

Driving for Work and Volunteering Policy

HR9.2 Employment Policies

June 2024

**Contents**

[1 Introduction 2](#_Toc169879719)

[2 Scope and Purpose 2](#_Toc169879720)

[3 Vehicle Types - Driving for Work or Volunteering 2](#_Toc169879721)

[4 Statement of Intent 3](#_Toc169879722)

[5 Requirements for All Drivers: Procedure 4](#_Toc169879723)

[6 Safe Travelling 5](#_Toc169879724)

[7 Car Allowances 6](#_Toc169879725)

[Car Allowance Terms and Conditions 8](#_Toc169879726)

[8 MHA Owned Vehicle Safety 9](#_Toc169879727)

[9 Roles and Responsibilities 10](#_Toc169879728)

[10 Training and Monitoring 11](#_Toc169879729)

[11 Communication and Dissemination 11](#_Toc169879730)

[12 Impact Assessments 12](#_Toc169879731)

[13 Resources 12](#_Toc169879732)

[14 Appendices 12](#_Toc169879733)

[Appendix 1: Logging Driver Details in mhapeople - Information for Colleagues to Follow 13](#_Toc169879734)

[Appendix 2: Logging Driver AND Vehicle Details in mhapeople - Information for Line Managers to Follow 13](#_Toc169879735)

[Appendix 3: Driver Wellbeing – Accessing Vivup Guidance 16](#_Toc169879736)

[Appendix 4: Pre-Journey Minibus Checklist 17](#_Toc169879737)

[Appendix 5: Guidance Notes 19](#_Toc169879738)

[15 Version Control 23](#_Toc169879739)

1. Introduction
   1. Driving for work refers to colleagues and volunteers who are required to drive a vehicle in order to fulfil their role.
   2. Only a vehicle which meets the requirements of this policy should be used for “driving for work.” MHA will identify and reduce to an acceptable level the risks associated with work related driving in line with legislation and with consideration to current guidance.
2. Scope and Purpose
   1. This policy applies to all colleagues and volunteers of MHA. For the purpose of this policy “drivers” refers to all MHA colleagues and volunteers driving for work of volunteering.
3. Vehicle Types - Driving for Work or Volunteering
   1. There are three categories of colleagues who drive for work or volunteering:

| **Category** | **Vehicle Type** | **Example Journey Types** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Own vehicle(s) | Work or volunteering related duties, events, visits.  To and from MHA locations (excluding regular commute to and from contracted place of work). |
| 2 | MHA car allowance | All journeys  (Refer to contract of employment for more information). |
| 3 | MHA owned vehicle | Work or volunteering related duties, events, visits.  Driving or escorting other colleagues or those who use MHA’s services such as residents and members to and from activities, appointments etc. (For more information refer CP023, Escorts to Appointments and in an Emergency Policy) |

