

(Insert your company name here)

Driver's Handbook

Dated: _____

This sample handbook is designed for private passenger leased fleets. If you do not have this type of fleet, the topic headings may be useful to help you design your own custom handbook more applicable to your specific fleet issues.

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INTRODUCTION: President's Message

This Driver's Handbook has been provided to ensure you understand and can refer to (insert company name)'s policies and procedures that govern the use and maintenance of company vehicles. (insert company name) takes safe driving very seriously and is committed to your personal safety and the safety of others on the road.

At (insert company name), we believe that good driving is good business. When you drive as part of your job with us, you are representing our company on the road. Not only is your personal safety at risk, but our reputation. We value both your safety and our reputation. We will do all we can to help and support you in driving safely. This manual is the first step.

We ask that you sign that you have read and understand the (company name)'s Driver's Handbook and also the (company name) Code of Conduct provided at the end of this section. Signing this Code signifies your agreement to learn and abide by the policies and procedures described in this Handbook.

This Handbook describes approved company policies on all aspects of vehicle replacement, use and maintenance. **The Fleet Manager (or other designated individual, if you do not have a fleet manager) must approve exceptions to any of these policies, in writing.**

Please read this Handbook carefully to familiarize yourself with its contents. As mentioned above, you are obligated to abide by the policies and procedures it describes. Clearly, no manual can anticipate every situation; if you have any concerns or questions that may have not been covered in this Handbook, contact the Fleet Manager (if applicable) or your immediate supervisor.

This introduction should be signed by the President of the company to help instill the importance of these policies and the issue of safety.

REPAIRS AND OPERATING EXPENSES

New Vehicle Warranty

All vehicles have a manufacturer's warranty against defects. Details of this warranty will be outlined in the warranty booklets supplied by the dealer at the time your new car is delivered.

Repairs/Preventative Maintenance

The dealer can perform repairs if your vehicle is still under warranty. Consult the Fleet Manager as to which repair garage should be used after the warranty period has expired.

The appearance and operating condition of your vehicle is a reflection on you and on the company. A vehicle that is operated and maintained carefully is safer, less expensive and, in the long run, brings in a better price for resale. Since our vehicles are leased from **(insert the leasing company's name)**, with whom we have a maintenance contract, some of the maintenance and repair procedures in this section may vary considerably from those you have used previously with other employers or with your personal car. For this reason, it is most important that you fully understand and carefully follow these procedures.

The (insert leasing company's name) program offers a number of benefits. [Any benefits can be listed for employee's knowledge.]

All car manufacturers involved have agreed to honour all new car warranties when maintenance is performed according to the schedule outlined by the leasing company. You are expected to follow the preventative maintenance schedule as outlined by the leasing company and Fleet Manager.

Operating Expenses (This section should reflect your expense management procedures and policies.)

Parking and Tolls

All parking expenses, bridge and road tolls incurred while on company business will be reimbursed. These charges should be reported on your business expense report form.

Traffic Violations

Parking tickets and other penalties imposed for traffic violations or infractions and related expenses are your responsibility but must be reported immediately to the company. The company will not reimburse these costs. It is your responsibility to have a thorough knowledge of speed limits and other motor vehicle laws in your area and to observe them fully. Similarly, traffic violations and any resulting fines are your responsibility and may not be charged back to the company. Traffic violations should be settled immediately. However, should you decide to dispute the charge, any associated expenses, such as legal fees, are also your responsibility. If the violations should cause prejudice to the company, The company reserves the right to defend its interest.

It is **(insert company name here's)** policy to obtain Motor Vehicle Abstracts annually for all drivers using any company vehicle to check their driving record. A driver with convictions that fall outside the parameters of the company's Authorized Driver policy (see Page ?) is prohibited from driving any company-owned vehicle at any time.

Reporting Expenses

All expenses for your company vehicle are to be reported monthly on the Car Expense Report. **(Insert a completed sample of your company's Car Expense Form and procedures if desired.)**

These forms are used for our financial records for company car expenses. Therefore, the Car Expense Report should be fully and carefully filled out. While detailed instructions on how to fill out the Car Expense Report are beyond the scope of this Handbook, a few key points should be emphasized.

- Record your expenses daily. If you only record expenses at the end of every week or at the end of each expense-reporting period, you may forget to charge some legitimate expenses to the company – and have to wait for these omissions to be rectified before you're fully reimbursed.
- Note that a Car Expense Report is required for all 12 months of the year, including periods of vacations or non-use of the car. (Record mileage daily for both business trips and personal travel.)
- Obtain receipts for *all* expenses.
- Attach a legible copy of all service work orders even though some may not show charge amounts for work done under warranty.

Seatbelts

You and any passengers are expected to use seatbelts each time you drive the company vehicle regardless of the length of the trip.

Tires

If you require new tires, they must be comparable to the original equipment (i.e., the same size and type of construction).

Tires should be checked regularly for proper inflation, bald spots, etc. In order to prevent premature deterioration, the tires should be rotated as prescribed in the owner's manual.

