

Safe Driving Policy

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Safe Driving Policy

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Scope.....	3
Responsibilities	3
Speed.....	4
Green Light Use	4
Standard of Driving Required by Law.....	5
In the Event of a Road Traffic Accident	6
Stopping at an Incident	7
Mobile Phones	8
Daily Safety Checks on Vehicles.....	8
Vehicle Tracking Devices.....	10
Lone Working.....	10
Change Register	11
Appendix A.....	13

Safe Driving Policy

Introduction

BrisDoc seeks to create a safe working environment conducive to protecting the health and safety of its employees, contractors, patients and the public through compliance with health and safety legislation. In doing so BrisDoc seeks to ensure its core values for workforce, patient and resource care are met.

This includes the obligation to drive any BrisDoc vehicle (whether liveried or not), or their own vehicle whilst on business purposes (e.g. driving to a meeting), in a safe, legal, and courteous manner.

This policy is not intended to be a complete and exhaustive statement. It is still the responsibility of the driver to ensure they understand and comply with the relevant Road Traffic Law and BrisDoc requirements.

Scope

The guidance provided by this policy is applicable to all staff employed by BrisDoc and working in any BrisDoc healthcare setting whether employed as a driver or otherwise.

Responsibilities

Directors and Managers Responsibility

Directors and managers are responsible for the operational implementation of this policy and for ensuring that their staff are aware of their legal responsibilities.

Managers are also responsible for taking appropriate action should any breach of this policy arise.

BrisDoc will check the validity of driving licences on recruitment and annually by the Workforce team via the DVLA.

Commented [RH1]: Do we do this?

All drivers, including staff who regularly drive a BrisDoc vehicle, will be issued with this policy and will be expected to read and abide by it. Drivers will be directed to BrisDoc's intranet system, RADAR to receive revisions of this document.

All BrisDoc Co-owners

All BrisDoc staff, including temporary and agency staff, are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are fit to drive in accordance with holding a UK driving licence.
- Compliance with relevant process/checks documents (OOHs Drivers). **Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action being taken.**
- Identifying the need for a change in policy or procedure as a result of becoming aware of changes in practice, changes to statutory requirements, revised professional standards and local/national directives, and advising their line manager accordingly.
- Identifying training needs in respect of policies and procedures and bringing them to the attention of their line manager.
- Attending and undertaking training / awareness sessions when provided.
- Ensuring their own vehicle insurance covers them for driving for business purposes.

Safe Driving Policy

Staff who drive their own vehicle for business purposes are recommended to undertake this training.

Driver Attitude

There is substantial recognition that 'appropriate' driver attitude is the key to safe driving. Poor attitude contributes much more than lack of skill to unsafe and poor driving. This includes the driver's attitude to other road users, to the vehicle being driven, speed and to taking unnecessary risks. **Drivers must consider other road users.** Selfish and aggressive behaviour increases the stress level of other drivers and passengers in the vehicle being driven and thus increases the risk of accidents. Responding to other road users with courtesy and tolerance ensures that BrisDoc vehicles and personnel are seen as professional. BrisDoc endeavours to ensure that all staff take pride in BrisDoc vehicles. Neglect of the vehicles is manifested by avoidable breakdowns and possibly less cautious driving. Drivers should feel a sense of 'ownership' for the vehicles and be responsible for safety checks and the general upkeep of the inside of the vehicle, keeping equipment clean, checked and operationally safe. Driving is always associated with risk but the driver's attitude moderates this risk. Driving fast, the use of the green light unless absolutely appropriate and necessary; and disregarding personal safety of a driver and passenger will not be tolerated; and may lead to disciplinary action.

Speed

Speed is often a key factor in the cause of accidents particularly when the vehicle is "en route" to a patient whom it is believed is very ill.

Emergencies are the prerogative of specially trained emergency drivers. BrisDoc is not an emergency service. High speed lessens the time a driver has to respond to any developing situation in front of them. Good driving requires that a driver drives at an appropriate speed that is safe for the conditions even when responding to an urgent patient. It is imperative that national and local speed limits are respected at all times.

Green Light Use

Driving with a green light flashing has inherent dangers. Some road users do not know what it signifies and are unsure of what to do. Some drivers will see it as a challenge and 'tail gate' the vehicle. The use of the warning light can give a false sense of security and appear to give a 'force field of invulnerability'.

Driving with care and consideration encourages other drivers to respond in a similar manner.

BrisDoc has reached an agreement with Bristol and South Gloucestershire Local Authorities, that when a BrisDoc vehicle is on an urgent/emergency visit with the green lights in operation, the BrisDoc vehicle may enter the bus lane. This agreement does not exist in North Somerset.