1. Statement of Intent
   1. All drivers will be asked for evidence that they meet the requirements set out throughout this policy.
   2. MHA has a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure the health & safety of colleagues. There are a number of specific employer duties under road traffic law, including those relating to the Road Traffic Act, and Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations, which are administered by the police and various other agencies such as the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.
   3. The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 includes motor vehicles in its definition of “work equipment.” A recent amendment also directs the employer to consider any other vehicle being used to conduct ‘business,’ to be a “place of work.”
   4. If a colleague has a job where it is necessary to drive in order to perform their duties and responsibilities, the possession of a valid driving licence is a condition of employment. In these circumstances, loss of a licence may result in disciplinary action.
   5. Drivers with a car allowance must report any accidents or incidents whilst driving on business in a timely manner to the relevant line manager(s), which must be reported further to HR and recorded in the colleague’s personal file.
   6. If a colleague with a car allowance, or a driver of a MHA owned vehicle is disqualified from driving by a court or becomes unable to drive for any reason including injury, they must inform their manager immediately.
2. Requirements for All Drivers: Procedure
   1. Drivers must produce evidence of a valid driving licence, vehicle insurance, and a vehicle MOT, Driving licence, Insurance, and Vehicle details (in line with points 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5 of this policy) for drives must be recorded:
   * **For colleagues** - in mhapeople and renewed in line with the expiry dates for both the driving licence and insurance. For guidance notes on how to input this information into mhapeople, see appendix 1.
   * **For volunteers** - in the volunteer database, or Sugar CRM in MHA Communities. Volunteers must also complete the Driver Assessment Information Form.
   1. Drivers who fail to produce the required documents (including driving licence, insurance, and MOT), or if evidence is found to be inconsistent with that submitted by the driver, or if evidence affects the colleague’s ability to perform the role, managers must raise the matter with HR immediately and any pending journey related expenses such as mileage cannot be signed off pending investigation. Drivers who have a car allowance will have their car or allowance suspended and will be subject to disciplinary action.
   2. **Driving Licence**
   * All drivers must have a valid driving licence (in date).
   * Drivers will be asked to for proof of their driving licence which line managers must confirm has been seen in mhapeople including (see appendix 1):

* Name on driving licence
* Valid From
* Valid until
* Licence number
* Issuing Country
  1. **Vehicle Insurance**
  + All vehicles must have valid insurance which covers all MHA drivers under “business insurance” (not personal).
  + Insurance dates must be added to mhapeople (form completed annually), managers to confirm it is business insurance.
  + For MHA owned vehicles (such as minibuses or pool cars)
  + Vehicle information must be input into mhapeople by line management (see appendix 1 for guidance on how to do this) “for Managers to follow”.
  1. **Vehicle MOT**
  + Drivers must ensure that the vehicle(s) has a valid MOT (if vehicle is over 3 years old), this can be checked on the gov.uk website.
  + For MHA owned vehicles (such as minibuses or pool cars)

1. Safe Travelling
   1. Drivers are encouraged to read the “Driver Wellbeing” section on the MHA Benefits Reward Platform – Vivup. **Guidance on how to access Vivup can be found in Appendix 2.**
   2. Drivers must adhere to the law when driving for work or volunteering, this includes the usage of mobile phones when driving, and driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medication. MHA strongly discourages the use of hands-free phones whilst driving due to the distraction and other associated risks linked to the use of such phones. MHA line managers must not expect phone related work to be done during time spent driving.
   3. Before travelling, be sure to plan the journey; consider whether it is necessary or if alternative methods could be used that would meet the business aims - e.g., Teams calls. Drivers are encouraged to:
   * Plan journeys ahead of time, ensuring method of navigation is up to date and correct.
   * Allow plenty of time for journeys, including rest breaks and allowances for rest breaks, dangerous weather, congestion etc.
   1. If carrying a load, drivers must ensure loading is done properly following the vehicles handbook for loading limits, consider placement of load, ensure objects are secured.
   2. Drivers must use their judgement to assess if it is safe and appropriate to make a journey in difficult driving conditions, such as heavy snow or ice, or thick fog. If it is not safe, or does not feel safe, do not drive, and discuss with your manager using alternative transport or making other arrangements to work or volunteer remotely from the desired location.
2. Car Allowances
   1. Colleagues must refer to their contract of employment which confirms whether they are working in a role with a car allowance entitlement.
   2. Eligibility for the car allowance is at the discretion of the organisation considering the following principles:

| **Type of Allowance** | **When awarded** |
| --- | --- |
| **Job Need** | The car allowance is awarded where a colleague is required by the organisation to have a car to undertake the job where there is normal ongoing job requirement to travel in excess of 10,000 business miles a year. This mileage requirement is pro-rated for part-time colleagues. |
| **Status** | Some positions will be awarded a car allowance where it is considered an appropriate and necessary part of the remuneration package. |

