

FLEET  
MANAGEMENT



# Safe Driver's Guide



# 1.0 Fitness to Drive

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Physical health, psychological and emotional states contribute towards an employee's fitness to drive a vehicle. An employee's fitness to drive can be severely reduced by:

- Fatigue
- Alcohol consumption
- Drugs (includes both prescriptions and illicit drugs).
- Temporary illness
- Medical conditions
- Stress events.

## Fatigue

Driver fatigue has been identified as a major contributor in vehicle collisions. These types of crashes often lead to serious injury and/or death because a sleeping driver is unable to brake or take avoidance action, meaning that collision impact generally occurs at a high speed.

### You are most likely to feel sleepy when driving:

- On long journeys
- Between 2.00am and 6.00am
- Between 2.00pm and 4.00pm
- After having less sleep than normal
- After drinking alcohol
- After taking medicines, which causes drowsiness
- On journeys home after night shifts
- On journeys after a very long working day

### Fatigue Countermeasures: *Avoid the most dangerous times*

- Avoid driving at night
- After drinking alcohol
- After taking medicine that makes you drowsy
- In poor weather conditions.
- If necessary, plan an overnight stop into your work schedule.

### Reduce your driving time:

- Take breaks at regular intervals or after every 2 hours of driving
- Resist the temptation to carry on if you feel tired
- If possible, share the driving with a colleague
- If necessary, plan an overnight stop into your work schedule.

### Make sure you are well rested:

- Avoid driving when you would normally be asleep.
- Ensure you get plenty of sleep before a long drive.

### Stop if you feel tired:

- Find somewhere safe to stop (not the hard shoulder).
- Find somewhere suitable to sleep overnight, if necessary.
- Discuss concerns with your manager.

If you are concerned about your driving hours, journeys or schedules or if you find yourself driving when too tired, discuss this with your line manager.

### Medical Conditions

Colds, flus, migraines, stomach bugs etc. can impede your ability to drive safely. Common symptoms such as headaches, blocked sinuses, sneezing and tiredness can disrupt concentration levels, reaction times and driver judgement. Under these circumstances drivers can be tempted to 'soldier' on when it would be safer not to drive until they are feeling better.

### Alcohol and Drugs

Consumption of alcohol and drugs impairs driver judgement, contributes to driver over-confidence and makes drivers more prone to risk taking. Not only does it reduce reaction times, it also increases vehicle stopping distances as judgement of speed and distance are affected.

A small amount of alcohol can seriously affect your ability to drive safely. Under these circumstances, it may take drivers longer to make vital decisions and can contribute toward missing hazards such as pedestrians and other vehicles. Drivers should always avoid drinking alcohol prior to driving.

### Medicine and driving

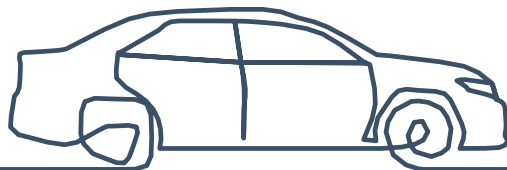
It is the responsibility of the driver of a vehicle to check with their doctor whether any prescription medication is likely to impact on driving ability (i.e. causing drowsiness). If so, ask for an alternative that does not affect driving, or avoid driving altogether.

### Common drugs that have side effects which can impair your driving ability include:

- Sleeping tablets
- Anti-depressants
- Medicines for anxiety
- Some pain killers
- Many cough and cold remedies
- Some medicines for epilepsy, diabetes, blood pressure and heart conditions.

### Illicit drugs

Illicit Drugs affects drivers in different ways. The use of such drugs can contribute to slower reaction times, aggressive behavior, poor concentration, panic attacks and paranoia. More so, as the effects of these drugs wear off, drivers may feel extremely fatigued.



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