Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd

**Health & Eyesight Policy**

**Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all drivers understand the driver licence and medical requirements that may affect their fitness to drive and to highlight the correct procedure you should follow to notify us of any issues. Drivers must notify the company of any medical issues that may affect their entitlement or ability to drive, including physical or mental impairment or the use of prescribed or over-the counter medication.

**Requirement**

On commencing employment drivers will be required to undergo an eyesight check. Thereafter drivers will be subject to the same eyesight test at **three** monthly intervals. Drivers involved in a collision will be required to undergo the test again as soon after the event as possible. They will also receive a wellbeing check as part of their debrief.

**Minimum Medical Standards for Driving**

Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd requires that all drivers must be in date for their driving medical (due every time their licence is due for renewal) and that they complete a Licence and Health Declaration as part of their induction process. The company will also conduct eyesight checks every 3 months and maintain a record of the results.

If you need glasses or contact lenses to meet the Highway Codes minimum vision standard (read a number plate at 20 metres) then you must wear them all the time you are driving. It is the responsibility of the driver to inform the office of any medical condition that may affect their entitlement or ability to drive.

* A signed record of the test will be kept showing the drivers name and the date the test was taken, name of the person supervising the check, the vehicle registration plate used, the outcome of the check and details of any follow up actions.

**Negative result**

Any driver that fails to read the number plate shall be prevented from driving company vehicles, advised not to drive any vehicle and to visit an optician to undergo an eyesight examination carried out by a qualified optometrist.

**Illness and Prescribed and Over-the-counter Medication**

Any driver who is feeling unwell should not drive or continue to drive. If they have already started their shift, they should leave the road, park where safe to do so and seek advice from the office. Any driver feeling unwell prior to their shift starting should contact the office.

For many medications it is difficult to predict whether, how, when and for how long they will affect a person’s ability to drive safely. A driver may not even notice that they have been impaired until it is too late. The affects depend on how much, how often and how a medicine is used, plus the psychological and physical attributes of the person taking it. Some medicines may cause:

* Drowsiness
* Dizziness or feeling light-headed
* Difficulty concentrating
* Feeling edgy, angry, or aggressive
* Feeling nauseous or otherwise unwell
* Reduced coordination, including shaking
* Feeling unstable

A person’s driving ability can also be affected by the medical condition for which they are taking the medicine. Any driver who is on prescribed medication should check with their GP or Pharmacist to ensure that it will not affect their ability to drive.

Many over the counter medicines cause unwanted drowsiness which might impair driving. If in doubt always check with a pharmacist.

**Remember** – as a professional driver, it is your responsibility to inform the company of any medicines you are taking (prescribed or over the counter) which may affect your driving ability.

**Impairment through drugs and alcohol**

Alcohol impairs judgement, making drivers over-confident and more likely to take risks. It slows their reactions, increases stopping distances, affects judgement of speed and distance, and reduces the field of vision. Even a small amount, well below the legal limit, seriously affects the ability to drive safely.

Drugs can affect a driver’s behaviour and body in a variety of ways (depending on the drug). These can include:

* Slower reactions
* Poor concentration and confused thinking
* Distorted perception / blurred vision
* Over confidence, resulting in taking unnecessary risks
* Poor co-ordination
* Erratic behaviour
* Aggression, panic attacks or paranoia
* Tremors, dizziness, cramps
* Severe fatigue the following day

No driver is authorised to drive any vehicle if they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd operates a zero tolerance Alcohol and Drug Policy.

**Health Effects of Driving**

The working environment of drivers provides limited opportunities for a healthy lifestyle.

***Posture***

Many drivers suffer from lower back pain. The exposure to vibration and overall posture were identified as the primary reason for this. Securing loads and using straps can cause back and arm problems. Drivers can also suffer lower leg, ankle and foot pain due to the constant pressure of the foot on the accelerator in a relatively static position.

***Air Quality***

Professional drivers are exposed to increasing levels of pollutants in the air. There’s only so much pollution that an air filter can filter out of the cab air, and that’s mostly only relevant for long-distance drivers. Drivers may spend much time at transport depots loading and unloading where other vehicles may have their engine running.

***Driver Fatigue***

Driver fatigue is a serious problem resulting in many thousands of road accidents each year. Sleepiness reduces reaction time (a critical element of safe driving). It also reduces alertness and concentration so that the ability to perform attention-based activities (such as driving) is impaired. Drivers should be aware that when they are feeling sleepy, they should stop and rest.

***Sleep Disorders***

Anyone who suffers from a sleep disorder that prevents them from getting enough sleep is likely to be excessively tired during their waking hours and so be at a higher risk of falling asleep when driving. Anyone who suspects that they have a sleep disorder should report it to their manager immediately and contact their GP.

**How to avoid falling asleep at the wheel**

The Highway Code (rule 91) gives the following advice: -

Driving when tired greatly increases your accident risk. To minimise this risk:

* Make sure you are fit to drive. Do not begin a journey if you are tired. Get a good night’s sleep before embarking on a long journey.
* Plan you journey to take sufficient breaks.
* If you feel sleepy, stop in a safe place. Do not stop on the hard shoulder of the motorway.
* The most effective ways to counter sleepiness are to drink, for example, two cups of caffeinated coffee and to take a short nap (up to 15 minutes).

Most of the things that a driver does to try and keep themselves awake and alert when driving are ineffective and should only be regarded as emergency measures to allow the driver to find somewhere safe to stop. The safest option is for drivers to avoid driving when sleepy, when they would normally be sleeping or when they are ill or taking medication which indicates that they should not be driving or operating machinery when taking that medication.

**Drivers should:**

* Try to ensure that they are well rested, feeling fit and healthy and not taking medicine which indicates not to drive or operate machinery.
* Plan the journey to take regular rest breaks.
* Avoid driving into the period when they would normally be falling asleep.
* If feeling tired during a journey, stop somewhere safe, take drinks containing caffeine and take a short nap.

**Stress, Depression and Anxiety**

Drivers may experience mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and stress all of which may impact their ability to work effectively and safely. At times, driving can be stressful. Drivers need to be able to recognise when they are under too much stress. Ask your doctor if your condition will affect your driving. If it does you need to tell the company and DVLA immediately.

A list of health conditions that may affect your driving can be found at: [www.gov.uk/health](http://www.gov.uk/health)[-conditions-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving)

**Driver Fitness and Health Declaration**

All drivers will complete a Licence and Health Declaration to confirm their fitness to drive. The company expects that drivers inform the office immediately if they have a health-related issue that may affect their entitlement or ability to drive.

**Reporting**

Any driver who has a medical condition which may affect their ability or entitlement to drive MUST report this to the DVLA by using the following link: https://www.driving-medical-condition.service.gov.uk/eligibility/entitlement-g

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| Issue No | Approved By | Signature | Date |
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I declare that I have read and understood the contents of this Health & Eyesight policy and agree to adhere to it at all times during my employment with Compass Group UK & Ireland Ltd.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name | Signature | Date |
| Employee |  |  |  |
| Company representative |  |  |  |