* 1. Consideration will be given to new roles and whether a car allowance is required during the job evaluation process. The allocation of a new job need car allowance must be supported by a business case, to identify the ongoing business requirement to travel.
  2. For existing colleagues without a car allowance can submit a business case including unmistakable evidence, based on six months mileage history where appropriate, that the job need criteria will be met on an ongoing basis. Each business case will be approved by the leadership team director in conjunction with the local HR Business Partner.
  3. For car allowance levels, please refer to the business expenses policy. The level of Car Allowance is set to enable the colleague to properly maintain and insure their car. The allowance is not intended to cover the full cost of providing a car.
  4. As a guide to determining the allowance, the organisation has assumed that the colleague will use a Personal Contract Plan (PCP) arrangement with the maintenance option, although colleagues may prefer to choose alternatives, such as purchasing a new or second-hand car, provided the Car Allowance terms of provision are met.
  5. **A colleague who receives a Car Allowance will be obliged to:**
  + Should use their vehicle for all business journeys unless agreed in advance with their line manager an alternative method of travel (where train or air travel is more appropriate i.e., exceptionally long journeys or journeys to London).
  + Hold a full valid driving licence, where you are able to drive in the UK and provide business insurance cover.
  + Provide a vehicle suitable for business use1 which scores at least four stars on the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP) safety programme (<http://www.euroncap.com>)
  + Should the Euro NCAP safety programme change the current star rating system then the star rating requirement will be reviewed by the.
  + At any point should the colleague’s vehicle fall below a 4-star rating they will be obliged to replace their vehicle with one which meets the requirements.
  + In both the above circumstances a grace period of 3 months will apply before the colleague is obliged to upgrade their vehicle.
  + Provide GAP insurance cover (Personal Contract Plan arrangements only)
  + Provide an alternative vehicle, whether through insurance or hired at their own expense, if their vehicle is temporarily off the road and they are required to travel on business.
  + Submit business mileage expense claims in line with MHA’s Business Expenses policy.
  + Ensure that the vehicle remains safe to drive at all times.

Car Allowance Terms and Conditions

* + 1. Under no circumstances can colleagues smoke or vape in cars subject to a car allowance.
    2. Managers will review the roles which are entitled to a car allowance annually during the Budget review process. In the event a role is no longer deemed to require a car allowance the allowance will be removed. In such circumstances the colleague in the role will be given six months’ notice that the Allowance will cease, during which time the monthly car allowance will continue to be paid.
    3. Part-time colleagues who are eligible to receive a car allowance will receive the full car allowance value appropriate to their grade.
    4. Colleagues in receipt of a car allowance who take maternity leave will continue to receive the car allowance throughout the full period of maternity leave.
    5. Colleagues in receipt of a car allowance who are absent due to long-term sickness absence will continue to receive their full car allowance whilst they are in receipt sick pay. When a colleague exhausts sick pay, then the car allowance will be suspended.
    6. If a colleague resigns, or is dismissed, from the organisation, the Car Allowance will cease with effect from the colleague’s effective date of termination.
    7. No compensation will be paid to colleagues in relation to Car Allowance in the event of redundancy or death in service.

