams of what happened, while the information is fresh in your memory.
+ Take a photograph of the scene of accident if possible.
+ Do not attempt settlement, regardless of how minor.
+ Complete the accident report in your vehicle.
+ Turn all information over to your supervisor within 24 hours.

DRIVER'S REPORT OF VEHICLE ACCIDENT

Incident Date:	**Incident Time:** AM / PM

Follow these Instructions if you have an accident:

1. Stop immediately, but do not block traffic.
2. Call for immediate aid for anyone who appears injured.
3. Call the police.
4. Call your supervisor.
5. Gather information necessary to complete this form.
6. Do not accept claim settlement.
7. Do not admit liability to anyone.
8. File a written report with your supervisor that includes the police report.

INJURED:	Circle: Our Driver/Other Car/Pedestrian
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Nature of Injury:	
Hospital Taken To:	
INJURED:	Circle: Our Driver/Other Car/Pedestrian
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Nature of Injury:	
Hospital Taken To:	
POLICE REPORT:	
Officer:	
Badge Number:	
Citation Issued:	Yes No
Type of Violation:	

WITNESS:	
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
WITNESS:	
Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
YOUR VEHICLE:	
License Number:	
Vehicle Number:	
Make/Yr:	
Driven By:	
Department:	
Supervisor:	
Damage:	
OTHER VEHICLE:	
License Number:	
Make/Yr:	
Driver:	
Age:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Insurance Company:	
Policy Number:	
Expiration Date:	
Agent/Address	
Damage:	

Diagram What Happened: **Indicate North:**

Completed By: ____

PERSONAL USE OF COMPANY VEHICLES POLICY

Company Name: COMPANY NAME	**Date:**
Subject: Personal Use of Company Vehicles	
Purpose / Rational	

A number of our employees are provided with company owned or leased vehicles for business needs. In many cases, these vehicles are in their control around the clock. All employees driving on behalf of the company are required to operate their vehicles safely and legally at all times. This includes any personal use as well as business use activity.

The following "Rules of Personal Use" are effective immediately and are to be adhered to whenever operating a company supplied vehicle for personal purposes.

Supervisory personnel are to discuss and review these rules with all authorized drivers currently employed. In addition, all newly hired personnel, authorized to drive as part of their duties must acknowledge receipt of this directive prior to being assigned a vehicle on behalf of COMPANY NAME.

Directive compliance will assist you in understanding permissible personal use of Company vehicles!

All drivers are to receive this directive immediately with signature acknowledgment filed with Corporate Risk Management.

Directive: Personal Use of Company Owned Vehicles

1. Only Company employees and their spouses who have been prequalified to operate vehicles for the company are authorized to drive company owned vehicles for personal needs. The ONLY exception to this is when injury and/or death is imminent, and the vehicle must be operated by others in an emergency.
2. Personal use of company vehicles should be kept to a minimum. Company vehicles will not be used for vacation trips or other extended, non-business trips unless specific prior approval has been granted.
3. A company vehicle being used for personal activity shall be operated in accordance with our established rules of operation for business activity which include but are not limited to:
    a. No transporting of hitchhikers or any unauthorized passengers.
    b. No towing of trailers of any kind.
    c. No driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
    d. No use of radar detectors
    e. Seat belts must be used at all times
    f. Do not use cell phones while operating company vehicles
4. All fines, defense costs and other legal penalties arising out of ticketed offenses are the responsibility of the driver. You will be responsible for any deductibles that must be paid resulting from any accidents that occur during non-business use, regardless of who is at fault.

Acknowledgment
I have received, read and understand these rules. For the safety and wellbeing of myself, my clients and the general public, I agree to adhere to these rules at all times. I also understand that failure to follow these practices will result in disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal. Employee Signature:______________________________ Date: / /

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read, been trained in, and understand the fleet safety program. I agree to follow the rules it contains. I also understand that failure to comply with this program could result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employee: (Print) ______________________________

Employee Signature: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________