Safe Driving Policy

Standard of Driving Required by Law

The law requires that every vehicle shall be driven with care and consideration to other road users. At no time must BrisDoc vehicles be driven in a manner or speed dangerous to the public. An urgent patient does not relieve the driver of the responsibility to drive safely at all times.

A court will look at the nature of the emergency to assess the reasonableness and proportionality of what has been done.

A driver has no exemptions in law whilst driving a vehicle with a flashing green light. BrisDoc drivers must:

- obey the speed limit
- stop at junctions
- stop at a red light
- not cross a white line in the centre of the road
- obey all road signs.

Exceptions to this are when the driver is signalled to do so by a Police Constable or Traffic Warden. No one else can assume this responsibility and the driver is still responsible for their own and others safety.

The driver will be responsible for bearing the cost of any penalty associated with breaching traffic law and taking any associated penalty points onto their personal driving licence.

Out of Hours Service Drivers are responsible for notifying the Workforce team if they incur penalties whilst driving their personal vehicle.

Sentencing guidelines for careless driving or driving without due care and attention, speeding offences and use of mobile phones when driving.

Careless driving, inconsiderate driving, driving without due care and attention
The maximum penalty here is nine points on your licence and a £5,000 fine – or you may be disqualified from driving altogether.

Use of mobile phone when driving a motor vehicle
Using a mobile phone or handheld device is a specific offence but also can be considered as dangerous or careless driving. Penalties include points and a fine. A driver could lose their licence if they have passed their test in the last two years. For offences committed on or after 1 March 2017 the fixed penalty for using a mobile phone while driving has gone up from £100 to £200 and the penalty points have gone up from three to six. The penalty points to be applied on conviction by a court have also gone up from three to six.

Speeding Offences
Most speeding offences would normally be dealt with by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, resulting in a minimum 3 penalty points and a £100 fine.
With effect from 24th April 2017 speed fine bands are as follows:

Band	Speed over limit	Fine
A	1-10mph	25-75% of weekly wage
B	11-21mph	75-125% of weekly wage
C	21mph and above	125-175% of weekly wage

Safe Driving Policy

In cases where a Court process has been issued, the offence carries between 3 and 6 penalty points or a discretionary ban.

Useful information can be found in the following:

- Roadcraft - the Police Drivers Handbook ISBN 978-0-11-702168-6
- <https://www.roadcraft.co.uk/roadcraft/>

In the Event of a Road Traffic Accident

In such situations when a driver of a BrisDoc vehicle is involved in a road traffic accident the circumstances may be considered by the police and courts.

- Did the standard of driving fall below that of a 'normal average' driver.
- Was excessive speed a factor

In the event an accident:

- The driver must stop
- The driver must exchange names and addresses and contact numbers of the drivers involved
- The registration marks, make and model of the vehicles involved need to be recorded
- Do not admit liability
- If appropriate and safe to do so take photographs to capture evidence of the collision and environmental conditions at the time
- If any PERSON or a horse, ass, mule, sheep, pig, goat, cattle or a dog is injured the Police must be informed preferably at the time or anyway within 24 hours.
- If the Police require a statement, it is better that it is done at a BrisDoc base and with the help of a manager or clinician.
- The driver must inform a shift / team manager as soon as possible after an accident in case the media become involved.
- **DO NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENT TO THE MEDIA OR OTHER PERSON WITHOUT APPROVAL FROM A SENIOR MANAGER REGARDING ANY INCIDENT INVOLVING A BRISDOC VEHICLE.**

Any employee who is involved in an accident while driving for company purposes will be required to complete an accident report form (example in Appendix A). He or she must return the report to the Facilities Manager as soon as possible to review the information to make sure it is complete. A Learning Event report form must also be completed (accessed via Brisdoc Weblinks)

The employee will be required to discuss the accident with Facilities Manager and/or their Line Manager if further details are required.

BrisDoc will review all accidents and determine whether they were preventable or non-preventable. A preventable accident is defined as an accident in which the driver failed to do everything reasonably possible to prevent it from occurring.

Safe Driving Policy

Stopping at an Incident

When travelling in a branded BrisDoc vehicle and passing the scene of an incident at which no medical assistance is available, it would be the public's expectation that our service would stop to assist.

If it is safe and appropriate to do so, BrisDoc co-owners may stop at an incident to offer assistance such as calling emergency services or offering immediate first aid. If stopping to assist, the Driver must liaise with the Shift Manager as soon as practicable to keep the Control Room informed so BrisDoc patients' needs can be managed.

