

WELLBEING POLICIES

2024



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Approval

All twelve of these wellbeing policies contained in this document have been reviewed and approved by the organisation's board of directors.



Paul Birdsall
Managing Director
Birdsall Services Ltd

Date: 2nd January 2024

1. Health & Safety Policy

Policy Statement

Birdsall Services Limited recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy environment for all its employees in order to prevent work related ill-health and injuries, paying attention to:

1. A healthy working environment.
2. Adequate welfare facilities.
3. A safe place of work and safe access to it.
4. The identification and reduction of Health & Safety risks through the elimination of hazards,
5. Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances (as and when the need arises).
6. Ensuring that plant, equipment and systems of work are safe.
7. Providing sufficient information, instructions, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
8. The setting and monitoring of appropriate objectives to ensure the effectiveness of the Health & Safety Management system and enable continual improvement.
9. Identifying and fulfilling all legal and other applicable requirements
10. Consulting with all appropriate stakeholders, including our Employees, and encouraging participation with the implementation of our occupational health and safety management system

We also accept responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities and expect full co-operation from our employees in the management of health and safety. Neglect of responsibilities in maintaining the company's Health and Safety Policy will be considered as gross misconduct and dealt with in accordance with the company's disciplinary procedures.

Responsibilities for maintaining the company's Health and Safety Policy, and specific arrangements for health and safety management are set out in the Health and Safety Codes and Practices Manual and comply with statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and associated Regulations where applicable.

As an essential part of the company's integrated management system, this Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to demonstrate effective health and safety management practice and to ensure that our commitment to continually improving our management system is achieved.

The above Statement of Safety Policy expresses our Company's commitment towards Health and Safety at work.

2. Home Working Policy

Policy Statement

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the main Company Health and Safety Policies.

Birdsall Services Ltd (“the Company”) recognises and accepts its responsibilities to its employees under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The Company accepts this responsibility extends to the employee’s working environment at their home, and will ensure so far as reasonably practicable:

- the means to maintain a safe and healthy place of work
- provision and maintenance of such equipment or tools as is necessary for the employee to carry out their work
- safe access to and from the places of work
- adequate information, instruction, and training to prevent accidents and work related ill health
- a site assessment is carried out to ensure the safety of the employee and any other Company staff or visitors

The Company recognises that its employees are its most important asset and is committed to improving the working lives of all employees.

As far as possible, the Company operates flexible working arrangements. The home working policy is one of the flexible working options which can be requested by employees. It has been introduced with the aim of providing a better work life balance for all employees and to deliver on the Companies sustainability objectives.

The Company understand that there are situations where conflict between work and home life creates difficulties and where temporary or permanent changes to working arrangements can enable employees to re-establish a balance. The options available in this policy can help employees to accommodate the needs of both their home and professional lives.

The policy fits with the Company’s vision of providing the highest standards of service and achieving greater efficiency by providing a better working environment.

General Health and Safety

The overall responsibility for health and safety within the Company lies with the Directors of the Company. The HR Director with the support of the Compliance Manager has day to day responsibility for managing health and safety which includes staff members who work remotely.

The Company will ensure that the employee’s work area at home is set up to an adequate standard to suit the employee, and to comply with the relevant Regulations.

The employee is responsible for ensuring that his/her working area is maintained to a satisfactory standard and for informing their line manager if any part of the environment requires alteration.

If any part of the employee’s home is to be used for client/customer interfacing, the Company may require (at its discretion) that specified areas are used solely for Company business activities.

Employee’s Duties:

The employee will ensure that any parts of their home designated as ‘work’ areas are maintained to professional standards.

Working with the Company Health & Safety management, the employee shall ensure that any hazards inherent with their work activities are properly managed, and that the same protocols as would apply at the Company’s premises are implemented.

It will be the responsibility of the employee to ensure the safety of any visiting Company visitors/clients/customers.

If any part of the work area becomes unsuitable by dint of the work process changing, damage or breakdown of equipment or furniture etc, or by the employee's physical needs, he/she must inform their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where PPE is needed following a Company Risk Assessment, the employee is required to use it.

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

Policy Aims & Benefits

This Home Working Policy aims to:

- increase the options for flexible working arrangements
- reduce costs
- increase efficiency
- improve recruitment
- improve employee retention rates
- improve company sustainability

The benefits of the policy for both the Company and its employees include:

- retention of trained employees who might otherwise have to leave for domestic reasons, resulting in savings on the recruitment and training of new staff
- reduction in office accommodation space
- greater job satisfaction and personal responsibility
- enhanced quality of life
- greater flexibility for combining work and domestic commitments
- furtherance of the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy, for example home working can help employees with disabilities
- furtherance of the Company's Sustainable Policy
- to improve work/life balance

Home Working Definition

Home working is where employees perform some or all their duties at home.

Home working can be divided into two categories:

- **Regular home working:** full-time or part-time employees with a formalised agreement to work from home on a regular basis for the whole or a significant percentage of their working week.
- **Occasional or ad hoc home working:** employees who work at home on an ad hoc basis, without a formalised agreement, to carry out a specific task. The office base for these employees will remain the Company's office.

General Principles

This policy applies to all employees of the Company. All employees can request formal home working arrangements however the Company will determine which posts are suitable for home working.

The Company encourages and supports home working where it meets business needs. The HR Director will consider the appropriateness of home working and will implement it where there are demonstrable benefits to both the Company and its employees.

The employees line manager will regularly monitor and review home working arrangements in order to ensure their continued effectiveness. To this end, regular contact must be maintained between the home working employees and employees line manager.

The Company will treat all employees equitably, whether they are home, or office based.

Employees who work from home must ensure that they have a suitable environment in which they can work. Employees must ensure that they can work free from disruption, e.g. by having adequate care arrangements in place for dependents who may be at home during working hours.

It is the responsibility of the home working employees to inform their line manager if their home working base changes.

Employees are entitled to apply for combinations of flexible working options.

All employees, whether working at home or at their office base, are required to comply with the policies and procedures of the Company.

Applying for Formalised Home Working

In line with the flexible working rules introduced by the Employment Act 2002, employees can request a variation to their terms and conditions of employment in respect of working from home. However, employees do not have an automatic right to work from home.

To work effectively, home working has to primarily meet the business needs of the Company. Whilst not all jobs are suitable for home working, any request will be considered on its merits.

Employees who wish to apply for home working must do so in writing to the HR Director. The written application should set out:

- the nature of the employee's request and the reason for it
- the proposed start date for the new arrangement
- an explanation of how the employee thinks it will affect the Company and its business
- how such effects can be dealt with.

Where a request is made to work from home under an employee's statutory right to request flexible working arrangements, the requirements of the Company's Flexible Working Policy must also be fulfilled.

The Company will consider a request for home working and may hold a meeting with the employee within 28 days of receipt of the request. The Company will notify the employee of its decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting.