Plates and Vehicle Licence Renewal Fees

The Manager is responsible for acquiring new licence plates and/or renewal stickers for their vehicles.

If a new plate is issued to you for your vehicle, please advise the Fleet Manager of your new licence plate number.

Insurance (You may wish to consider how much detail of insurance coverages you disclose to your drivers. Information could be communicated to third parties in the stress of a collision. However you do want to stress that adequate insurance is in place to ensure employee piece of mind)

The Fleet Manager is in charge of all insurance placements on company vehicles. The Employee / Driver is required to ensure that the Liability "Pink Slip" is kept in the vehicle at all times, to produce in the case of a collision or accident, or requested by police officer.

The company maintains adequate insurance at a level in excess of the required minimum provincial limits of liability for Third Party Liability and appropriate coverage extensions.

If you have any inquiries as to the details of the Insurance Package, please see the Fleet Manager for additional information.

Some provinces require mandatory enrollment in government-backed auto insurance programs at the time plates are purchased. Check with your Fleet Manager as to what type of fleet coverage has been provided for **(insert company name here)** by our insurance carrier.

Our insurance costs are a result of our own loss history. Therefore, all employees can control and impact on the total cost of insurance by practicing safe and defensive driving and looking after the automobile in your care with appropriate loss control and loss prevention techniques.

USE OF VEHICLE

All operators who qualify for a leased vehicle, under this program, will have the privilege of driving the vehicle for personal use at anytime, subject to the following provisions:

Authorized Drivers

The company's Automobile Fleet Policy permits personal use of the company vehicle, but restricts such use to the employee and the employee's spouse. The company requires you to provide the name and driver's license number of your spouse if he/she will be driving the company vehicle.

The company vehicle may not be driven by anyone else other than the authorized employee and his or her spouse. The use of the company vehicle is a privilege not a right.

Fully licensed drivers may only drive the company vehicle. It must not be used for driver training.

These restrictions will be waived to permit operation of the company car by other licensed drivers during emergencies, such as transporting an injured person to a hospital.

Driving a company-owned vehicle is prohibited for anyone who has been convicted of a serious / major moving violation or a Criminal Code conviction violation in the past year. **(Note: this can be changed to meet your company's criteria. However, we strongly suggest that employees and their spouses or other family members who may drive the company vehicle have no serious or criminal code convictions, such as driving-while-intoxicated, failing to remain, refusal to provide breath sample).**

Personal Use Responsibilities

The employee is responsible for expenses incurred for personal use of the vehicle. These include parking, storage, tolls and other incidental costs incurred during personal use, and normal operating costs such as gas, oil and incidental expenses incurred during vacation travel.

Use Restrictions

The company vehicle *may not* be:

- Driven outside of Canada without the company's consent.
- Used to tow any type of trailer or other vehicle. (Pushing another vehicle or being pushed by another vehicle is restricted to emergency situations only.)
- Modified, or substitutions of approved equipment made, without the approval of the Fleet Manager.

Collision Deductible

Employees who are assigned a company automobile are also required to assume some financial responsibility for any preventable collision damage to the company vehicle. This responsibility is similar to that normally assumed with deductible collision insurance coverage on a personally owned vehicle.

The employee will be responsible for preventable collision damage, not to exceed **(enter dollar amount as per company policy)**. The employee of the company automobile may also be held responsible for the collision deductible if the vehicle was operated at excessive speed or recklessly, or permits the operation of the vehicle by an unauthorized or unlicensed driver. The aforementioned contraventions are grounds for the loss of the vehicle and possibly termination of employment.

Reimbursement will be waived when the collision has been reviewed and the driver of the company vehicle is found to be not-at-fault or it was an unpreventable loss.

COLLISIONS AND OTHER LOSSES

Key Steps When a Loss Occurs

In the event of a collision or loss involving a company vehicle, the following steps *must* be followed:

1. If a serious injury has occurred at the scene of the collision, call for medical aid immediately.
2. Call the police and then the office, if the collision occurs during business hours.
3. Obtain the name and address of the other driver(s), the make, year and registration number of the other automobile(s), and the other driver's insurance company information including policy number.
4. As soon as possible, make notes of any passengers or injuries, name and addresses of any witnesses, date and time the collision occurred, road and weather conditions at the time of the collision, and the location and direction of all vehicles involved at the time of the collision and any admission of guilt by the other driver(s).
5. Identify yourself and show your driver's license number, ownership and insurance slip only.
6. Do not discuss provisions or limits of the company's insurance policy.
7. Do not make any admission of guilt or liability to the other drivers or anyone else.
8. Do not agree to any settlement or argue with anyone at the scene of the collision.
9. Provide copies of notes taken at the scene to the Fleet Manager or your company's legal advisor and be prepared to answer any additional questions about the collision.

Also be prepared to attend a safety committee meeting to review the circumstances to help determine whether the collision was preventable or non-preventable, and whether additional safe-driving training is required.

10. Take pictures of collision scene, position of vehicle(s), hazards, traffic signs, distractions (hedges, trees, etc), where possible.

NOTE: Picture of injured parties are not to be taken.