1. MHA Owned Vehicle Safety
   1. Risk assessments must be conducted for all activities involving the use of minibuses. The assessments must make special provision for unplanned events - e.g., breakdowns, medical incidents.
   2. When hiring a minibus with a driver it is reasonable to assume that, providing the hirer is a PSV (Public Service Vehicle) operator, the vehicle and its driver are regulated by the Traffic Commissioners and should be safe. Consult: <https://www.gov.uk/find-vehicle-operators> to check the provider.
   3. When operating a Home or Communities Service minibus, or sharing, borrowing, or hiring a minibus which requires a colleague to drive, this must be done in accordance with the “Minibus Safety – code of practice” published by RoSPA - which MHA has adopted where applicable for MHA activities. This is a very thorough code of practice, and the requirements and recommendations should be followed.
   4. Please see Guidance Notes section for more details on the requirements for operating an owned / shared / borrowed or hired minibus and providing the driver.
   5. **The Pre-journey Minibus Checklist in Appendix 4 must be completed ahead of the first journey of each day the minibus is in use. If there is a driver change during the day, the form should be used as a handover document.**
2. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- |
| **All Drivers** | * To personally ensure that they as drivers and their vehicle are safe to drive for business purposes (including, servicing, MOT, insurance etc). * To provide the required information and ensure it is recorded within mhapeople. * To keep update with driving wellbeing and safety information. |
| **Line Managers of Drivers** | * To confirm the drivers in their team, have the required, valid document and that this information is recorded in mhapeople including vehicle information. * Ensure the pre-journey minibus checklist in Appendix 4 is completed ahead of driver’s journey. * To ask and encourage drivers to talk about their wellbeing and safety when driving for work. * Line Managers must not expect phone related work to be done during time spent driving. * To ensure drivers feel comfortable and welcomed to discuss driving for work or volunteering including confidence, adverse weather, business need, substance use (including prescribed medication). * Volunteering Line Management: * Where an existing volunteer changes role to a driving role, the MHA service where they are based will need to complete these checks. * Following the initial checks (done by the Central Volunteering Team), the ongoing review of volunteer driving documentation will be the responsibility of the MHA service where the volunteer is based. |
| **Recruitment Team** | * To ensure driver information is collected and recorded during onboarding. |
| **Central Volunteering Team** | * Where a potential volunteer is applying for a driving role at the time of recruitment, the initial driver licence / insurance / MOT checks will be completed by the Central Volunteering Team. |
| **Health and Safety, People, and Procurement Teams** | * To consult on the development and review of this policy. |

1. Training and Monitoring
   1. Compliance is assessed through direct observation, monitoring and supervision of our colleagues.
2. Communication and Dissemination
   1. This policy is disseminated and implemented within all MHA services through MHA’s channels of communication.
   2. Each colleague’s line manager must ensure that all teams are aware of their roles, responsibilities.
   3. This policy will be available to the people we support and their representatives in alternate formats, as required.
   4. Any review of this policy will include consultation with our colleagues, review of support planning, incident reports, quality audits and feedback from other agencies.
   5. Queries and issues relating to this policy should be referred to the Standards and Policy Team [policies@mha.org.uk](mailto:policies@mha.org.uk)
3. Impact Assessments
   1. Equality, Diversity, and Impact Assessment to be confirmed.
4. Resources
   1. **MHA policy documents, procedures, and guidance:**

* + [HR9.2a Driving for Volunteering Driver Assessment Information Form](https://intranet.mha.org.uk/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=15281&SearchId=728155&utm_source=interact&utm_medium=quick_search&utm_term=hr9.2a)
  + [FP003: Business Expenses Policy](https://intranet.mha.org.uk/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=2494&utm_source=interact&utm_medium=quick_search&utm_term=business+expen)
  + [HS401: Risk Assessment Policy](https://intranet.mha.org.uk/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=2630&SearchId=665680&utm_source=interact&utm_medium=general_search&utm_term=risk+assessment+policy&)
  + [HR8.8: Alcohol Drug and Dependency Policy](https://intranet.mha.org.uk/Interact/Pages/Content/Document.aspx?id=2489&utm_source=interact&utm_medium=quick_search&utm_term=HR8.8)
  1. **External Resources**
  + [Driving for Work Using Own Vehicles – RoSPA (2018)](https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/work-own-vehicles.pdf)

1. Appendices
   * Appendix 1: Logging Driver Details in mhapeople - Information for Colleagues to Follow
   * Appendix 2: Logging Driver AND Vehicle Details in mhapeople - Information for Line Managers to Follow
   * Appendix 3: Driver Wellbeing – Accessing Vivup Guidance
   * Appendix 4: Pre-Journey Minibus Checklist
   * Appendix 5: Guidance Notes

Appendix 1: Logging Driver Details in mhapeople - Information for Colleagues to Follow

On the front page off mymha click on View Profile



Click on Add Driving Licence Details

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generatedGraphical user interface, text, application, email

Description automatically generated

**Input the following:**

* Name on driving licence
* Valid From
* Valid until
* Licence number
* Issuing Country

**Click Save**

Appendix 2: Logging Driver AND Vehicle Details in mhapeople - Information for Line Managers to Follow

“Employee Information”

Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

Description automatically generated

Find the person you wish to add the vehicle information.