Applications for home working will be approved at the HR Directors discretion, taking into account the individual's circumstances and the needs of the Company. When a request for home working has been refused the Company will provide the reasons for the refusal in writing.

If employees feel that an application for home working has been unreasonably refused, they may appeal against the decision in line with the Appeals procedure contained in the Company's Flexible Working Policy.

Employees working from home will be required to sign a Home Working Agreement before being allowed to work from home. Approved home working arrangements will be subject to a trial evaluation period before being confirmed.

The Company reserves the right to review and vary existing home working arrangements and end an existing home working arrangement if it is proving unsatisfactory.

Home working may be withdrawn from employees who abuse the system. Such employees may also face disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary policy.

Selection Criteria

In determining whether to grant a request for home working the following criteria will be considered:

- The suitability of the job and whether the work is capable of being undertaken at home
- The impact on the level of service, efficiency and effectiveness
- Whether costs incurred are reasonable
- The needs of the employee for more flexible working arrangements
- The suitability of the home environment
- The suitability of the employee
- The ability of the employee to cope with reduced social contact
- Whether arrangements can be put in place for effective communication between the home working employee and the Company

Equipment and Connectivity

The Company will provide the necessary equipment to enable employees to work effectively from home. This will usually include:

- The supply of a telephone and/or broadband line, for the exclusive purpose of business use
- Relevant IT equipment including PC, laptops, printer (PAT Testing to be carried out on required electrical equipment in line with company equipment maintenance procedures)
- Furniture including desk, chair, lockable drawers (further to a DSE assessment)
- Mobile phone where appropriate
- Consumables, such as printer paper and ink, and stationary

The Company will bear the cost of installing, maintaining, repairing or replacing the equipment.

The Company reserves the right to enter the employee's home for the purposes of maintaining and servicing the equipment.

Equipment supplied by the Company is not for personal use. The equipment should be used exclusively for Company business and it must not be used by anyone other than the employee.

The equipment provided will remain the property of the Company. Employees are required to return any equipment supplied by the Company should the home working arrangement end.

Use of personal equipment for work purposes is permissible if it satisfies the necessary Health and Safety and technical requirements.

The Company will not be responsible for maintaining employees' own computers and equipment.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 applies to home working employees as well as office-based employees. Under the Act, the Company is responsible for the health, safety and welfare of its employees, wherever they work. At the same time employees have an obligation to ensure that they

take reasonable care not to expose themselves and others to risks to health and safety.

Prior to any employee starting home working, the Employee will undertake a Homeworking Checklist and a DSE Self-Assessment at the employee's proposed place of work in order to ensure that it is suitable for its purpose and that the work can be carried out safely. Should any remedial work or measures be required, they must be completed prior to the employee starting to work from home.

The Homeworking Checklist will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains appropriate and in line with the latest guidance from the HSE on Homeworking.

Home working employees are responsible for day-to-day health and safety issues and for reporting any concerns to the manager. Employees must take reasonable care to ensure that they work in a safe working environment.

Failure to comply with the health and safety provisions may result in the withdrawal of the home working arrangement and disciplinary action.

Insurance and Other Financial Concerns

Equipment supplied to home working employees is covered by the Company's insurance policy. Employees must take reasonable care to ensure that all equipment owned by the Company is kept secure.

Employees will be held responsible for the loss or damage to any supplied equipment when caused by failure to take adequate precautions to ensure its safety.

Employees working from home are covered by the Company's Employer's Liability policy in respect of injury arising out of and in the course of employment at home.

It is the responsibility of the home working employee to provide adequate home buildings and contents insurance. The Company will not accept liability for damage caused to the home or its contents.

Home working arrangements may affect the home and contents insurance policies of the householder. Before commencing home, working employees are required to contact their own insurance company to advise that they will be working at home on a regular basis.

Some mortgage and rental agreements do not allow for the home premises to be used for work purposes. It is the responsibility of the employees to inform their landlord or mortgage provider and to obtain permission where necessary.

Employees should check with their local council as to whether business rates are payable in respect of any part of their home used for business purposes.

The Company will not accept any responsibility for an employee who suffers any detriment, loss or legal action as a result of not obtaining the necessary permissions from their insurer, mortgage lender, landlord etc.

Confidentiality, Security and Data Protection

All employees, whether working at home or at their office base, are required to comply with the Company's Data Protection Policy.

Employees are responsible for ensuring the security of the Company property and all Company information, files, documents etc. within their possession.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to determine whether the home working employee is able to retain the security and confidentiality of information within the home. Line managers must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are taken to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with the requirements of the Company.

Data security is a particular concern for home working employees. Employees must ensure that all

information stored and accessed, including written information and that held on a computer, is secure and cannot be accessed by other parties. Employees must take no action which might prejudice the security of such information.

Failure to keep information secure is a serious matter and will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure.

Hours of work

Employees working from home and their line manager are required to agree an appropriate working pattern in the Home Working Agreement. Home working employees must ensure that appropriate breaks are taken.

Requests from home working employees to change their hours of work will be treated in the same way as requests from office based employees and must be agreed by their line manager.

Annual and Sick leave

Requests for annual leave must be sent to and agreed by the line manager following the normal procedure.

Employees working from home will be subject to the normal sickness absence procedures.

Expenses

Expenses paid for by the Company will be agreed at the outset of the Employment Contract.

Further reasonable expenses incurred by the employee may be reimbursed at the Company's discretion, to be decided on a case by case basis.

3. Lone Worker Policy

Policy Statement

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the main Company Health and Safety Policies.

Birdsall Services Limited (“the Company”) recognises and accepts its responsibilities to all its staff under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and its associated Regulations.

Work done by the Company sometimes demands that staff work alone or in situations where help might not easily be available in an emergency.

The Company accepts that its responsibility extends to when the employee is working alone and away from their normal base, and will ensure so far as reasonably practicable:

- the means to maintain a safe and healthy place of work
- provision and maintenance of such equipment or tools as is necessary for the employee to carry out their work
- safe access to and from the places of work, so far as is within the control of the Company
- adequate information and training are provided to the employee

Definition of Lone Worker

The definition of lone worker includes (but is not limited to):

- engineers working in plant rooms or on roofs without assistance
- on-call engineers
- on-call engineers working out of hours
- engineers visiting domestic and commercial premises
- office staff working alone or at home
- people in fixed establishments where only one person works on the premises, e.g. in small workshops, shops as well as home workers

General Health and Safety

The overall responsibility for health and safety within the Company lies with the Managing Director.

The Compliance Manager has day to day responsibility for managing health and safety which includes staff members who work alone.

Engineers are required to complete a Dynamic Risk Assessment before commencing any work. If lone working is deemed a risk, then adequate control measures will need to be implemented before any work commences to reduce and/or manage any risks involved with lone working.

When carrying out a risk assessment or dynamic risk assessment, the employee will consider:

- access and egress to the place of work
- any physical fitness that may be required
- any medical conditions the employee may have
- whether there is a risk of violence or harm befalling them
- whether they need to use tools or machinery etc
- what methods of communication are continuously available via people, phone or two-way radios?
- communication arranged for timed periods
- if they have all the training, they need to be able to work safely in a variety of environments.

