

Driving for New Zealand Red Cross: Requirements for Members

1. Introduction:

New Zealand Red Cross and members who drive on a voluntary basis have a legal duty to make sure the activity is safe and as free from harm for themselves and other road users as far as reasonably possible.

This applies both to members who drive New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles e.g. community transport or use their own vehicle to carry out New Zealand Red Cross duties e.g. meals on wheels.

The Driving for New Zealand Red Cross: Requirements for Members has been adapted from the Driving for NZRC Standard (policy), to provide you with information on what you need to know and do when driving for New Zealand Red Cross, including making sure vehicles are safe and fit for purpose and safe driving practices are followed. A copy of the full Driving for New Zealand Red Cross Standard is available from your local Service Centre and in the members section on the New Zealand Red Cross website

2. Drivers licence

To drive for New Zealand Red Cross, you must

- Be over the age of 18 and maintain a full and valid New Zealand drivers licence, or legal equivalent for the class of vehicle being driven.
- Give a copy of your licence to your line manager.
- Drive within the law, rules and guidelines outlined in the NZ Road Code and set down by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA).
- Comply with any conditions of your licence (e.g. wearing glasses).
- Let your line manager know immediately of any changes to licence conditions, demerit points or driving offences which affect your ability to drive.

3. Fitness to drive

Certain medications, (e.g. strong painkillers, anti-histamines, sleeping tablets, anti-depressants) and some medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy, heart conditions) can affect a driver's ability to drive safely.

For your own and others safety you should always

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the effects of any medication you are taking, its impact on your ability to drive safely and let your line manager know immediately if this is the case.
- Tell your line manager, in confidence, about any medical conditions which affect your ability to drive and strictly follow any conditions advised your medical practitioner.

If there is cause for concern New Zealand Red Cross may request a medical opinion on fitness to drive, or an on-road driving safety test.

4. Safe driver agreement

You must familiarise yourself with the Driving for New Zealand Red Cross Requirements for Members and sign the New Zealand Red Cross Safe Driver Agreement before commencing any driving duties for New Zealand Red Cross. This is your understanding and commitment to drive safely and follow these requirements.

If we have repeated concerns over your safety to drive, or a complaint is received you could be stood down until the situation has been investigated. Depending on the circumstances a driving test with an independent driving instructor or further training may be requested before you can recommence driving for NZRC.

Your line manager will retain a copy of the signed safe driver agreement as evidence.

5. NZRC Code of Conduct

You must adhere to the New Zealand Red Cross Code of Conduct. This considers drink-driving, serious traffic offences committed or failure to report an incident when driving for New Zealand Red Cross as serious breaches of conduct which could result in dismissal.

6. TORO

New Zealand Red Cross subscribes to TORO (Transport Organisation Register Online) the New Zealand Transport Agency's online data base which allows the organisation to track our drivers' licence status, and activity including endorsements, conditions and demerit points.

It is strongly recommended you provide written consent for New Zealand Red Cross to access this information. If this is not provided you must arrange alternative methods to advise your line manager of any changes.

Your line manager will retain a copy of the signed consent form as evidence.

7. Driving New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles

While New Zealand Red Cross always strives to ensure all fleet vehicles are roadworthy, before driving a New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicle you must always check the vehicle:

- Has a current warrant of fitness, registration and Road User Charges Licence (where applicable for heavy goods and diesel vehicles).
- Is in good running order (tyre pressure, brakes, lights etc).
- Is in clean, tidy and in a presentable condition.

You can reasonably refuse to drive a fleet vehicle if these conditions are not met.

You must also:

- Not use the vehicle for purposes other than which it was intended.
- Follow the requirements set out in these requirements and accompanying guidelines.

All fleet vehicles are equipped with first aid kits, reflective vests and triangles and fire-extinguishers.

If you drive an New Zealand Red Cross branded fleet vehicle you must hold a current comprehensive first aid certificate and be prepared to stop and assist in the event of an accident. This training is provided free of charge and can be arranged through your local Service Centre.

ERoad driver safety and fleet monitoring units are being progressively installed all New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles. Use of ERoad is mandatory in fleet vehicles where units are fitted and you will be given an individual log on and training on how to use the system.