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Click on Vehicle Details

Shape

Description automatically generated

Click on 1. Input Vehicle Details

A picture containing logo

Description automatically generated

Please input the following:

* + Vehicle Type
  + Vehicle Registration
  + Start Date
  + Fuel Type
  + Insurance Checked

**Valid Until (Please note this will trigger and email to the manager reminding them that the insurance needs to be rechecked)**

**MOT Checked (Please use** [**https://www.gov.uk/check-mot-history**](https://www.gov.uk/check-mot-history) **to check if the MOT is valid)**

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated

**Save**

**Check or input Driving Licence**

The colleague should input their driving licence details through mymha so all you need to do is to check the details against the driving licence produced to you. But you also have the option to input the licence details on their behalf.

Employee Information

Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

Description automatically generated

Find the person you wish to add the vehicle information.

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Click on Vehicle Details

Shape

Description automatically generated

Click on 2. Driving Licence Details

A picture containing text

Description automatically generated

Please check or input the following.

* + Name on Driving Licence
  + Valid from
  + Valid until *(This will produce an email to the manager informing them that a new driving licence needs to be checked)*
  + Date verified (The date the manager checked the document)
  + Licence number
  + Issuing Country

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

**Save**

Appendix 3: Driver Wellbeing – Accessing Vivup Guidance

* Once you have logged into Vivup. Choose “Health and Wellbeing”

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

* Choose “Useful Links” and “Driver Wellbeing”

Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

Description automatically generated

Appendix 4: Pre-Journey Minibus Checklist

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pre-Journey Minibus Checklist** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Location Name** | |  | **Vehicle Reg No** | |  | | | | | |
| **Each item listed below must be checked and a tick (√) or cross (x) entered in the relevant box. If a (x) is entered, record the corrective action taken on page 2.** | | | | | | | | | | |
| This form must be completed ahead of the first journey of each day the minibus is in use. If there is a driver change during the day, the form should be used as a handover document.  Input Inspection Dates on the right - | | | | Date | | Date | Date | Date | Date | Date |
|  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **External Checks** | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | Tyres – visual check for wear/condition (no cuts & bulges), tread and pressures (including spare if applicable). Tread should be at least 1.6mm throughout a continuous band in the centre three-fourths of the tread and around the entire circumference of the tyre. At least 3mm is recommended. | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Wheels - security of wheel nuts | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Engine oil, brake fluid & coolant levels | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Fuel - sufficient for journey | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | All windows clean | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Lights - brakes hazard, reversing, indicators clean & working (may need help to do this) | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | Windscreen wiper blades (clean & undamaged) and washer fluid level | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Bodywork - no damage or sharp edges | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Mirrors - positioned correctly, not damaged, not obstructed, clean | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Lift (if fitted) works safely & is securely stowed. Last inspection date was within last 6 months. | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Ramp (if fitted) works safely & is securely stowed. | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Internal Checks** | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | Section 19 permit displayed in vehicle (if required) | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | Recent completed pre-journey checklists reviewed for previous faults | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | Brakes - when vehicle is stationary & moving (before loading passengers) | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Horn is in working order | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Mirrors - positioned correctly, not damaged, not obstructed, clean | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | Interior lights are working | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Seatbelts - in good condition, working properly | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Seats are secured in place correctly | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Equipment for wheelchair users (wheelchair tie-downs, passenger safety belts and harnesses) is available, if wheelchair passengers present. | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | First aid box | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | Fire extinguisher | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | Torch | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24 | Mobile phone - available for driver | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25 | Cloth for cleaning the windows | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26 | Spare bulbs/fuses | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27 | Other emergency equipment – specify (determined according to need) | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Initials of the person completing the checks for each inspection date -** | | | |  | |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Corrective actions taken:**  **Report any identified problems that cannot be immediately addressed to the Manager or person in charge.** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Completed reports to be retained for 2 years** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **END OF FORM** | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 5: Guidance Notes