If via the assessment lone working cannot be undertaken safely another person should be quoted for and the reason why stated in the remedial quotation. If attending a reactive visit an additional person should be called to attend for the duration of the visit if required.

Only those employees deemed 'competent' will be permitted to work unsupervised.

Confined spaces should never be entered alone and are covered under a separate policy

Employee's Duties:

The employee will ensure that any parts of their home designated as 'work' areas are maintained to professional standards.

Working with the Company Health & Safety management, the employee shall ensure that any hazards inherent with their work activities are properly managed, and that the same protocols that would apply at the Company's premises are implemented.

If any part of the work area becomes unsuitable by dint of the work process changing, damage or breakdown of equipment etc., or by the employee's physical needs, the employee must inform their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where PPE is needed following a Company Risk Assessment, the employee is required to use it.

Emergency procedures

No member of the Company will be permitted to work alone without their immediate line manager (acting as their safety buddy) being fully aware of their whereabouts, and an approximate finishing time.

The employee will be required to contact their safety buddy at pre-agreed intervals throughout the day/job.

Contact can be made via phone call from a mobile phone, landline, email, SMS, What App message or call, radio.

Should any employee fail to make contact as agreed the safety buddy will attempt to reach the employee by all the other means above.

Should this be unsuccessful, the safety buddy will contact site where-ever possible and request a check of the work area be made by security, reception staff or the point of contact of the client. Request a check for the engineer's vehicle via CCTV or patrol.

If unable to establish that the engineer has left site, the nearest employee to that site will be asked to attend to check on the engineer.

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

4. Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

PURPOSE

Your role within Birdsall Services Limited relies on a mutual relationship of trust and confidence between yourself, the Company and the client for whom the service is being provided.

Birdsall Services Ltd provides a service and maintenance on HVAC and Mechanical & Electrical systems. Where work is required at schools, nursing homes or premises where there is a placement of children and/or vulnerable adults, in such circumstances may involve contact with children and/or vulnerable adults. The Company therefore recognises that the welfare of children and/or vulnerable adults is paramount and takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard any children and/or vulnerable adults on a client site with whom our employees may have contact with.

This policy aims to provide guidance, protection, and rules on how to maintain this professional relationship and avoid any situations where this is likely to be jeopardised.

Please note that a deliberate, negligent or malicious breach of this policy will be treated as a gross misconduct, which may result in disciplinary action, potentially leading to your dismissal.

DEFINITIONS

Vulnerable Adult

Definition of 'vulnerable adult' means a person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Child

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years.

Abuse

For the purposes of this policy abuse is defined as: "abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons."

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a child/vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

POLICY

The company will not tolerate abuse in any form (either of clients, employees or anyone connected with the company) and where abuse is suspected, or witnessed, then immediate action will be taken.

Procedure

When entering schools, hospitals, nursing homes or premises where there is a placement of children and/or vulnerable adults and the employee is required to work in areas where there is prohibited access, the employee must be escorted by the client to the prohibited access work area and must be escorted by the client when leaving the prohibited access work area.

A prohibited access work area is defined as an area where you may come into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Reporting procedure

It is the duty of all employees to report to the HR Director any allegation of abuse straight away, which is being made against you or a colleague, which is either witnessed or suspected incident of abuse. You should clearly and promptly record all information regarding such an allegation. Employees may be assured that their jobs will not be threatened by reporting abusive behaviour by others (please refer to the whistleblowing policy).

Disciplinary action for violation of policy

Any employee who is found to have abused children and/or vulnerable adults on a client site or those from a client site in any form will face disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, in addition appropriate agencies may be notified. In addition, knowingly withholding information regarding the abuse of any children and/or vulnerable adults from a client site by another colleague may result in disciplinary action if found to be contrary to this policy.

General conduct and behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to act in a manner that will not bring into question the confidence in which fellow colleagues, the client, the children and/or vulnerable adult in the care of the client or the public in general have in their abilities to act appropriately.

In summary you should not:

Behave in a manner, which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to carry out work on premises where children and/or vulnerable adults are placed.

Use language or make comments of a personal nature, which would cause (or be interpreted to cause) embarrassment, humiliation or otherwise demean other parties.

Force or encourage colleagues or others to make unprofessional, personal comments or use of inappropriate language, which would cause (or be interpreted to cause) embarrassment, humiliation or otherwise demean other parties.

Social contact

Further to the above you should ensure that you do not establish or seek to establish a social friendship or relationship with children and/or vulnerable adults placed at the client site.

It is therefore important to ensure that you take care in your language or conduct so that it does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour, and language all require care and thought, particularly where you are carrying out works at a client site where children and/or vulnerable adults are placed.

Client safeguarding policy and procedures

Employees of Birdsall Services Ltd working on a client site where they will come into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults will be expected to be trained on the client's safeguarding policy and procedure and will be required to adhere to this. All employees that could attend any premises with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to a mandatory enhanced DBS Check managed by the HR Director.

5. Stress & Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy

Policy Statement

We are committed to protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of our staff. We recognise the importance of identifying and tackling the causes of work-related stress. We also recognise that personal stress, while unrelated to the workplace, can adversely affect the wellbeing of staff at work. We want to support the mental wellbeing of all our staff and will provide appropriate support for staff who are suffering from stress or mental ill health, on a confidential basis where appropriate, regardless of its source.

We will:

- Promote a culture of open communication. We want staff to feel confident that any concerns they raise about their work or working environment will be addressed. We will provide both formal and informal means for them to raise concerns.
- Provide training for all managers in good management practices.
- Take account of stress and mental wellbeing when planning and allocating workloads. We will provide opportunities to discuss these through our appraisal processes.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are using their entitlement.
- Ensure risk assessments address work-related stress.
- Facilitate requests for flexible working where reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that in any workplace reorganisation our change management processes are designed to minimise uncertainty and stress.
- Implement policies and procedures to address factors that can cause stress at work, or add to personal stress, in particular so that we can:
- Provide a workplace free from harassment, bullying and victimisation; and
- Address inappropriate behaviour through disciplinary action.
- Provide training to help all staff understand and recognise the causes of work-related stress and mental ill health, the impact of stress from factors in everyday life and the steps they can take to protect and enhance their own mental wellbeing and that of their colleagues.

This policy covers all employees. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

Legal obligations

We have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that your health is not put at risk by excessive pressures or demands arising from the way work is organised.

This policy takes account of our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

Personnel responsible for the policy

Our board of directors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The board has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to Human Resources Director.

We will monitor the development of good practice in approaches to work-related stress and mental wellbeing at work and will keep our practices and the effectiveness of this policy under review to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

All managers have a responsibility to recognise potential issues of work-related stress or mental ill health in the staff they manage. They should seek advice from HR in the event that they have concerns.

