

G.21 Vehicles Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Mercy Services provides a range of services in client's homes, in the community and/or directly involving the transportation of clients/others. With transport being a necessary component of our service it is vital that vehicles used are safe, reliable and suitable. Mercy Services has a range of policies that deal with vehicles and driving. These are:

- a) D.08 Vehicle Management – the acquisition, maintenance and use of vehicles;
- b) G.20 Safer Driving – safe driving guidelines; and
- c) G.21 Vehicles– risks associated with transport and the controls to manage these risks.

2.0 SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), all other employees and volunteers of Mercy Services who are involved in driving vehicles belonging to the organisation or in transporting clients of the service. Issues related to driving of vehicles are covered by the Safer Driving Policy.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Mercy Services will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that vehicles used for Mercy Services' activities are safe, suitable and reliable.

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.01 Risks Associated With Vehicles

Safety considerations will be considered prior to buying a vehicle (see D.08 Vehicle Management Policy).

A risk assessment (in line with the Risk Management Policy), will be carried out to identify, assess and control risks associated with any vehicle in the event of an incident involving that vehicle. Such risks may include but will not be limited to the following:

- transferring clients on and off vehicles;
- use of storage restraints;
- operation of hoist;
- inappropriate client behaviour;
- poor ventilation and client overheating in unattended stationary vehicles (where vehicle has been turned off);
- steep or uneven access to client's homes or destination/venues;
- driving accidents;
- medical emergencies;
- unsecured items (First-Aid Kits, shopping);
- spills;
- driver fatigue; and
- communication devices such as mobile phones and two way radios.

4.02 Driver Training

See: G.20 Safer Driving Policy

4.03 Community Transport Accreditation

Mercy Services' Community Transport program will meet all requirements set for Community Transport operators and their vehicles as set by funding and transport authorities.

4.04 First Aid Kits

All Mercy Services owned vehicles have First Aid kits (see: First Aid Policy).

4.05 Fire Extinguishers

All Mercy Services' buses must be fitted with an Australian Standard approved fire extinguisher appropriate to the type of fire risks on that vehicle. The local fire brigade or fire fighting supply organisation will be able to supply details of appropriate extinguishers for each vehicle.

Regular maintenance and inspection of fire extinguishers must be carried out and recorded in an appropriate manner by an approved fire equipment specialist (Refer to Appendix 3).

4.06 Vehicle Maintenance Standards

As part of the scheduled inspection and maintenance program, the following information and procedures must be documented. For vehicles required to meet the accreditation conditions, Transport for NSW require information on:

- where the vehicle is parked;
- a maintenance schedule and standard ;
- details of the qualifications of maintenance personnel employed or engaged by the organisation;
- documentation of passengers, driver and organisation contact number;
- infringements record/disciplinary procedure; and
- vehicle cleaning.

A copy of the Community Transport Operator Accreditation Standards will be kept to ensure comprehensive details for compliance with this section of the accreditation. While this is only a requirement for programs providing Community Transport and therefore requiring accreditation, it is recommended that all programs comply with the standards.

Additional maintenance requirements related to vehicle modifications and air conditioning, for example – hoists, auto-steps are to be identified and added to vehicle maintenance schedules for each service.

Any vehicle which has developed a mechanical fault rendering it un-roadworthy shall be withdrawn from service until the fault has been rectified and inspected by an authorised vehicle repairer.

Where a staff member is the main driver of a vehicle they are primarily responsible for ensuring the maintenance and cleanliness of that vehicle. In other cases the Coordinator is responsible for ensuring maintenance and cleanliness.

All vehicles used by Mercy Services personnel will be maintained to the appropriate standard.

4.07 Vehicle and Driver Records

The Coordinator will ensure that up-to-date records are kept on all drivers and vehicles (both privately owned and organisation vehicles) used in the delivery of their services. Sections 4.9 and 4.10 provide details of these requirements.

4.08 Drivers of Privately Owned Vehicles

The CEO or relevant Coordinator shall ensure that any privately owned vehicles used to conduct services have current registration as a measure of their roadworthiness.

Mercy Services will maintain insurance to cover the comprehensive insurance excess of staff and volunteer's cars that are damaged during their Mercy Services work.

