

Safe driving and vehicle policy

Parkinson's UK has a moral and legal duty of care towards volunteers who drive their own vehicle while volunteering with us. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risks for volunteers who drive, whether as an essential requirement of their role or by choosing to drive to undertake their volunteering tasks when other transport options are available.

Examples of when a volunteer would be **required** to drive on behalf of Parkinson's UK include:

- Driving to different locations to deliver training or education sessions
- Transporting large bulky items of equipment to events where a car is essential

Examples of when a volunteer might **choose** to drive to undertake activities as part of their volunteer role:

- Transporting small amounts of materials to an event
- Driving to a meeting with your staff contact

If driving is an essential requirement of a volunteer's role, then it will be stated in their role description and the staff contact will discuss this with them when they start.

1. Exclusions

Travelling to a volunteer role

This statement does not cover driving for 'commuting' purposes. Therefore, if a volunteer is based in one of Parkinson's UK's offices, or the volunteer's local group meets in the same place on a regular basis, travel to and from these locations isn't considered to be a volunteering activity and is not covered by this statement. However, volunteers may still claim expenses for this travel in line with Parkinson's UK's Volunteer expenses policy.

Transportation services

Most groups choose to use external transport services, such as private hire firms or community transport, if they wish to provide transport for people to attend activities. This requires significantly less administration and can sometimes even work out cheaper than reimbursing volunteer mileage.

There is no restriction on people offering lifts to and from events and activities in a personal capacity or where lifts are arranged privately and informally between individuals. In these situations it is essential that all parties are clear that this is not a

service delivered on behalf of Parkinson's UK and that driving expenses are not covered by the charity.

2. Legal matters

Driving licence requirements

All volunteers driving on behalf of Parkinson's UK must hold a valid driving license. If driving is an essential requirement of a volunteer's role, then they must complete the Parkinson's UK volunteer driving form annually to declare they have a valid license. If penalty points are gained during the year that stop a volunteer from driving, or there is another legal reason why a volunteer must stop driving, the relevant staff contact must be informed immediately and the volunteer must stop using their car.

Parkinson's UK will not accept responsibility for any traffic offences committed by the vehicle's driver including speeding fines, parking fines and unpaid vehicle tax.

Vehicle tax and insurance requirements

All vehicles driven by volunteers as part of their volunteer role must have adequate vehicle tax and insurance that covers their voluntary activities. Volunteers must inform their motor insurance provider that they are using the vehicle for volunteering activities and volunteers can request a template form from Parkinson's UK in order to do this.

Highway Code

Drivers must abide by the Highway Code at all times and Parkinson's UK recommends that volunteers refresh their knowledge of the Code before driving in their role.

3. Personal safety

Volunteers are reminded that when driving they should take all reasonable precautions regarding their personal safety.

Eyesight

It is recommended that drivers have an eyesight test every two years and that, where prescribed, glasses are worn for driving at all times.

Alcohol and illegal or legal drugs

Under no circumstances should alcohol or illegal drugs be consumed before or when driving on behalf of Parkinson's UK. In practical terms this means at any time during the day before you are driving as well as thinking about consumption the previous evening (if the alcohol level was high then it can remain in the body for up to 24 hours). It is also illegal to drive after consuming legal drugs if they impair your driving - please see <https://www.gov.uk/drug-driving-law> for more information.

Fatigue

Before setting off on a journey, drivers should consider whether they are likely to be drowsy or sleepy while driving. Tired drivers are more likely to have accidents, especially on long journeys and in the early hours of the morning, so ensure regular breaks are planned for long journeys.

If medication for any medical condition leads to fatigue dips, please ensure you plan your journey outside of these dips.

Excessive driving

Drivers should ensure they take regular breaks at least every two hours and avoid driving while tired. If a volunteer has any concerns about excessive driving as part of their role then they should discuss this with their staff contact.

Distractions

Drivers should not use mobile phones while driving even if a hands-free device is available. Other distractions should also be avoided such as programming satellite navigation systems and eating and drinking.

4. Vehicle safety

It is the volunteer's responsibility to keep their vehicle in good repair and maintain it in an efficient and roadworthy condition, complying with existing legal requirements.

Servicing and MOT

All drivers are required to ensure that their vehicle is serviced in line with its manufacturer's specified service guide and that their car has a valid, up-to-date MOT certificate where applicable.

Seat belts and safety equipment

Seat belts must be worn at all times while driving on behalf of Parkinson's UK. The driver is responsible for ensuring the seatbelts are in full working order.

Volunteer drivers of a Parkinson's UK transport service must ensure that all passengers wear a seat belt or if appropriate, that the wheelchair is strapped in and the passenger strapped into the wheelchair. Any passenger not wearing a seatbelt would be responsible for their own fine if stopped.

Some vehicles may also have additional safety features including head restraints, airbags and anti-lock braking systems (ABS). Where present, these should be used to reduce the risk of injury in the event of an accident.

5. Emergency Procedures

Accidents

In the event of an accident while driving on behalf of Parkinson's UK, the driver must stop and exchange names and insurance details. If personal injuries are sustained the incident should be reported to the police. Any accidents that occur while driving on behalf of Parkinson's UK should also be reported to the volunteer's staff contact or the Volunteer Driver Co-ordinator if the volunteer is part of a transport service.

Breakdown

While Parkinson's UK does not require drivers of their own vehicles to have breakdown cover, we strongly recommend that volunteers have cover in place for personal safety reasons.

Volunteers driving as an essential part of their role are strongly encouraged to have breakdown cover and this will be specified in their role description.

6. Training

Volunteers driving as an essential requirement of their role must complete the ***Parkinson's UK Health and Safety Training Unit 13: Safe Driving*** which will be given to them by their staff contact.

7. Review of this document

This policy will be reviewed annually using the expertise of volunteers, staff and people affected by Parkinson's. The Volunteer Programme Manager will be responsible for leading the review and the Parkinson's UK team of Directors will have final sign-off.