All staff should ensure that they are familiar with this policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives. Staff should plan and organise their work to meet personal and organisational objectives and co-operate with support, advice and guidance that may be offered by their line managers and the HR Director. Anyone who experiences or is aware of a situation that may result in work-related stress or undermine mental wellbeing at work should speak to a manager.

Understanding stress and mental health

Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or demands placed on them. Stress is not an illness but, sustained over a period of time, it can lead to mental and/or physical illness.

Mental health is a term to describe our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing; it affects how we think, feel and act and how we cope with the normal pressures of everyday life. Positive mental health is rarely an absolute state since factors inside and outside work affect mental health, meaning that we move on a spectrum that ranges from being in good to poor mental health.

There is an important distinction between working under pressure and experiencing stress. Certain levels of pressure are acceptable and normal in every job. They can improve performance, enable individuals to meet their full potential and provide a sense of achievement and job satisfaction. However, when pressure becomes excessive it produces stress and undermines mental health.

Pressures outside the workplace, whether the result of unexpected or traumatic events such as accidents, illness, bereavement, family breakdown or financial worries, can result in stress and poor mental health. They can also compound normal workplace pressures.

We recognise that individuals react to similar situations in different ways and that what triggers stress and poor mental health varies from person to person.

Supporting mental wellbeing at work

We want to ensure that our workplace supports good mental health for all staff. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when events at work or outside work result in staff feeling that their mental health is suffering. Anyone who feels that they are suffering from work-related stress should follow the steps set out in paragraph 0 in addition to making use of the support services referred to in this policy which all staff are encouraged to access if they ever feel they need support or assistance.

All managers should (working with the HR Director) provide support to staff. In particular, they need to communicate support levels to all employees on a quarterly basis such as:

- Promote a culture of open communication.
- Effectively plan and provide feedback on performance.
- Ensure that staff receive necessary training.
- Monitor workloads and reallocate work where necessary.
- Ensure that staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and others, and act on behaviour that falls below those standards.

Help and information can also be obtained from Mind, the mental health charity, www.mind.org.uk or the Samaritans, www.samaritans.org.

If any member of staff is considered by their manager or colleagues to be at serious risk of self-harm, or of harming others, action must be taken straight away. The matter should be referred to the HR who will seek medical advice. The wellbeing of the member of staff and those around them will at all times be our first concern.

Addressing work-related stress

If you believe you are suffering from work-related stress you should discuss this with your manager or supervisor in the first instance. If you feel unable to do so you should contact the Human Resources Department. You should also access the support services referred to in paragraph 0.

Once an issue affecting your health comes to the attention of your manager, supervisor, or HR we will discuss with you what steps can be taken to address that issue. Those steps may include any of the following:

- A review of your current job role, responsibilities, workload and working hours. Adjustments may be agreed to these, on a temporary basis and subject to further review, where appropriate.
- Where it appears that stress has been caused by bullying or harassment, investigation under our Disciplinary and/or Grievance Procedures.
- Referral for medical advice, treatment and/or a medical report to be provided by the Occupational Health Department, our medical advisers or any specialist or GP who has been treating you.
- If you are on sickness absence, discussion of an appropriate return to work programme. Our Sickness Absence Policy may be applied.

The Occupational Health Department will continue to be used appropriately to help staff overcome problems associated with work-related stress as well as other stress and the impact that has on their ability to do their duties.

Absence due to stress or mental ill health

If you are absent due to work-related stress or mental ill health, you should follow the sickness absence reporting procedure contained in your contract and/or our Sickness Absence Policy.

In cases of prolonged or repeated absence it may be necessary to apply the procedure set out in our Sickness Absence Policy.

Confidentiality

Information about stress, mental health and mental wellbeing is highly sensitive. Every member of staff is responsible observing the high level of confidentiality that is required when dealing with information about stress or mental health whether they are supporting a colleague or because they are otherwise involved in the operation of a workplace policy or procedure.

Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.

However, there are occasions when information about stress or mental wellbeing need to be shared with third parties. For example:

- Where steps need to be taken to address work-related stress such as reallocating work within a team.
- Where medical advice is required on how to support a member of staff, address issues raised by work-related stress or address issues raised by mental ill health.
- Where allegations of harassment, bullying or other misconduct require a disciplinary investigation or proceedings to take place.
- Where a member of staff presents an immediate danger to themselves or others.

In these circumstances, wherever possible, matters will be discussed with the member of staff concerned before any action is taken.

Protection for those reporting stress or assisting with an investigation

Staff who report that they are suffering from work-related stress or mental ill health, who support a colleague in making such a report or who participate in any investigation connected with this policy in good faith will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation.

If you feel you have been subjected to any such intimidation or victimisation, you should seek support from your line manager and the HR. You may also raise a complaint in accordance with our Grievance Procedure.

If, after investigation, you are found to have provided false information in bad faith, you will be subject to action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

6. Eye Test Policy

Policy Statement

An employee is entitled to a free eyesight test under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations if they use Display Screen Equipment ("DSE") as a significant part of his/her normal work.

The requirement to provide a free sight test is not automatic, the Regulations only require an employer to provide a free eyesight test on request from the employee.

It is Birdsall's policy to support and encourage the proactive use of eye tests.

Criteria to be met:

- A computer worker must be assessed as a DSE 'User' for any entitlement to apply
- If the employee has been assessed as a user, they must obtain their manager's authorisation for the eye test to be given at the Company's expense. Appointments should be arranged to take place outside of working hours wherever possible.
- The employee must bring back a receipt and the optician's test results
- The date of the eye test should be recorded on the person's DSE assessment form
- Users can request further eye tests at regular intervals after the first test (generally specified by the optician at approximately 2 yearly intervals) or earlier, if they are having visual difficulties that they believe is being caused by their DSE work
- If the tests indicate the need for glasses (called 'special corrective appliances') for the user's DSE work, the Company's liability is restricted to payment of the cost of a basic pair of frames and lenses (plus the cost of the eye test/examination as above).

Note 1 – If, following the eye test, special corrective appliances have been specified by the optician, and a user chooses more costly appliances - for example, designer frames or lenses, or optional treatments not necessary for the work, the Company will contribute only that portion of the total cost (see below) equal to the cost of the basic lenses and frame as required under the regulations.

Note 2 - The cost of normal, everyday use spectacles that are also worn for computer work, are at the user's own expense.

Note 3 – The Company is not responsible for any corrections for vision defects or examinations for eye complaints that are not related to DSE work.

Where an eye test by an optometrist suggests that a user is suffering eye injury or disease, the user is to be referred to his/her registered medical practitioner for further examination (keep a record).

Company contributions

Approval must be obtained in writing before claims are submitted. This then needs to be attached along with the receipt to the expenses form. Currently the Company contribution towards these costs:

- **Eye test/examination:** Up to a maximum of £50.00
- **Basic frames/lenses** or contribution towards higher specification appliances, up to a maximum of £75.00

Users that have been authorised to have an eye test/examination should arrange for it to be carried out with an appropriate High Street optician within the Company cost criteria as above.