The Administrative/Payroll staff will ensure that applicable staff and volunteers have provided current details of their vehicle registration and comprehensive insurance.

Administrative/Payroll staff will send out reminders when an update of this information is required. Failure to provide this information may result in the Coordinator not providing work until the information is supplied.

All drivers/vehicle owners will be required to advise the organisation of any changes to this information that occurs during the 12-month period between reviews.

4.09 Organisation Owned Vehicles

The CEO will designate an administrative officer to be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date Register of Motor Vehicles and their compliance with scheduled maintenance.

4.10 Vehicle Restraints

Mercy Services is committed to ensuring the safety and comfort of all its passengers and recognises the essential function of passenger safety equipment in saving lives.

Wherever practicable, all personnel shall be responsible for ensuring that, prior to service commencement, passenger safety equipment, appropriate to safety needs of each passenger, is:

- available in sufficient quantity and
- clean and in good working order.

Personnel shall be responsible for ensuring that all:

- appropriate safety equipment is utilised by passengers and is correctly fitted and secured; and
- passenger safety equipment is safely and neatly secured within vehicles when not in use.

4.10.1 **Seatbelts**

All Mercy Services vehicles will be fitted with seat belts.

It is a requirement in all vehicles (whether privately owned or owned by the organisation) that, where fitted, seat belts be worn at all times. The only exception to this rule is the case where a medical certificate can be produced stating that a client is not required to wear a seat belt. This letter must be carried with the client at all times during transportation. If possible, a copy of this letter must be attached to the client's file.

4.10.2 **Child Restraints**

Drivers of Mercy Services vehicles should ensure that children travel in restraints suitable for their age and size.

Types of restraints

The Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) (Road Rules) Regulation 1999 – sect 46 relates to child restraints being prohibited on front seats fitted with airbags (cf MTRm r110H).

Section 46 specifically states that:

- (1) A person must not use a motor vehicle on a road if a child is occupying a child restraint in a front seat position of the vehicle and an airbag fitted to the vehicle is designed to deploy in that seat position.
Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.
- (2) The Authority may, subject to such conditions as it thinks fit, exempt any person or class of persons, or any motor vehicle or class of motor vehicles, from the operation of this clause.
- (3) In this clause:
 - child means an individual under 16 years of age.
 - child restraint means any restraint or similar device that is designed to restrain or limit the movement of a child occupying the restraint in a motor vehicle if the vehicle suddenly accelerates or decelerates, but does not include a seat belt.
 - seat belt means a belt or similar device that is fitted to a motor vehicle and designed to restrain or limit the movement of a person who is seated in the vehicle and wearing the belt or device if the vehicle suddenly accelerates or decelerates.

Roads & Maritime Services advise the use of the following child restraints:

- Infants (younger than 6 months): Always use a rearward facing restraint and never in a front seat;
- Young children (from 6 months up to 4 years): Always secured in either a forward or rear facing restraint and never in a front seat;
- Older Children (4 to 7 years): Always secured in either a forward facing restraint or booster seat and only in a front seat if the back seat is full of children their age or younger.

4.10.3 Wheelchair Restraints

A checklist for determining suitability for transporting scooters, tri-wheels and electric chairs (Appendix 3) shall be used to decide whether the service can safely transport a client with any of these devices.

When people travel in approved wheelchairs:

- the wheelchair will be appropriately secured according to the manufacturers recommendations; and
- the passenger shall be restrained independently of the wheelchair.

Any person responsible for restraining wheel chairs and passengers shall receive adequate training in the safe use and application of restraints.

4.11 Compliance

Compliance with this policy is measured by:

- a) Mercy Services has up-to-date information on registration and insurance of privately owned vehicles used for Mercy Services work; and
- b) Mercy Services records show that all Mercy Services owned vehicles were serviced as per log book.

4.12 Evaluation

The performance indicators for the evaluation of this policy are:

- a) 0% injuries from vehicle accidents.

