

## RCoS Use of Vehicles Policy

Ripon City of Sanctuary (RCoS) recognises that members of the management committee and volunteers (known collectively here as 'volunteers') may sometimes use their own vehicles, or third-party vehicles, in carrying out the activities of RCoS. This may include:

- Travelling to events and meetings, for example as a RCoS representative
- Providing lifts to service-users (refugees/asylum-seekers), for example for social or employability activities
- Accompanying service-users on minibuses or coaches
- Driving a minibus in which service-users are passengers
- Providing lifts to other volunteers
- Transporting household items to the homes of service-users.

A RCoS DBS check is not generally required for providing lifts, unless the service-user has been in the UK for less than 12 months (including adults).

### **Other RCoS policies which should be cross-referenced**

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Expenses Policy.

### 1. Insurance

Individuals who use their own vehicles when volunteering for RCoS, for any reason, must:

- For their own sake, check with their insurer that they are permitted to use their vehicle for volunteering purposes (they may need to register their policy for business use. To assist with this, some suggested wording to send to the insurer is provided in Appendix A)
- Also check with their insurer that RCoS is indemnified against third-party claims (again, using the wording in Appendix A)
- Show, or provide a copy of, their current insurance certificate to the RCoS management committee when they begin volunteering, and then at every renewal of their car insurance (they must complete Appendix B, parts 1 & 2, with a member of the RCoS management committee)
- Never accept payment from passengers in return for giving lifts, as this is likely to invalidate insurance (although volunteers may be able to claim mileage costs from RCoS, which is not the same as payment)
- Bear the cost of any required upgrade to their motor insurance policy in order to ensure cover for using the vehicle for voluntary purposes.

### 2. Use of restraints when carrying passengers

Any volunteer providing a lift must:

- Understand that road-safety laws are considerably more lax in most countries from which refugees and asylum-seekers originate, and appreciate that passenger understanding of safety and UK law may be limited, and therefore be particularly vigilant about the safe and lawful use of seat-belt and restraints.

- Be aware of the UK laws pertaining to seat belts/child restraints <https://www.gov.uk/transport/seat-belts>, especially with regard to third-party vehicles such as minibuses and taxis
- Never permit a child to travel in the lap of a parent.
- Ensure that children's car seats are age-appropriate – see <https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules>
- Ensure that children's car seats are fitted correctly according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the volunteer is in any doubt, they must refer to the manufacturer's website, although the majority of Ripon's car seats are of one make, which are fitted as shown here: <https://bit.ly/2vVbr2R>
- Ensure that adults and children remain properly strapped in throughout the journey, and that they do not loosen or remove restraints. If a child is in distress, they must remain strapped in until the car can be stopped and the problem resolved.
- Regularly check that passengers are securely restrained, particularly remembering to use the rear-view mirror.

### 3. Conduct for all drivers

Any volunteer driver must:

- Observe all UK driving laws, including the Highway Code, the ban on smoking in vehicles in which children are passengers, and the ban on driver use of hand-held mobile phones whenever the engine is switched on.
- Never provide lifts to minors (under 18 years of age) without one of their parents/carers present, and never be left alone with a minor (regardless of whether they hold a DBS certificate)
- Maintain confidentiality concerning the names, phone numbers, addresses and any other personal/sensitive personal information relating to both service-users and other volunteers.
- Participate in all RCoS-require training, adhere to the appropriate RCoS policies and procedures, and be aware of relevant risk assessments and action plans for activities/events.
- Report any hazards or concerns not previously identified to RCoS, or any incidents which occur.

### 4. Providing lifts in personal vehicles

Any volunteer providing a lift in their own vehicle must ensure that:

- They hold a current insurance policy and have checked with their insurer that they are covered for using their vehicle in the course of volunteering for RCoS (see Appendix A).
- They hold an up-to-date driving licence and have completed Appendix B, parts 1 & 2, in conjunction with a member of the RCoS management committee.
- Their cars are maintained in a roadworthy condition and hold a current MOT certificate.
- Their vehicle is appropriately taxed.
- Child car seats are fitted correctly and used where required by law, and that all passengers wear their restraints correctly whenever the vehicle is in motion.

### 5. Driving or travelling in minibuses & coaches

#### 5.1 Seatbelts & child restraints

When booking a minibus, bus or coach, volunteers should make sure it has seat belts and ask whether child restraints can be provided or whether the family's own car seats can be used. However, be aware that it may not be possible to fit them properly because the seats and seat belts are different from cars. In some of these vehicles it is possible to adjust the height of the seat belt so that they fit child passengers better.

Volunteers, whether the driver or a passenger, must be aware of the law pertaining to the wearing of seatbelts in minibuses and ensure that everyone required to wear a seatbelt does so. Follow this advice from RoSPA:

“On **minibuses**, children over 3 years old must wear seat belts, or use child restraints, if available. On **larger buses and coaches**, all seated passengers aged 14 years or over must wear seat belts if they are fitted. The driver (or a conductor or similar person) must notify passengers when they board that they have to wear their belts and/or signs must be displayed at every seat. At the moment, the law does not require passengers under 14 years old to use seat belts. Operators are not required to provide child restraints, but if they are available and if they can be fitted properly, they must be used.”