7. Alcohol, Drugs & Solvent Abuse Policy

Policy Statement

Drugs, alcohol, and the workplace

It is in everyone's interest for the Company to maintain a healthy, safe, and productive working environment. This policy sets out the rules you must follow in relation to drugs and alcohol as an employee of this Company.

It is very important that you always comply with this policy as the Company considers any breach to be a serious matter. If you are found to be in breach of this policy, you may be dismissed without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Drugs

Using, possessing, selling, and supplying drugs

Apart from drugs prescribed for you, or over the counter medication (both of which must be taken as directed), you are strictly prohibited from using or possessing drugs, including 'legal highs':

- During working time
- Whilst on company, client or suppliers' premises (this includes vehicles)
- At lunchtime or during breaks
- When representing the Company at business/client functions or conferences
- When attending company organised social events outside normal working hours

You must not sell or supply illegal drugs, prescription medication or 'legal highs' in the circumstances specified above. Furthermore, it is important to remember that if you engage in activities outside the workplace that could seriously damage our reputation; this may affect your on-going employment with us.

Incidents involving the possession or use of illegal drugs on company premises will result in the authorities being notified.

Attending work under the influence of drugs

You are strictly prohibited from attending work or business functions under the influence of drugs (including 'legal highs') or solvents. It is your responsibility to ensure you attend work in an unimpaired condition.

If you are taking prescription or over the counter medication, we advise you to seek advice from your doctor or pharmacist regarding the effects this will have on you in your role and/or in the workplace. You should also have regard to any side effects or prohibited activities detailed in the instructions, such as drowsiness or advice that you should not operate heavy machinery.

You should advise your manager in confidence if medication may have an impact on your health and safety or that of others. This is to enable the Company to take appropriate action where necessary. You do not have to inform the Company of what illness the medication relates to.

Alcohol

Attending work under the influence of alcohol.

You are strictly prohibited from attending work under the influence of alcohol. It is your responsibility to ensure you attend work in an unimpaired condition.

Consuming alcohol

Without prior permission from the HR Director, you are strictly prohibited from consuming alcohol:

- During working time
- Whilst on company, client or suppliers' premises (this includes vehicles)
- At lunchtime or during breaks
- When representing the Company at business/client functions or conferences

Where permission is given for alcohol to be consumed, you must demonstrate responsible behaviour and maintain a professional image and standards at all times. You must remember that the Company's usual code of conduct still applies. Excessive alcohol consumption or unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated by the Company. These rules are equally applicable to work related social events, such as Christmas parties, where prior permission is not required to consume alcohol.

If you are permitted to consume alcohol, you must ensure that you comply with relevant legislation including drink driving legislation.

Bringing alcohol into the workplace

Alcohol must not be brought onto company or client's premises (including vehicles) without the prior permission of the HR Director. The only exception to this is that you are permitted to bring alcohol onto our premises if it has been given as a gift from a client and you comply with the Company's gift policy.

If you are permitted to bring alcohol onto company premises it must remain sealed and out of sight of visitors or stored in the Server Room.

If you have personal use of a company car, you are permitted to carry alcohol in it providing this is done in your own time and you comply with road traffic laws.

Driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If we know or suspect that you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will not permit you to drive, whether this is your own or a company vehicle. In such circumstances we will ask that you make alternative arrangements to get home and will reasonably assist you to do so, such as by ordering a taxi. Where you insist on driving, it may be necessary for us to contact the police.

If you have any questions regarding this Drug and Alcohol policy, please contact your manager.

Policy on Drug and Alcohol Dependency

We acknowledge that some employees may have or may develop a dependency on drugs or alcohol. We will endeavour to support such employees in so far as is reasonably possible in accordance with the needs of the business and/or our health and safety duties.

This policy sets out the approach the Company will usually take where an employee informs us that they have a drug or alcohol dependency.

Whilst this policy is aimed at assisting employees who have alcohol or drug problems, we must advise you that the following actions are not covered by this policy and may result in your dismissal:

- Being found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst at work or
- Another serious breach of our policy on Drugs, Alcohol, and the Workplace

In this policy, drug and/or alcohol dependency will be referred to generally as dependency.

Voluntarily seeking help for dependency

If you feel you have a dependency, we encourage you to seek appropriate professional support for this at an early stage and to inform us of your situation. Such information will be treated in confidence.

Where you voluntarily inform us that you have a dependency, your manager will discuss your situation with you. We have a duty to ensure your health and safety and that of others and as such we will need to initially assess whether it is safe for you to remain in the workplace and/or continue to carry out your

full range of duties. We would like to stress that where there is no risk to health and safety you will usually be able to remain in the workplace.

Where a risk to health and safety is identified, the Company's response is dependent on the circumstances. It could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Adjusting your duties to remove the risk where it is possible and feasible to do so in accordance with the requirements of the business
- Temporarily transferring you to other more suitable work and/or a more appropriate location, where possible and feasible to do so in accordance with the requirements of the business
- Initially suspending you on basic pay pending a medical opinion regarding your condition

If the above is applicable in your case, we will discuss the situation with you.

Where medical advice is that you are unfit to attend work, or you are unfit to carry out your full duties (and it is not possible whether for operational or other reasons for us to adjust your duties) your absence from work will be treated as sick leave and you will be paid accordingly. The medical opinion and the Company's response to it will be discussed with you.

Encouragement to seek treatment

Where you inform us that you have a dependency you will be counselled about the need for treatment. Where specialist treatment is required, we will encourage you to access this to overcome your dependency. Specialist treatment should usually be sought from the National Health Service. However, the Company may also assist you in accessing relevant organisations.

Time off work for treatment

If you need time off work to attend treatment for your dependency and this is recommended by a medical professional, we will treat this as sickness absence and the usual company sick pay rules will apply. The reasons for your absence will be kept confidential.

Returning to work after treatment

As in any other case of illness, your return to work after treatment will depend on confirmation by your general practitioner that you are fit for work. In this context, fitness for work means that your addiction is being monitored and controlled and that you do not present a risk to either your own safety or that of others. The opinion of the company or site appointed occupational health advisor may be sought before agreeing to a return to work date.

Where stress is a possible contributor to your dependency, we will take the necessary steps to ensure that any work-related causes are identified and addressed.

Following a return to work after treatment, it is essential that confidential and regular monitoring by the Company continues. Following the company's return to work procedure

Dependency and work performance

As an employer we require all employees to perform their duties to the required standard which will have been communicated to you. If you have a drug or alcohol dependency this can cause your performance at work to suffer.

Where this is the case, the Company will offer support, so far as is reasonable in accordance with the needs of the business, to assist you to improve your performance to an acceptable level.

Any support the Company may provide under this policy is dependent on:

- Your GP or Occupational Health practitioner diagnosing a dependency and
- You recognise that you have a dependency and co-operating with treatment and rehabilitation

Subject to operational requirements and feasibility, the support the Company may offer includes adjusting your duties or accommodating other support recommended by a medical professional during your treatment and for an agreed period thereafter.