5.0 REFERENCES

1. Current issues	a) None identified
2. Australian Standards	a) None identified
3. Legislation	a) Work Health and Safety Act, 2011 (NSW) b) Work Health and Safety Regulations, 2011 (NSW) c) Passenger Transport Act, 1990 and 2014 (NSW)
4. Professional guidelines	a) None identified
5. Codes of Practice	a) Safe Work Australia (2011) Code Of Practice: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Publications/Documents/633/How_to_Manage_Work_Health_and_Safety_Risks.pdf
6. Codes of Ethics	a. Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics 2010 http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201 b) Australian Psychological Association Code of Ethics http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/APS-Code-of-Ethics.pdf c) Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia 2008 http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Codes-Guidelines.aspx#codesofethics d) Integrity in the Service of the Church https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards e) Mercy Services Code of Conduct
7. Evidence	a) NSW Ministry of Transport (2009) <u>Bus Driver Authorisation Package</u> pg 3. http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/file/bus/driver-authorisation-package.pdf

8. Mercy Services Values	a) Justice, Respect, Care, Unity, Service
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6.0 OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A.03 Code of Conduct – Staff/Volunteers
- A.04 Environmental Responsibility
- D.08 Vehicle Management
- E.01 Service Guarantee
- F.01 Employment Conditions
- F.07 Employee Records
- G.15 First Aid
- G.20 Safer Driving Policy

7.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH STANDARDS

Aged Care Accreditation Standards	Home Care Standards	Disability Standards	EQulP Standards
1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.3, 3.3, 3.4,	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5	1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4,	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.2.4, 3.2.1, 3.2.5

8.0 Document changes record

Dates of change	Section altered	Natures of changes made
Dec 2005	First record of document	
05/12/2008	a) Header and Footer	a) changed
03/03/2010	b) Introduction and Policy Statement, 5 references, 6 Related Policies, 7 Relationship to Standards, Document Changes Record c) Numbering of all sections within Policy d) 4.1 e) 4.9 f) 4.11.2 Child Restraints g) 5.0 References h) Previous section 6 Responsibilities	b) Added c) Changes in numbering of all sections to make consistent with other Mercy Services Policy d) Clarify that risk assessment occurs prior to purchase or after incident e) Clarify that admin/payroll track this information and send out reminders. Also that failure to provide information may result in no work. f) Updated with g) Added Passenger Transport Act and Bus Driver Authorisation Package h) Deleted as already in other sections
02/06/10	a) Old Appendices 1a, 1b ,1c, 2a	a) Deleted as no longer required or used
28/03/2011	a) 7.0 Relationship to Standards	a) Updated Community Care Common Standards and EQulP5 Standards
06/02/2012	a) All sections b) 4.5 Compliance c) 4.6 Evaluation d) 5.0 References	a) Updated with how new WHS laws and Codes of Practice apply at Mercy Services b) New section c) New section d) Updated with new WHS laws and Codes of Practice
10/12/2012	a) All Sections	a) Organisation name updated

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) 4.1 Risks Associated With Vehicle c) 4.3 Community Transport Accreditation d) 4.8, 4.10.2 e) 4.4 Community Transport Vehicle and Driver requirements f) 4.7 Vehicle Maintenance g) 4.8 Drivers of Privately Owned Vehicles h) 4.9 Organisation Owned Vehicles i) 4.11 Compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Split acquisition and incident risk assessments. Delete "full" from risk assessment c) Simplified in absence of any current accreditation requirements d) RTA renamed Roads and Maritime Services e) Deleted due to 4.3 and G.20 Safer Driving (4.13) f) Remove financial limit on Mercy Services cover of volunteer/staff private cars g) Section shortened and simplified h) Section shortened and simplified i) Delete licence requirement as this is in G.20 Safer Driving
16/12/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All sections b) 2.0 Scope c) 4.01 Risks Associated With Vehicles d) 4.06 Vehicle Maintenance Standards and 4.08 Drivers of Privately Owned Vehicles e) 5.0 References f) 7.0 Relationship to Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) GM renamed CEO b) Minor rewording c) Minor rewording d) Delete reference to Safe Work Practice e) Update Legislation and Codes of Ethics f) Update Disability Standards add Aged Care Accreditation Standards
Review due 16/12/2018		

DAILY VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT INSPECTION RECORD

All vehicles and equipment to be used in the provision of a Community Transport Service shall be inspected and the results of inspection recorded on this form as indicated.