MHA Owned / Shared / Borrowed or Hired Vehicles

1. **Driver Training**

* Drivers must be trained to a standard equivalent to that achieved by completion of the Community Transport Association MiDAS programme.
* Driver training and assessment must include instruction on the use of passenger lifts and the loading, unloading, and securing of wheelchairs (if relevant). This training is also recommended for employees and volunteers who will be escorting and supporting service users (see further below).

1. **Escorts / Passenger Assistant**

* An escort / passenger assistant should ideally be present on a minibus when scheme members are being transported. The role of the escort / passenger assistant is:
* to prevent the driver being distracted by passengers.
* to assist passengers safely on and off the minibus
* to assist in the event of a breakdown or other emergency
* to ensure the passenger safely reaches their destination.
* Managers should ensure that escorts / passenger assistants are familiar with the vehicle - especially the emergency exits, first aid kit, fire extinguishers, emergency / breakdown procedures and trip details. It is good practice for volunteers to have access to an MHA mobile phone whilst in transit.

1. **Section 19 Permits**

* If passengers are charged either directly or indirectly for use of the service then you must, obtain a “Section 19 Permit” from your local Traffic Area Office. The permit is not specific to one vehicle and a Home / Communities Service can hold more than one permit. Every vehicle must have a permit on display when being operated. A permit can only be used by one vehicle at a time. Permits last for 5 years.

1. **Tail-Lift Inspections**

* Hydraulic wheelchair lifts must undergo a ‘thorough examination and inspection’ by a competent person every 6 months.
* Appropriate and timely servicing, MOT and insurance should be arranged, and appropriate records maintained. This must include where necessary the servicing and six monthly thorough (LOLER) examination records for mechanised access platforms.
* Drivers should conduct a pre-trip vehicle check, inside and outside the vehicle and record any visible damage or faults. Notes should be made of any emergency equipment that has been used and any incidents that have occurred during the journey. Any faults should be reported to the relevant Manager in a timely manner and the vehicle should not be used again until the fault is rectified.
* The Manager has a duty to ensure that staff / volunteer escorts have sufficient experience and ability to accept responsibility for the welfare of the Residents, Scheme Members or other service users being transported.
* Drivers / escorts must make sure that all passengers have boarded, are safely seated, and are wearing properly adjusted seat belts, before moving off. The doors must be properly closed, but not locked. Equally, they must ensure that all passengers have left the vehicle and are clear of the doors before moving off. Drivers should be aware of the dangers of passengers’ clothes becoming trapped in a door. Frail members and those with poor mobility should be encouraged to access the vehicle using the disabled access / raised platform facilities.

1. **Wheelchairs**

* Passengers may travel in their own wheelchairs if they wish and if this is appropriate. However, passengers who are able to transfer from a wheelchair to a seat will be asked to do so, for their comfort and safety and for the wheelchair to be securely stored during the journey.
* A passenger may remain in their wheelchair during the journey, provided that the wheelchair is secured in a forward-facing or a rearward-facing position (never sideways), and it is securely and symmetrically fixed to the vehicle with suitable restraints.
* Wheelchairs must not obstruct a door or gangway. Some wheelchairs, such as those designed for sports use, are unsuitable for travelling in.
* The wheelchair user must be secured with seatbelts (three-point belts or harness) attached to the vehicle tracking and the wheelchair handbrake must be applied.
* The power on electric wheelchairs should be switched off and the batteries rigidly attached to the wheelchair.
* Tracking for the wheelchair and occupant restraint system must be kept clean.
* Drivers and escorts / passenger assistants should be trained in the care (boarding and assistance) of passengers who travel in their wheelchairs.

