

Vehicle Use Policy

1. Purpose

Inala Community House (ICH) is committed to ensuring the safety of all people, including both workers and service users, while using motor vehicles. Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, a vehicle is classified as a workplace where it is used for work-related purposes.

ICH recognises that road safety is a significant issue which is the cause of many occupational injuries. ICH has systems in place which seek to ensure the safety of workers and service users while travelling.

This policy operates pursuant to the ICH Work Health and Safety Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, Board members, volunteers, students, trainees and contractors. For the purposes of this policy, these persons shall be referred to as workers.

This policy also applies to all vehicle usage while at work including but not limited to:

- ICH vehicles
- Personal vehicles
- Public transport
- Rideshare vehicles

3. Definitions

Public transport: Includes buses, trains, ferries, taxis.

Grey fleet: Vehicles owned or leased by workers that are used in the course of their work. A vehicle is considered to be part of the grey fleet regardless of whether the worker claims mileage or claims it in their tax.

Rideshare services: A ridesharing service provides transport to passengers through websites and mobile apps by matching passengers with drivers who use their own private vehicle for hire.

Authorised vehicles: Are vehicles which workers are permitted to use for work-related purposes.

Unauthorised vehicles: Are vehicles which should not be used for travelling by workers. These should also not be used when arranging transportation for service users or other people.

Serious traffic infringements: Includes, but is not limited to, offences such as unlicensed driving, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving without due care, dangerous operation of a vehicle, speeding of more than 20km over the speed limit, seatbelt infringements.

Service User: Refers to any person who accesses services provided by ICH. This includes adults and children under the age of 18 years.

Department: Refers to the government Department responsible for funding the relevant service or program e.g. Child Safety.

4. Policy

ICH has systems in place to authorise drivers and certain types of vehicles for use to ensure the safety of workers and passengers. ICH also requires workers to drive responsibly, comply with road rules and undertake continuous scanning to identify and appropriately respond to risks while travelling.

4.1 Authorisation to Drive

All employees are able to drive for work-related purposes in accordance with the requirements listed below. All other workers (e.g. contractors, students or volunteers) require pre-approval from the CEO to drive an ICH vehicle.

All workers who drive for work-related purposes must:

- Hold and maintain a valid open or provisional licence (Queensland, interstate or international) at all times to drive for work related purposes and not drive if they:
 - Have a suspended or cancelled licence
 - Are disqualified from driving
 - Hold a learner licence
- Provide a copy of their current drivers licence to Human Resources.
- Complete relevant Drivers Declaration forms. This will be required at least annually and at the Manager or HR's discretion at other times.

Workers are also not permitted to drive when they are under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other drugs which impact their ability to drive safely. Workers who take medication must check with their doctor if they are safe to drive and notify Human Resources in the event that they are not able to drive due to the effect of medication.

All drivers must notify Human Resources of any issue which may impact their capability or capacity to drive safely, this includes:

- Any situation which would result in a person being unauthorised to drive.
- Any conditions upon their driving (for example: alcohol interlock, restrictions for driving between certain times, etc.).
- Any other condition or impairment which would make it unsafe for them to safely operate a vehicle.

Drivers are also required to immediately notify Human Resources upon:

- Causing a serious motor vehicle accident or injury
- Receiving a serious traffic infringement notice or penalty

Workers holding an LCS2 screening check who have been charged with driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol and dangerous driving will need to report this to Human Resources and complete an LCS6 as soon as possible to update their driving history.

4.2 Authorised Vehicles

ICH has a fleet of vehicles which are registered, comprehensively insured and regularly serviced. These vehicles are permitted for work-related travel but are not to be used for private use without prior authorisation of the Chief Executive Officer.

Public transport may be authorised where it is easily accessible, cost effective and meets the needs of the organisation. Examples of this may include, providing taxis for service users or using the train to attend a meeting in the centre of Brisbane.

Rental cars may also be available on limited occasions.

Personal vehicles (grey fleet) may be used for work-related purposes. Where a personal vehicle is used, it must be suitable, roadworthy, registered, regularly maintained and appropriately insured (which includes for work travel).

Vehicles not owned by ICH such as those owned by service users or other organisations (excluding public transport or grey fleet vehicles) are not to be used without pre-approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.2.1 Transportation of Service Users

Where ICH workers transport or arrange transportation of a service user, they must only be transported in:

- ICH vehicles or public transport
- Vehicles rented by ICH or those not owned by ICH with prior authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer

4.2.2 Vehicle Security

Vehicle security must be maintained at all times. Vehicles must be parked securely and remain locked when not in use and keys must never be left unsecured under any circumstance. This includes while working onsite or offsite (including when refuelling). Drivers must not leave the engine running at any time when the driver has exited the driver's seat (unless another worker is in the vehicle at the time).

Workers in possession of vehicle keys offsite must carry the keys on their person:

- In a pocket;
- In a bag which is kept on them at all times; or
- Securely attached using a clip or carabiner

Keys must not be carried on lanyards or other mechanisms that can easily break or detach.