If your performance does not improve, if applicable, the normal capability procedures may be followed, which may result in your dismissal.

8. Legionnaires Disease Policy

Policy Statement

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria. Infection is caused by breathing in small droplets of water contaminated by the bacteria. Legionella is common in natural water systems and can contaminate other water systems such as cooling towers, evaporative condensers, humidifiers, pumps, heat exchangers, hot & cold-water systems, baths and showers.

Equipment and services provided by Birdsall are not considered to be a likely source of Legionella but may be associated with customer property or equipment on which we are required to work.

Birdsall Services has a duty of care to consider the potential risks from Legionella that may affect engineers, sub-contractors, customers, and members of the public, and to ensure that systems installed and maintained prevent the growth and multiplication of Legionella.

The policy of Birdsall Services is:

System Design and Specification

- Systems to be designed, installed, commissioned and maintained to control the growth or multiplication of Legionella
- Systems designed to ensure the release of water spray is properly controlled
- Hot water is stored at temperatures in excess of 60° and distributed above 50°
- Cold water is stored below 20°
- Water temperatures are avoided that favor the growth of Legionella & other micro organisms
- Systems to be designed to ensure that water cannot stagnate anywhere in the system by keeping pipe runs short or by removing redundant pipework
- Avoiding materials that encourage the growth of Legionella
- Systems to be designed that are safe to use and can be cleaned and maintained satisfactorily
- To provide advice and guidance to system users on effective water management to prevent contamination

Service and Maintenance

- Identify and assess potential sources of risk from Legionella
- Review system specification including schematic diagrams, pipe work runs and layout
- Determine safe and correct operation of the system
- Review system control methods including precautions to prevent contamination by Legionella
- Recommend system improvements to reduce risk from Legionella
- To provide advice and guidance to system users on effective water management to prevent contamination or control infection
- Appoint an Approved Sub contractor registered to a recognized Regulatory Body or Trade Association to sample, treat, monitor and maintain water systems susceptible to Legionella

Training

- Engineers, supervisors & managers are provided with training for legionella and water treatment services when applicable

In the event of suspected exposure to Legionella

It is the responsibility of the Director or Compliance Manager to:

- Notify the Health and Safety Executive by submitting a RIDDOR. Report.
- Notify the client of suspected exposure.

9. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policy

Policy Statement

This Company Coronavirus Policy (CCP) includes all the measures we are actively taking to mitigate the spread of coronavirus.

You are kindly requested to follow all these rules diligently, to sustain a healthy and safe workplace in this unique environment. It is important that we all respond responsibly and transparently to these health precautions. We assure you that we will always treat your private health and personal data with high confidentiality and sensitivity.

This policy is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional governmental guidelines. If so, we will update you as soon as possible by email.

Scope

This policy applies to all our employees who physically work in our office and customers premises. We strongly recommend to our remote working personnel to read through this action plan as well, to ensure we collectively and uniformly respond to this challenge.

Following current guidelines

If you are unsure of any of the above please contact our HR Director or our Compliance Manager.

10. Vehicle Policy

Policy Statement

As a conscientious employer whose work often involves travelling, Birdsall is committed to reducing the risk of work-related road traffic crashes and collisions.

We understand that the following legislation applies to us:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Road Traffic Acts supported by the Highway Code
- UK Domestic Drivers' Hours Rules
- Tachograph Regulations
- The Road Transport (Working Times) Regulations 2005
- The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1996
- Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007

This Driving Policy applies to all employees and Directors who drive in connection with Company employment whether it is in their own vehicle, a fleet vehicle or a vehicle hired by the Company.

This Policy will be given to all employees who drive on Company business.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how the Company will ensure that all those who drive on Company business are acting in line with both the Health and Safety Law and Road Traffic Legislation.

This Driving Policy will be reviewed / updated as needed annually, and any changes made known to all driving staff.

All staff who drive on Company business whether they use a company vehicle or their own, will be required to produce their Driving Licence every six months, or on request, to prove continued entitlement to drive the class of vehicles they are required to use. All drivers will be deemed to have consented to permit their employer to contact the DVLA to check for any endorsements every six months or if unsafe driving practices are suspected.

Failure to produce the driving licence when requested may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Employees are required to inform their line manager of any Road Traffic Accidents (RTA) involving Company vehicles as soon as it is safe to do so, whether any damage is sustained to the Company vehicle. All staff are required to follow the procedures.

All employees must inform their line manager of any driving penalties either received or pending within 5 working days of notification.

Licence

You are required to have a full and valid UK driving licence, a European Community equivalent, or an international driving licence appropriate for the class of company vehicle you will drive. The Company requires all employees to produce upon request their original valid driving licence prior to use of a company vehicle or at any subsequent point during their employment. When requested to do so you are also required to take the necessary steps to enable the Company to obtain evidence of your driving record. Please contact your Manager if you require further information regarding this.

Loss of your driving licence may result in the termination of your employment if your ability to drive on highways is a substantial part of your job.

Type of use

Company vehicles are to be used for the Company's business purposes only. Express permission must be obtained before a company vehicle is used for personal use. Speak to your manager if you are unsure about this.

Use for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward is expressly forbidden and will be regarded by the Company as constituting gross misconduct.

Physically and mentally fit

Whenever you drive a company vehicle you must have disclosed to your employer any medical physical or mental conditions that would impair your ability to drive the vehicle in a safe and secure manner.

Smoking/Electronic Cigarettes

It is not permitted to smoke or use electronic cigarettes in company vehicles at any time.

Fuel and mileage

You will receive a company credit card/company fuel card for fuel used by you when driving your company vehicle on company business. Use of this card for any other reason without authorisation from your manager will be grounds for disciplinary action and may result in your dismissal.

Road fund licence

The road fund licence for each vehicle will be renewed by the Company when required. If you have any questions regarding a vehicle's road fund licence, please contact your Manager.

Use outside the United Kingdom

No company vehicle may be taken out of the United Kingdom without written permission from your manager.

Vehicle security

At all times when leaving the vehicle unattended you must ensure that all windows are closed, the ignition key removed, and the vehicle securely locked.

Lost or stolen articles

The Company accepts no responsibility for any personal articles carried in the company vehicle.

Seat belts

You and any front or rear seat passengers are always required by law to wear seat belts where they are provided. Fines imposed for not wearing them will be your responsibility.

Parking Tickets/Fines

If parking tickets are given to any Company vehicles whether they are being used for Company business, the driver/keeper of the vehicle is to ensure that the office is informed as soon as reasonably practicable. Failure to do so may result in the employee being held liable for extra costs over and above the original fine.

Congestion Charge

The congestion charge is automatically paid for on your vehicle. The only exception is if you are in a hire vehicle you WILL need to pay for the Congestion Charge and claim back on your expenses.