1. **Pick-ups and Drop offs.**

* The place where passengers are picked up and dropped off should be pre-arranged. Consideration should be given to the safety of the passengers waiting for the vehicle to arrive, boarding, and leaving the vehicle at these places. Where necessary a risk assessment should be conducted - e.g., locations with dark stairways or paths.
* Where appropriate, families / carers should be aware of the approximate times and location of pick up and drop off.
* Where appropriate, the escort / passenger assistant should ensure that the passenger has reached their home safely, has entered their home safely, and is not left in any danger.
* Drivers should only use suitable, agreed, drop off points. They should ensure that passengers do not exit from doors opening into traffic. When collecting or dropping off passengers from / to premises on the offside of a one-way street, the passengers are escorted across the road when it is safe to do so.

1. **Use of Seat Belts**

* All passengers travelling in the vehicle must wear a seat belt (this includes driver and volunteer escort).
* The driver and escort / passenger assistant must ensure that the passengers are informed before each journey that they must wear a seat belt.
* It is important that seat belts are correctly adjusted for the wearer to maximise their effectiveness. The basic points to note are:
* The belt should be worn as tight as reasonably possible.
* The lap belt should go over the pelvic region, not the stomach.
* Passengers who do not wear a seat belt put themselves and other occupants at risk. In such cases, the risk should be explained to the passenger, if a refusal still occurs then the passenger will be refused the journey on the vehicle. However, the passenger should not be left behind if this would place them in danger. In such circumstances the Manager should be contacted immediately.

1. **Exemptions**

* Exemptions can be claimed by anyone holding a valid certificate signed by a medical practitioner stating that it is inadvisable on medical grounds for them to wear a seat belt. In deciding whether to grant an exemption, a medical practitioner needs to judge each case on its merits. No conditions justify automatic exemption.
* All certificates must specify a period of validity, which may be as long or as short as medically justified. Note that a medical practitioner’s letter is not, in law, a valid substitute. The passenger must keep the certificate with them to show to the police, if challenged. The organisation’s insurers may need to be informed if someone insists on travelling without being restrained by a seat belt.
* A risk assessment should be undertaken for passengers travelling with a medical exemption certificate to determine where they can safely sit within the vehicle.

1. Version Control

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Version Date | Revision Description / Summary of Changes | Author | Next Review Date |
| 2 | May 2023 | This policy is an amalgamation of HR9.2 Driving for Work, HS333 Driving Safely, HS33a Driving safely guidance, HS33b Driving safely Driver Assessment Information Form and HS333c, Driving Safely - Pre Journey-Minibus Checklist.  Procedural updates include entering driver details into mhapeople. | * Head of Talent Acquisition and Shared Services * Head of Health and Safety * Health and Safety Officer * Procurement Manager * Head of People * Standards and Policy Manager | May 2025 |
| 3 | July 2023 | Volunteer Drivers and Car Users added to the scope of this policy including procedures for recording and updating driver details in the volunteer database, or Sugar CRM in MHA Communities. See also, Roles and Responsibilities. | * Head of Volunteering * Volunteering Manager * Standards and Policy Manager | July 2025 |
| 4 | September 2023 | Driver Assessment Information Form reinstated for use by volunteers who drive for volunteering only. All other drivers to complete driver information in mhapeople instead. | * Head of Volunteering * Standards and policy Manager | September 2025 |
| 5 | November 2023 | Resource list updated. | * Standards and Policy Manager | September 2025 |
| 6 | June 2024 | MHA no longer provides company cars, only car allowances (if eligible). | * Standards and Policy Manager | September 2025 |