Responsibility for Unauthorized Drivers

Again, note that you will be held responsible if any unauthorized driver uses the company automobile in a grossly negligent manner, which includes the following (whether or not an collision is involved):

- Driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs
- Blatant disregard for traffic regulations or the safety of others.

Reporting Collisions

All collisions should be reported to the Fleet Manager using the Company Accident Form provided. In addition, any police report and other relevant information should be attached. Keep a copy of this information for your own file.

Any collision involving bodily injury or damage to another party's property will be reported to your company's insurance broker by the Fleet Manager or another company representative. Again, under no circumstances should you or anyone else in the vehicle at the time of an Collision make any admission of responsibility to anyone at the scene or attempt settlement of damages with the other party.

Any notice of claim, letter, invoices and so on received from the other party should be forwarded immediately to the Fleet Manager (or, if you are advised to do so) directly to the insurance broker or adjuster handling the claim. Drivers of company vehicles do not have the authority to sign releases or any other type of legal document.

Damage to Company Automobiles

Any damage to a company vehicle, whether or not a third party was involved, should be reported to the Fleet Manager.

If damage is sufficiently severe that an appraisal is required before repair, the Fleet Manager will arrange this and select who will do the repairs.

SAFETY

Defensive Driving

Every employee of **(insert your company name)** whose work requires the operation of a company vehicle has a specific responsibility to drive in a safe, defensive manner. It is the responsibility of supervisors to enforce this policy.

We expect employees to know and to practice defensive driving techniques so they may avoid Collision-causing situations regarding "right of way" or preventable losses, regardless of the actions of the third party driver. Simply by consistently following basic safety rules, as well as by practising courtesy and restraint, you will go a long way towards attaining the high degree of defensive driving skills required to protect yourself, your passengers, other drivers and pedestrians.

Winter Driving

Winter driving, which is a fact of life in Canada, requires changes in driving habits. Here are a few quick and easy winter-driving tips:

- Allow yourself additional traveling time in bad weather.
- Clean snow and ice from all windows **and lights**, before driving.
- Avoid any sudden moves on slippery roads.
- Keep sunglasses handy to protect your vision from the glare of snow.
- Top up windshield washer fluid regularly.
- If possible, slow down or pull to the side of the road before using your wipers and spraying washing fluid in freezing temperatures to reduce the danger of being blinded by the fluid freezing and ice forming.

Common Driving Errors

Expert analysis of accident reports has revealed that many stem from a few common errors. Three errors account for a large percentage of preventable Collisions. They are:

1. Following at an unsafe distance, for road and weather conditions.
2. Tailgating.
3. Improper backing, especially failing to adequately check the area at the rear and sides of the vehicle before backing up.

Other Top Driving Errors

- Failing to yield the right of way to avoid an collision.
- Driving too fast for road conditions.
- Pulling into or out of a traffic spot without making sure the way isn't obstructed or that oncoming traffic isn't approaching too fast.
- Turning improperly, especially without signaling.
- Not paying sufficient attention to driving (i.e., being distracted while using a cell phone, CD player, eating, etc.)
- Cutting in and out of traffic, crowding other drivers.
- Failing to obey traffic signals and signs.

Other Safety Tips

Protect Valuables

All car phones, briefcases and other valuable items should be left out of sight in the vehicle's trunk and removed from the vehicle at night.

Spare Keys

Store an extra key where you can access it easily wherever you are, such as in a common carried briefcase, purse, or in a "Share Key holder or "Safety Container" hidden on the automobile.

Using Cell Phones

According to Transport Canada, research indicates that using cell phones/texting devices while driving does create an extra risk, and is the cause of many collisions. The extra risk results from not only the distraction of thinking about the ongoing conversation, but also the physical distraction of handling, dialing, typing or looking at the phone. Research also suggests that stressful, emotional or important conversations are even more distracting.

Currently, (identify any province or area that has made the using a hand-held phones illegal) have made it illegal to operate a phone while driving, and this must be strictly adhered.

Company policy on use of cell phones can be inserted.

It is suggested that all drivers purchase a hands-free unit, a viable and safe alternative to allow for better control of the vehicle. Ultimately, it's best to pull over to a safe place when making or receiving cell phone calls.

When Leaving the Company

Company policy can be defined as to the responsibility of the driver for any outstanding collision deductibles.

Procedures for the return of any company car, or options for possible buy-out of lease, or ownership, to the employee can also be included.

(Company name) Driver's Code of Conduct

(Company name) is pleased to provide a company vehicle, which will adequately meet your needs, and provide reliable, comfortable and safe transportation. The vehicle is made available primarily for business use although it may also be used for personal travel to the extent allowed by company policy. Since your vehicle represents a substantial investment, we depend upon you to keep it in the best possible condition and carefully control the cost of its operation. Drive and maintain this vehicle as if though it was your own.

In accepting this vehicle for use and signing this Code of Conduct, you agree to abide by all company policies and procedures regarding the vehicle's use and maintenance, including operating this vehicle safely and abiding by all traffic laws in the jurisdiction(s) you will be traveling in or through.

Signed:

Driver's Signature

Dated