Safety

Accident scenes can be dangerous places. Protect yourself:

- It may be best to park obliquely behind the incident to fend off oncoming traffic.
- Use the car's green and hazard lights.
- If you have access to a high visibility jacket, wear it.
- Cover exposed skin, wear gloves if available.
- Unless people are trapped or unable to move, get them off the road and out of the way of further harm.
- **Call the emergency services.**

Recording

Clinician

Should a BrisDoc representative stop at an incident while conducting BrisDoc business, in a BrisDoc vehicle an Adastra case must be generated to record any assessment, advice, intervention, action, or treatment.

Non-Clinician

Should a BrisDoc representative stop at an incident while conducting BrisDoc business, in a BrisDoc vehicle a learning event must be generated to record any assessment, advice, intervention, action, or treatment.

Debrief and accident raising

After the event a debrief should be held as soon as possible. There should be a low threshold for raising a learning event so that the event can be captured, and any learning discerned.

Liability

Professional standards state that a registered healthcare professional should offer help if emergencies arise in clinical settings or in the community, taking account of safety, competence and the availability of other care.

A Good Samaritan act is where medical assistance is given in a bona fide medical emergency, which a healthcare professional may happen upon in a personal rather than professional situation. While there is no legal duty to assist (in UK law), clinicians have an ethical and a professional duty to help.

Safe Driving Policy

The Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism Act 2015 came into force in England and Wales. It sets out some additional factors that a court must consider when assessing a negligence claim or alleged breach of duty.

These factors essentially outline a new legal test that is especially pertinent in the case of a Good Samaritan act. They are:

- Social action – whether the alleged negligence or breach of statutory duty occurred when the person was acting for the benefit of society or any of its members.
- Responsibility – whether the person, in carrying out the activity in the course of which the alleged negligence or breach of statutory duty occurred, demonstrated a predominantly responsible approach towards protecting the safety or other interests of others.
- Heroism – whether the alleged negligence or breach of statutory duty occurred when the person was acting heroically by intervening in an emergency to assist an individual in danger.

If a clinician stops, they are legally responsible for their actions and omissions. It is recognised by most authorities that a clinician or good Samaritan willing to stop is acting out of beneficence for the casualties and, in this country, legal repercussions are fortunately rare.

Treatment or care administered at the scene of a medical emergency, accident, or disaster is covered within the provision of BrisDoc's indemnity. Hence the importance of record keeping in such an incident.

Mobile Phones

It is an offence to use a mobile phone whilst driving.

- Even using a hands-free kit is dangerous as the driver's attention is on the conversation, not their driving.
- If driving, stop to answer the phone or tell the base the call will be returned when it is safe to do so.

It is also a distraction when the passenger is using a mobile phone. It is acceptable to stop and wait until the phone call has finished.

Daily Safety Checks on Vehicles

Daily safety checks will be completed via the Drivers Visit Log and Vehicle Check Form, which are retained in the vehicle and are reviewed weekly by the Operational Support Officer. Findings are reported and reviewed by the Facilities Manager/Team Managers

More specific checks such as water levels and tyre pressures etc are reviewed as part of the weekly cleaning and review of the vehicle.

Inside

Check:

1. condition of seats and adjust seatbelts for condition and operation
2. all mirrors

Safe Driving Policy

3. fuel status
4. that a torch is present and working
5. all diagnostic, oxygen, and ancillary kit is present if working OOHs.

Lights

Check:

1. headlights dipped and main beam
2. side rear and brake lights
3. green light operates
4. side white alley lights operate (where applicable)
5. hazard warning lights
6. windscreen wipers and washers
7. that the horn works.

Levels

Check:

1. check washer bottle
2. ensure a de-icer and scraper is on board during winter / cold spells
3. visual check for any obvious leaks including clutch and steering systems

Walk round check

1. check no unreported damage to outside of vehicle
2. check state of tyre walls and depth of tread
3. at least once per week check tyre pressures
4. check all lamp lenses for chips / cracks
5. check filler cap is present and closed

These checks help to ensure whether:

- everything works
- anything is missing or damaged
- everything is secure
- you will have proper control of the vehicle

It is a feature of advanced driving practice that the driver checks the operation of the brakes before they drive off and when they commence driving (please warn the passenger). It helps establish how much pressure is needed to stop a particular vehicle, and that it does not “pull to one side”.

Summary

- The driver is responsible for their own safety and driving
- Undertaking a daily check list enables the driver to prove that everything was operational at the commencement of the shift
- Green lights:
 - indicate the position on the road, they will enable Police or Traffic wardens to recognise and help a BrisDoc vehicle through the traffic
 - They help at junctions when other drivers will often stop or help the driver through a junction

Safe Driving Policy

- When unavoidably going slowly and looking for an address they warn other traffic nearby and also alerts the patient / relative to the arrival of the clinician
- Whilst unavoidably parked outside an address and temporarily blocking the street they help inform other road users
- **THEY DO NOT MAKE THE BRISDOC CAR AN 'EMERGENCY VEHICLE'**
- The driver must obey all rules and Road Traffic regulations unless a Police Officer or Traffic Warden indicates otherwise
- If the Green Light is used the driver MUST have a clinician in the vehicle. Delivering drugs or any other reason will not be accepted by the Police or Courts
- It is the Driver's responsibility to drive in a manner appropriate to the circumstances, no one else can take that responsibility
- Any endorsements on the drivers licence must be reported to line manager as soon as they occur.