Dartford Tunnel or any other Tunnels

These are not automatic, and you will need to pay for these as and when you use them. Please claim the monies back through your expenses against the case number of the job you were attending.

Rotherhithe Tunnel

As you are driving a Commercial Van you are NOT permitted to use the Rotherhithe Tunnel at any time. If you do use this Tunnel there is an automatic fine of £90 which will be passed to you to pay.

Drink and Drugs including Medicines

The Company operates a zero-tolerance drink and drug driving policy.

All drivers must report any pending prosecutions and/or cautions immediately, regardless of whose vehicle they were driving at the time. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Any driver prosecuted for such offences will be subject to the disciplinary procedure which may result in dismissal.

All employees are encouraged to report concerns about colleagues with regards to drink or drugs as soon as possible. This can be done anonymously if necessary.

Any driver who believes that they may be over the drink drive limit must inform their line manager. They must not drive. They may be given alternative duties if available or be required to take annual leave. Should this become a regular occurrence, disciplinary action may take place.

Any driver found to be affected by illegal drug use will face disciplinary procedures as well as prosecution by the Police.

Any driver taking prescription or over the counter medicines must ensure that they are still fit to drive. Many prescription/over the counter medicines can have a serious effect on the ability to concentrate and can contribute to accidents. Such medication may include cold remedies, some cough medicines, pain relief – especially those including opiates, and antidepressants which may cause muscle spasms.

Any driver whose abilities are found to be impaired through drugs, whether legal or illegal, may be prosecuted.

Any driver who may be unfit to drive must inform their line manager immediately. They must not drive.

Drivers' Responsibilities

All drivers are legally responsible for the roadworthiness of their vehicles. If the tyres are bald or the lights do not work etc. it is the driver who will receive penalty points and fines.

Drivers of Company vehicles are required to carry out basic maintenance on their vehicles, such as ensuring oil and coolant levels, tyre pressures etc. are all correct.

Any defects identified must be reported to the Company immediately. The Compliance Manager will ensure the fault is recorded. The employee must complete a vehicle defect form as soon as the defect is found. The completed form must be handed to the Compliance Manager as soon as possible.

Verbal reporting of a defect without completing a defect form is not acceptable.

All reported defects will be dealt with promptly. The Company will not permit un-roadworthy vehicles to be used.

Use by other drivers

Sole use by employee

If the company vehicle has been provided solely for your use, it is your responsibility to see that the vehicle is not driven by anyone else. If in doubt, you must seek clarification from your manager.

Use by another driver

If you have received authority for someone else to drive the company vehicle, you should use your best endeavours to ensure that he/she observes the policies and rules set out in this section and complies with licencing procedures as set out at the beginning of this chapter.

Grey Fleet

Any employees driving their own vehicle on behalf of the Company will be required to present their insurance certificate and MOT certificate (if applicable) on an annual basis. The employee must ensure that their vehicle is insured for business use.

Any employee driving their own vehicle must ensure that it is kept in a safe and roadworthy condition at all times. The management accept that employees may be without their vehicle when repairs are necessary to keep the vehicle in a safe and roadworthy condition. However, employees must give as much notice as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Safety of our employees here at Birdsall is our first concern. For those employees that use their personal vehicles for business use we have implemented the following policy.

Employees must provide proof of the following on their Induction to the business:

- Valid UK Drivers Licence
- Valid Insurance Certificate showing liability coverage which includes cover for business use
- Valid MOT Certificate
- Proof of Valid Tax

This information will be presented at New Employee Orientation and subsequently within 30 days of renewal of any of these documents.

It is understood that:

- Drivers shall obey all applicable traffic and parking regulations, ordinances, and laws, including the use of seat belts.
- Accident deductibles, parking tickets, speeding fines, etc. incurred by staff while using a personal vehicle for Birdsall business are the personal responsibility for payment of such fines.
- Birdsall are not responsible for any physical damage to an employee's vehicle.
- The employee bears the expense of any personal auto policy deductibles.
- An accident/incident report must be filed out via our electronic form system Bantham Technologies, should any accident/incident occur while using a personal vehicle for Birdsall Business.
- Submit a monthly vehicle check sheet via our electronic form system Bantham Technologies.
- The driver shall not talk on their mobile phone, text message or operate any electronic equipment while driving the vehicle. If the driver receives a call or needs to make a business call, they shall park the car in a safe location to receive or make a mobile phone call.

- We will pay a rate per mile in line with government guidance to cover fuel and wear and tear costs on your vehicle, you will need to submit a mileage form each month to be reimbursed for this.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones, sat nav's and tablets are seen as an essential means of work communication. However, it is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while in control of a vehicle, whether it is mobile or stationary i.e. in traffic. If caught, you can get an automatic fixed penalty notice which you could get 6 penalty points on your licence and a fine of £200.

Your case could also go to court, and you could be disqualified from driving and get a maximum fine of £1,000.

All drivers/vehicles will be provided with hands-free kits; however, a mobile phone should only be used when it is necessary. You are permitted to use hands-free phones and sat navigation when you are driving, but if the police think you are distracted and not in control of your vehicle you could still get stopped and penalised. If you are involved in an accident and there is a possibility that you were not concentrating due to phone use, for example, you may also be charged with 'driving without due care and attention', or worse.

Whenever possible, mobile phones should be switched off while driving and a message facility used. Messages should only be picked up and responded to when it is safe to do so.

Drivers must not dial out or send or read texts while in motion. (This includes hands free kits.) They should find a safe place to stop before making any calls.

Where there is a passenger or 'drivers mate' in the vehicle they should be responsible for all communication however, all driver distractions must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Drivers must report faulty hands-free sets immediately. These will then be repaired or replaced as soon as possible. Drivers will not be permitted or encouraged to use a handheld mobile phone while they have no hands-free kit.

Any driver failing to adhere to the mobile phone policy will be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Satellite Navigation Systems

Satellite Navigation Systems can be a useful tool for drivers; however, they can also be a dangerous distraction.

All destinations should be entered while the vehicle is stationary in a safe place. All drivers should stop if it is necessary to take their eyes off the road to check routes.

They should be positioned so as not to impair vision. They should not be positioned where they are likely to cause injuries in the event of a collision.

All vehicle distractions should be kept to a minimum and it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that they are not likely to be distracted.

Journey Planning

The management will ensure that appointments are scheduled to a realistic timetable and are planned to consider the essential need for adequate rest periods. Any employee who feels that their timetables/schedules are unrealistic, and they need to take risks or break speed limits to complete them must voice their concerns with their line manager as soon as possible.

The management will monitor weather conditions and will reschedule deliveries and/or appointments etc. if conditions become too dangerous for the drivers.

Drivers must ensure that their personal lives do not cause them to come to work tired. Driver fatigue is a well-known cause of accidents.

Condition of vehicle

Cleanliness

The company image is important and is reflected through you and through any company property including company vehicles. It is therefore your responsibility, where a company vehicle has been entrusted to you, to keep its exterior and interior clean, ensuring all rubbish and waste is removed from the vehicle daily.