Where it is not possible for a worker to carry vehicle keys on their person (e.g. at a pool), they must report this to the Manager so that appropriate risk management measures can be implemented.

Vehicle keys that are not in use must be stored securely in a location that is not accessible to service users, this can include but is not limited to:

- Storing the keys in a locked area which service users cannot access (e.g. a locked office or a key safe)
- Carrying the keys on their person (see above section)

Lost or stolen vehicle keys must be immediately reported to the Chief Executive Officer.

4.3 Unauthorised Vehicles

ICH does not permit the use of the following vehicles:

- Rideshare services as they do not have guaranteed safety practices in place.
- Motorbikes or scooters as the risks of injury with a motorbike compared to a car increase significantly.

4.4 Driving at Work

Drivers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own safety as well as that of passengers, other road users and pedestrians. This duty of care means that drivers must be aware of their safety responsibilities which include:

- Identifying any hazards or safety risks
- Assessing the risks
- Implementing controls to mitigate risks
- Reviewing the controls

This should occur throughout the duration of travel and should also encompass preparation for travelling.

4.4.1 Planning

It is important to consider a range of factors when planning work-related travel. This includes considering:

- If travel is required or whether teleconferencing is an option
- If travel is required, the appropriate vehicle to use and whether it is authorised
- Any risks or special requirements during the journey

All workers are required to plan their journey to:

- Allow sufficient time to avoid pressure to speed
- Utilise main and major roads or highways where possible and avoid areas with known risks (e.g. roadworks where there are changed traffic conditions)
- Avoid travelling when risks are higher due to weather, wildlife or other hazards
- Avoid fatigue – such as by rotating drivers or taking breaks
- Minimising distractions while travelling

Adequately restrain equipment or goods so that it will not become a hazard to vehicle occupants – such as by using a boot cover or cargo net

Workers should also consider the possibility of any other risks associated with transporting passengers such as behaviour, distraction or if there are any special requirements for travel. This is particularly important when transporting a child or young person, and considerations may include, but are not limited to:

- Potential triggers during travel that may lead to escalations, and associated preventative strategies.
- Strategies to respond if a child or young person becomes agitated, aggressive, is distracting the driver or is not remaining seated.
- Strategies to respond if a young person attempts to exit a moving vehicle.
- Whether a staff member is required to assist during transport.
- Ensuring that the driver has access to a mobile phone in case of an emergency.

Workers must also ensure that the vehicle is in a clean and tidy condition when transporting other people and that there is safe access and egress from the vehicle.

Workers must complete a pre-inspection checklist to ensure that the vehicle is in a safe condition prior to travelling.

If any risks are identified prior to travelling (e.g. passenger behaviour), a risk management plan detailing appropriate controls must be completed and approved by the Manager. This includes also identifying other risks which may arise from:

- Working offsite and/or alone
- Activity/task related risks

These should be identified and controlled in accordance with the ICH Working Alone Policy, Personal Safety in the Community policy and the Vehicle Use Procedure.

4.4.2 Child Restraints and Child Locks

When driving with a child up to 7 years of age, the child must be restrained in a properly fastened and adjusted Australian Standard (AS) approved child restraint, which is appropriate to their age and height. All workers transporting children will be trained in how to correctly install, adjust and fasten child restraints.

Any decision about the use of child restraints, harnesses, and buckle guards to manage a child's behaviour will comply with all relevant requirements (e.g. the Department of Child Safety's Positive Behaviour Support and Managing High Risk Behaviour Policies and Child Safety Practice Manual). Decisions about the use of these devices must take into consideration the age and developmental needs of children and young people, and the risk of the child's behaviour during transport (this includes risk to self, others in the car and other road users). The use of a device or harness to support the safe transport of a child or young person with a physical disability is to be prescribed by an appropriate professional and adhere to legal requirements.

A vehicle is never to be used to contain or seclude a child or young person.

4.4.3 Secure Storage and Carriage of Keys

Vehicle keys that are not in use are to be stored securely, in a manner which prevents unauthorised access.

Vehicle keys that are in use (and are not placed in the ignition with the driver in the driver's seat) must be securely carried on the worker, for example in a zipped pocket, in a pouch/waist belt or attached to a belt via a key clip or carabiner. Vehicle keys are not to be carried on lanyards or other mechanisms that can easily break or detach. Where it is not possible for the worker to securely carry the keys, they should be locked and secured appropriately, for example in a locked locker/cabinet.

Regular audits will be undertaken to ensure key storage requirements are adhered to.

If keys are accidentally locked in a vehicle when children or young people are inside, workers must follow the incident response process outlined in the Vehicle Use Procedure.

When refuelling, vehicles must be turned off and keys carried securely by the driver.