It is better to arrive a few minutes later than not to arrive at all

Vehicle Tracking Devices

Vehicle tracking devices are installed on all BrisDoc vehicles in connection with business requirements for security purposes, location in an emergency, and checks on compliance with legal requirements such as driving speed and usage time. Regular audits of the vehicle tracking device data are being carried out. Analysis of this data may indicate excess speed information. When necessary, this information will be shared with the specific driver, and their line manager. In such cases and in consultation with the Workforce team, action within the BrisDoc Disciplinary Procedure may be taken when failure to comply with traffic law is noted.

Drivers found, through compliance audit or the receipt of fixed penalty notices, to be breaching traffic law will be required to undertake further e-learning on safe driving.

Lone Working

The driver is expected to support the clinician throughout the shift, as well as transport them to visits. For example:

- Offer to accompany the clinician into the address, carry equipment, provide a chaperone etc.
- Offer to make phone calls or make contact with the shift manager.
- Use the torch to light the way into the house during periods of darkness.
- Agree a length of time the clinician may be in the house and whether they would like the driver to make contact after a certain amount of time
- Ensure the clinician has the phablet and knows how to use it/ summon the driver to urgent help
- Stay contactable via the car mobile phone to respond to any request for urgent assistance.

Safe Driving Policy


Change Register

Date	Reviewed and amended by	Revision details	Issue number
12/05/2015	SB	Minor grammatical and check list changes	
13/09/2016	DL	Reformat using headings etc. for TOC	
13/09/2016	DL	Addition details on accident reporting and inclusion of accident form as an appendix	
13/09/2016	DL	Additions to Manager responsibilities and daily safety checks and green light changes	
15/05/2017	AM	General review and update on details of driving offence penalties, training, lone working and vehicle tracking with associated audits	
14/04/2020	TC	General review references to the HR department have been changed to the Workforce team. Removal of reference to safe driving course which was to be accessible on radar	
08/11/2023	AM	General review and update on details of driving offence penalties.	4.2
19/12/2023	RH	Updated to consume stopping at an incident information	4.3

Safe Driving Policy

Safe Driving Policy

Appendix A

		ACCIDENT REPORT FORM			
<small>Patient care by people who care</small>					
DATE OF ACCIDENT				TIME	
Were Police Called	Yes No	Officer Number		Was Ambulance Called	Yes No
INSURED VEHICLE					
Make		Model		Reregistration No	
Year of Manufacture		Number of persons in car including Driver			
THIRD PARTY VEHICLES					
Make		Model		Reregistration No	
Year of Manufacture		Number of persons in car including Driver			
Make		Model		Reregistration No	
Year of Manufacture		Number of persons in car including Driver			
INCIDENT					
Conditions					
Day	Night	Dry	Raining	Frost	Snow
Ice	Flood				
INSURED VEHICLE					
Parked	Moving	Speed	Breaking	Reversing	
Lights	On	Indicators	On	Hazards	On
	Off		Off		Off
Were Seatbelts being Worn	Yes	No			
THIRD PARTY VEHICLES					
Parked	Moving	Speed	Breaking	Reversing	
Lights	On	Indicators	On	Hazards	On
	Off		Off		Off
Were Seatbelts being Worn	Yes	No			
Parked	Moving	Speed	Breaking	Reversing	
Lights	On	Indicators	On	Hazards	On
	Off		Off		Off
Were Seatbelts being Worn	Yes	No			
INSURED DRIVER					
Name					
Address					
Post Code		Date of Birth			
Telephone Number Home		Mobile			
Driver Injuries					
Passenger Injuries					

Safe Driving Policy

THIRD PARTY DRIVER							
Name							
Address							
Post Code			Mobile				
Drivers Insurance Company				Policy Number			
Driver Injuries							
Passenger Injuries							
Name							
Address							
Post Code			Mobile				
Drivers Insurance Company				Policy Number			
Driver Injuries							
Passenger Injuries							
WITNESSES							
Name							
Address							
Post Code			Mobile				
Telephone Number Home				Mobile			
Name							
Address							
Post Code			Mobile				
Telephone Number Home				Mobile			
DISCRIPTION OF INCIDENT							

Safe Driving Policy