Random checks

We reserve the right to conduct random checks to ensure that these policies are being observed and to repossess the vehicle if they are not.

No fixtures or alterations

No fixtures such as aerials, roof racks, additional storage racking< towing apparatus, stickers or similar may be attached to company vehicles without prior written permission.

Before returning the vehicle to the Company, it should be restored to the condition it was in when first received by you, subject to normal wear and tear.

No change or alteration may be made to the mechanical or structural specification of any company vehicle.

Vehicle Maintenance

All drivers are required to carry out basic maintenance on the vehicle for which they are responsible. They should check oil, water, tyre pressures and windscreen washer fluid weekly and carry out a full vehicle inspection checklist monthly.

In winter months, drivers are reminded that they must have a clear windscreen before setting off. Peering through a small section while the screen de-mists is not acceptable. Ensure that all your windows are clear/free of ice/snow etc. before moving off.

The management will ensure that all vehicles used on behalf of the Company are regularly inspected and strictly maintained using at least the manufacturer's recommended service schedules (and if applicable, in accordance with Operator licence requirements).

INSURANCE

Fleet policy

All company vehicles are covered by a fleet insurance policy and the terms of this policy must be strictly observed. For security reasons, the Company keeps certificates of insurance.

Securing vehicles and contents

All company vehicles should be kept locked when not in use, and all contents should be stored out of sight, preferably in the boot. Additionally, you should ensure that any company vehicle is parked in well-lit areas in clear public view.

If a vehicle is stolen, the Company is required to satisfy the insurance company that there has been no negligence. If you have not observed this policy, we will hold you responsible for any resulting loss that would not have been covered by the insurance.

Reporting loss

In cases of loss, whether of the vehicle and/or its fittings or contents, you must inform the Company immediately. Full details of the contents of the vehicle must be itemised and given to the Company.

Emergency Procedures

Breakdown

- If possible, avoid stopping in dangerous places such as roundabouts and corners
- Switch on your hazard lights
- If it is safe to do so, drop your speed, continue driving and try to pull off the road completely, or onto a straight section of road
- If you must stop on a road, display your emergency triangle at least 45 metres behind your vehicle (do not do this on a motorway)
- Do not attempt to fix your vehicle yourself by the roadside. Call your employer's designated breakdown service. Refer to the company's fleet maintenance procedure
- Switch off your engine and wait in a safe place, away from traffic

Calling for Help

- If required on motorways, blue and white marker posts show the direction of the nearest phone. The phones connect directly to the police control centre and are numbered so that you can be easily located. If using your mobile phone, refer to the blue rectangular Driver Location Signs, which detail the road number (e.g. M1), direction of travel and precise location.

Motorway Breakdown Procedures

If your vehicle develops a problem on the motorway:

- Leave at the next exit if possible and stop at the next service area
- If you must stop immediately, pull onto the hard shoulder and stop with wheels turned to the left, away from traffic
- Park as close to the left as possible and try to stop near an emergency phone
- Put on your hazard lights and turn on side lights in poor visibility
- DO NOT use your warning triangle on the hard shoulder

NEVER attempt repairs yourself

Waiting for Help

- If you must stop on the hard shoulder:
- Get out of the vehicle
- Make sure you and all passengers exit the vehicle on the left-hand side
- Walk off the road – up the embankment if there is one, or climb over the crash barrier into a field if possible
- NEVER try to cross lanes to the other side of a motorway

Be prepared

- Carry a charged mobile phone
- Carry an emergency kit, including warm and high visibility clothing, a torch, water and a reflective triangle
- Call the office and the Company breakdown service and await instructions

Accident

If a vehicle being used on Company business is involved in an accident (RTA) the following steps are to be taken:

- Stop your vehicle in a safe location
- DO NOT admit liability
- Call the emergency services if anyone is injured or if property is damaged
- If the police attend the scene, note the reporting officer's name, identity number and station
- Note information about the accident, exchange details with third parties and take the names and contact details of witnesses
- Third parties are obliged to give you their name, the vehicle registration number and insurance details under section 170 of the Road Traffic Act 1988
- If a camera is available, photograph the scene from different angles
- Take pictures of the vehicles involved and of the damage to your own and third party vehicles/property
- Contact your line manager as soon as you are able.
- Fill out an Accident/ Incident Form and report a vehicle accident
- Fill out motor accident insurance form
- Note: Further information can be found in the company Fleet Maintenance Procedure

Employees must prioritise:

- Their own safety
- The safety of anyone else involved
- The safety of other road users

Replacement, return and repossession of company vehicles

Replacement

At a time to be decided by the Company, and at its sole discretion, the vehicle will be replaced with a vehicle from the existing fleet or a new vehicle, depending on availability at the time of replacement. The model and make are at the Company's discretion.

Repossession

Where you have a company vehicle for work use only, the Company reserves the right to take back the vehicle in the event of an unexplained absence from work in excess of one week or any certified sickness absence in excess of four weeks. The vehicle will be returned when you return to work.

Where you have a company vehicle for personal use, the Company reserves the right to provide you with an appropriate alternative vehicle, in the event of an unexplained absence from work in excess of one week or in the event of any certified sickness absence in excess of four weeks, such action will only be taken where it is necessary to ensure the Company is able to meet its service commitments to clients.

On notice of termination being given by either party the Company reserves the right to repossess the vehicle at any time, and may require the company vehicle to be returned at any time.

Returning the company vehicle

It is your responsibility to return the vehicle to the Company in the condition in which it was provided to you. By signing these terms and conditions, you agree to refund the Company for any damage to the vehicle that you have not notified the Company of previously and that is not as a result of ordinary wear and tear.

It is your responsibility to return the vehicle to the place that the Company designates at the time that the Company stipulates. Any reasonable transport expenses incurred in returning home will be met by the Company.

There is a £100.00 per year wear and tear allowance on the vehicles.

Contributory fault for loss, accident or damage

Whilst the Company appreciates that accidents and/or incidents may happen, where it is found by the insurer that your behaviour has contributed to the accident we may require you to repay, either through deduction of wages or any other method acceptable to us, any costs incurred by the Company.

Where you are held responsible by the insurer for any accident, incident or damage, then we reserve the right to deduct the excess on the insurance policy as a minimum and possibly the total costs of the accident and/or damage from your wages.

Severe Weather

Winter can bring extremes of weather from dense fog to snowfall that closes major roads. The Company will monitor weather conditions and will attempt to ensure so far as reasonably or operationally practicable that no-one is sent on a journey that may take them into a severe weather front.

The Company will ensure that all vehicles supplied by the Company have been properly maintained and prepared for bad weather.

It is incumbent on the drivers of all vehicles to make sure they have adequate cold weather protection with them – warm coats, gloves and blankets etc. in case they are stranded.

All drivers are reminded that if they are stranded by snow etc., they should remain in their vehicle unless instructed to leave by the emergency services.

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