## 5.2 Essential checks

Any volunteer using a hired minibus, whether the driver or a passenger, must check, or ensure that another RCoS representative checks:

- The odometer reading both before and after all journeys are completed (for an accurate mileage reading)
- The condition of the minibus on collection and on return with the hiring organisation, and note any damage caused during the hire period (for insurance purposes)
- The type of fuel used
- The procedure in the event of a breakdown of the vehicle.

## 6. Using taxis

- Taxis should be avoided because of the cost.
- However, if a volunteer is required to book one for a service-user, or is present when the service-user books and uses one, the volunteer must ensure that the service-user complies with the law pertaining to the use of seat-belts and child restraints in taxis, and let the taxi-driver know that they take this seriously. Volunteers should follow this guidance from RoSPA:

“When booking a taxi, make sure it has seat-belts and ask whether they can provide a suitable child restraint or whether you can use the family’s own car seats. Some black cabs have an integral booster cushion in the rear for older children. If the seat belts cannot be used (because the buckle is hidden under the seat, for example) ask the driver to fix it. If it cannot be fixed, do not use the vehicle – ask for a replacement. If child restraints are not available, then children under 3 years may travel unrestrained in the rear, and those 3 years to 135 cms in height (around 11 years old) must use an adult belt in the rear seat. Children may travel in the front if they use the correct child seat/booster. The taxi driver is responsible in law for making sure that children under 14 years use seatbelts or child seats/boosters as required.”

## 7. Associated costs

- RCoS can reimburse volunteer-driver mileage and some other related costs on request. See the RCoS Expenses Policy.
- RCoS will not reimburse any fines which might arise during the volunteering period, whether related to speeding, parking or any other inappropriate use of the vehicle relating to the use of seat-belts/child restraints, the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving, or smoking/permitting smoking when children are passengers).

## 8. Right to make documentary checks

RCoS reserves the right, at any time, to request copies of any relevant driver/vehicle documentation, including vehicle registration or ownership document, MOT certificate, insurance certificate, road tax and/or driving licence.

Date approved: 11.10.2018  
Appointed lead: TBC  
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## Appendix A – Text for the motor insurer

Below is suggested wording to be sent to the volunteer's motor insurer by email or letter.

The policy number should be quoted and a written reply requested.

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Dear [insurer]

I intend to undertake voluntary work on behalf of Ripon City of Sanctuary, a not-for-profit group. The work of Ripon City of Sanctuary is described at <http://ripon.cityofsanctuary.org/>

From time to time, as part of this voluntary work, I will use my vehicle to travel to events/meetings, or to carry passengers, or to carry out other duties as requested.

I confirm that I will use my vehicle as per my insurance policy and will not use my vehicle:

- for hire or reward (ie as a taxi or minicab), or charge fares for any journey (I am therefore exempt from Passenger Service Vehicle licensing laws)
- as an emergency vehicle
- as a delivery vehicle, for example for courier or take-away deliveries.

I am not an employee of Ripon City of Sanctuary and I do not receive a salary for carrying out this role.

I may receive a non-profit mileage allowance for these journeys, to cover the running costs of my vehicle.

Please would you confirm in writing that:

- my existing motor insurance policy covers me for such volunteer driving (if not, please advise what needs to be done in order for me to qualify)
- my insurance policy contains a clause indemnifying any agencies for which I am a volunteer against third-party claims arising from the use of my vehicle for such voluntary work.

Best regards

[your name]

# Appendix B – Volunteers assurance form

## Part 1

**To be completed by the volunteer and a copy to be kept by both volunteer and RCoS management committee. To be reviewed annually on renewal of the volunteer's insurance certificate.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I am willing to use my own vehicle for transporting people and/or goods in the course of volunteering with RCoS.

I hold a valid insurance policy (third-party cover as a minimum) and have checked with my insurance company that I am covered for using my car on RCoS business, including carrying passengers on a voluntary basis. I also accept responsibility for maintaining this insurance cover in relation to this activity.

- I agree to abide fully with all aspects of the RCoS Use of Vehicles Policy
- I confirm that I have never been cautioned or convicted of any offence that would render me unsuitable to work with minors or other vulnerable passengers
- I attach a copy of my full, original driving licence (which I have not altered in any way)
- I attach a copy of my current certificate of insurance
- I attach a copy of my insurer's confirmation that my policy covers me for using my vehicle while volunteering for RCoS.

I confirm that the information I have provided above is true.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2

**To be completed by a member of the RCoS management committee and kept for the files.**

I confirm that I have checked the documentation of the following volunteer:

Volunteer name: \_\_\_\_\_

Driving licence no: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy no: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date checked: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by a member of the RCoS management committee**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date to be reviewed \_\_\_\_\_

(on the renewal of the volunteer's insurance policy and annually thereafter)