Smoking is not permitted in New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles at any time.

8. Using your own vehicle

The same duties to drive safely and make sure the vehicle is safe and fit for purpose also apply if you use your own vehicle to carry out New Zealand Red Cross duties and activities.

Therefore, you must:

- Provide details and obtain line manager approval before using your own vehicle for New Zealand Red Cross duties and activities.
- Make sure the vehicle is legally registered and warranted and provide evidence to your line manager on request.
- Maintain the vehicle in good running order (tyre pressure, brakes, lights etc).
- Follow the requirements set out in these requirements and accompanying guidelines

It is strongly recommended you also hold a comprehensive first aid certificate. The course is provided free of charge and can be arranged through your local Service Centre.

9. NZRC insurance policy

New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles are covered by a comprehensive motor vehicle insurance policy. This is extended as a blanket cover to the drivers of personal vehicles to cover any costs not included by personal insurance policies in the event of a motor vehicle accident when driving for New Zealand Red Cross.

However, personal liability applies for any actions that invalidates the terms of the policy (e.g. driving beyond the conditions of your licence, or driving under the influence) in the event of an accident.

10. Reporting accidents and incidents

You must report all accidents, no matter how minor to your line manager as soon as possible after the event. This includes 'near miss incidents' where no damage or injury occurred but reasonably could have.

You should then complete the Motor Vehicle Accident report form and then taken to the nearest Service Centre for loading into GOSH, New Zealand Red Cross's online incident reporting system.

Depending on the type of accident members you could be required to provide additional information and / or participate in a formal incident investigation

11. Specialised driver training

Where required, you will be provided with specialised driver training, e.g. fork lift, heavy transport or defensive driver on a case by case basis. This training must only be undertaken by operators who are licenced to provide the training before specialised driving duties commence

If you drive the Disaster Welfare Support Team (DWST) fleet for emergency response purposes you will be given specific theory and practical training on the driving and operating aspects of the fleet and won't be authorised to drive DWST vehicles until training is complete.

If you drive DWST Vehicles for general purposes you be required to undertake familiarisation before driving these vehicles.

12. Passengers

Authorised passengers only (other New Zealand Red Cross people, clients and customers) are permitted in vehicles used for New Zealand Red Cross activities.

You must not pick up hitch hikers in New Zealand Red Cross fleet vehicles at any time or when driving personal vehicles for New Zealand Red Cross activities.

Animals must not be transported, except when required to fulfil New Zealand Red Cross duties.

13. Use of seat belts and child restraints

The use of seat belts, where fitted, is mandatory for all drivers and passengers in all vehicles used for New Zealand Red Cross activities, and the number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts.

Approved age appropriate child restraints must always be used when children under the age of 7 years are being transported. Under no circumstances should a child under the age of 7 years be transported without one, or on another passenger's lap. After the age of 7 years all children are required to use seat belts and travel in the back seat.

14. Mobile phones

The use of mobile phones while driving is not permitted unless the vehicle is fitted with Bluetooth or hands-free kit. Even then this is not recommended as it provides a distraction and you should pull over when safe to do so to return the call.

The only exception is making a 111 or *555 call where it is unsafe or impractical to pull over to make the call.

Texting while driving is not permitted under any circumstances.

15. Fatigue and journey management

Fatigue is a major cause of road traffic accidents and you should manage your schedule to avoid this by:

- Planning longer journeys to allow sufficient break times.
- Taking a 15-minute break for every 2 hours of driving.
- Sharing the driving where possible.

- Avoiding driving between midnight and 6am.

It is strongly recommended you do not drive for more than 5 hours in a working day, or a total of 3.5 hours on top of a 7.5 hour working day.

15. Secure loads

If you are carrying loads these must be placed in the boot or if that's not possible, must be adequately secured in the vehicle to prevent items moving if the vehicle stops suddenly.

If you are towing a load this must remain within the trailer's safe working load and be properly secured.

16. Fines and infringements

You are responsible for the payment of any fines or infringements incurred when driving for NZRC, whether in fleet vehicle or your own vehicle. This includes infringements for expired registration and warrants of fitness which must always be checked before driving.