4.4.4 Safe Driving Practices

Drivers must obey all road rules and implement safe driving practices. Drivers must also show due regard, judgement and responsibility on the road. This includes:

- Maintaining safe stopping distances
- Wherever possible, avoid driving more than 6 hours each day during work hours and no more than 2 hours at a time without a minimum 15-minute break
- Stopping when tired
- Driving to the conditions, particularly when there are higher risks due to changed traffic or road conditions, weather and during times when wildlife is active

The driver is responsible for ensuring that seatbelts are worn by all vehicle occupants and that children have an appropriate child restraint. Drivers must also take steps to ensure the vehicle is secured, this includes:

- Locking the vehicle when unattended
- Concealing any valuables
- Being wary of people indicating for the vehicle to stop for someone to talk to the vehicle's occupants
- Not accepting hitchhikers

Workers must never allow service users to be unattended while the worker is not in or immediately beside the vehicle.

4.4.5 ICH Vehicle Requirements

- ICH does not permit smoking (including e-cigarettes) or vaping in ICH vehicles
- Vehicles must not be driven for personal use or taken to the worker's home without pre-approval from the Chief Executive Officer

4.5 Documentation

For travel in ICH vehicles, logs must be completed by the driver for each trip they undertake. These logs record the basic details of the trip and confirm that a pre-start vehicle checklist has been undertaken.

Drivers wishing to claim mileage for the use of their personal vehicle must complete an *Employee Mileage and Reimbursement form*.

4.6 Incidents and Breakdowns

Workers must take due care when on the road to avoid any incidents, including those potentially caused by a breakdown. In the event of an incident, a worker must take steps to ensure their safety and the safety of others, and follow all other required steps accordance with the Procedure, including notifying Reception of the incident as soon as possible.

In the event that a child or young person is locked in a vehicle, the worker shall immediately notify the Chief Executive Officer who may be able to arrange spare car keys to be delivered, if this is not possible or would take too long, reception will contact roadside assistance or a locksmith (whoever will be able to respond quickly).

4.7 Damage, Mechanical, Maintenance Issues

Workers must report any damage to ICH vehicles or maintenance issues as soon as reasonably practical, this should occur no later than the close of business the following business day. If a driver believes that a vehicle is unsafe to drive, this must be immediately reported to the Chief Executive Officer.

Workers must not at any time drive a vehicle which they believe to be unsafe to drive whether due to damage or mechanical issues regardless of whether this is an ICH vehicle or not.

4.8 Costs

ICH will not pay any traffic or parking related fines which are incurred by workers driving for work-related purposes, this includes when travelling in an ICH vehicle. This may include but is not limited to, fines relating to speeding, driver distraction, drugs or alcohol, seatbelt use, mobile phones, fatigue or negligence.

Drivers using their personal vehicles for work-related purposes should be aware that any costs relating to the use of the motor vehicle such as registration, insurance, maintenance, fuel or those arising from an incident or motor vehicle issues are the sole responsibility of the driver.

4.9 Procurement and Disposal of ICH Vehicles

When purchasing new vehicles or considering disposal of vehicles, ICH will take into consideration the following factors:

- Demand: The need for a new vehicle should be justifiable
- Suitability: The vehicle should be suitable for the organisations requirements and should be automatic
- Safety: All new vehicles should have an ANCAP rating of 4 or higher.
- Value for money: Vehicles should be good value for money, taking into consideration cost, reliability and likely resale value.

4.10 Lease of Hire of ICH Vehicles

For insurance purposes, ICH vehicles will not be hired or leased to third parties for monetary compensation under any circumstances.

4.11 Breaches

The Vehicle Use Policy and Procedure provides important information to workers regarding their use of vehicles, safe driving behaviours and what to do if there are mechanical issues or an incident.

Workers must be aware that driving in a manner that is contrary to this Policy and associated procedures has the potential to negatively affect the reputation of ICH.

Workers who are identified as responsible for poor driving behaviour or misuse of a vehicle may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from ICH.

4.12 Responsibilities

The Board and Chief Executive Officer will:

- Have a plan for the timely procurement and disposal of vehicles
- Ensure that vehicles are procured or disposed of in accordance with this policy

The Leadership Team will:

- Ensure that risks while travelling are considered as part of Service risk assessments
- Promote safe and responsible travelling
- Review and approve any appropriate mileage claims
- Ensure their team trained in this policy and associated procedures

Drivers must:

- Undertake risk assessments which seek to identify, assess and control risks to prevent any harm or injury from occurring
- Follow traffic rules, and showing due regard, judgment and responsibility on the roads
- Report any damage, mechanical or maintenance issues
- Only use authorised vehicles to perform work-related tasks
- Report to Human Resources in accordance with this policy

5. Review

This policy shall be reviewed every 2 years.

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

6. Related Documents

Legislation

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009

Child Protection Act 1999

Policies

Work Health and Safety Policy

Procedures

Vehicle Use Procedure

Forms

LCS6 Change in Personal Circumstances Form

Employee Reimbursement Form

Vehicle Log Sheets

Drivers Declaration Form

References

Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, 'Motor Vehicle Safety – Guidelines for Child Protection Placement Services'

Positive Behaviour Support Policy (dcssds.qld.gov.au)

Managing high risk behaviour Policy (dcssds.qld.gov.au)

Meet a child's health and wellbeing needs | Child Safety Practice Manual (csyw.qld.gov.au)

Positive behaviour support and managing high risk behaviour | Child Safety Practice Manual (csyw.qld.gov.au)