VEHICLE: **SERVICE DUE:**

Please tick each box to indicate that you have checked each item as necessary and fill in the date at the Bottom of each days column. Please also sign the bottom of each column to confirm having checked your vehicle.

ITEM	M	T	W	Th	F	W/E	COMMENTS/FAULTS
DAILY CHECKS ALL DRIVERS							
Fuel level sufficient							
Oil level							
Water /Coolant level							
All Exterior Lights							
Visual Inspection Tyres							
First Aid and U.P. kits							
Fire Extinguishers present and charged							
Disabled sticker visible							
Hoist operational							
Cleanliness of interior							
Damage to vehicle inside and out							
1 Twice weekly checks – permanent drivers or their relief only							
Brake fluid level							
Tyres including spare pressure and condition							
Wipers/washer fluid							
Interior lights							
Seat belts in good repair							
“Q”strains in good repair							
Breakdown kit and Jack							
Documentation – Engineers Modifications Certificates							
SIGNATURE							DATE

<u>REPAIR DETAILS</u>	
<u>Authorised Vehicle</u>	
<u>Repairer’s Signature</u>	<u>Date</u> / /

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CHECKLIST FOR APPROVAL TO CARRY SCOOTERS, TRI-WHEELERS OR ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIRS

Regarding transport of the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair	YES	NO
1. Is there anything specifically identified on the Engineer's Report of the vehicle modifications that would eliminate the safe carriage of a scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair?		
2. If corrosion is present on the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair, is it likely to affect the structural integrity of the chair?		
3. Does the weight of the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair exceed the safe working load of the individual hoist?		
4. Once loaded, would the position and size of the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair hinder emergency evacuation of the vehicle?		
5. If the client is using a scooter/ tri-wheeler does the client need to remain seated in the scooter/ tri-wheeler during transportation due to manoeuvrability/ weight issues?		

If answered 'yes' to any of the above 1-5 questions, measures will need to be taken and another checklist completed in order for the client to gain or retain access to community transport services.

	YES	NO
6. Is the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair in good mechanical condition and unlikely to breakdown?		
7. Can the client safely manoeuvre the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair to the vehicle safely?		
8. Can the bus be positioned in a safe place whilst loading takes place? (Take into account the slope of the terrain, the angle of the hoist platform, traffic flow).		
9. Does the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair fit safely onto the hoist platform allowing all Standard Operating Procedures to be carried out without changes? (This would include the length of the apparatus allowing the safety flap to properly engage; if SOPS for the organisation state that a staff member must ride on the hoist with the client or apparatus, this should be able to be done etc)		
10. Can electrical power be isolated to ensure inadvertent movement of the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair?		
11. Is there a minimum of 4 anchorage points on the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair to allow the 4-point restraint system to be operated legally? (it is not legal to have 2 restraints connected to the one anchorage point)		
12. Does the size of the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair allow for all restraints to be attached in the manner indicated by the manufacturer? (angles able to be obtained etc)		
13. Are there anchorage points on the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair that have been Engineer Approved?		
14. Once loaded, can the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair be positioned in a frontwards or rearwards facing position?		
15. If the client remains in the electric wheelchair is the client restraint seatbelt able to be fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications?		
16. If the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair is not being occupied while being transported can it be restrained to resist a lateral force of 25 times its weight?		

	YES	NO
17. Does the apparatus have an anchorage point other than at the following points: -The wheels? -The backrest? -The armrest? -The footrests? -The upholstery?		
18. Are the vehicle restraints adjustable to accommodate a range of scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair sizes?		
19. Does the scooter/ tri-wheeler/ electric wheelchair have a system to adequately secure the battery or power supply system? (To withstand a horizontal load 25 times the weight of the battery.)		
20. Is there a guarding system to prevent a short circuit across the battery terminals?		

If answered 'no' to any of the above questions 6-20, measures will need to be taken and another checklist completed in order for the client to gain or retain access to community transport services.

Regarding transport of the electric wheelchair	YES	NO
21. If the clients is to remain in the electric wheelchair is there sufficient clear space around the wheelchair as determined by the electric wheelchair restraint manufacturer's specifications?		

If answered 'no' to the above, measures will need to be taken and another checklist completed in order for the client to gain or retain access to community transport services.

Clients situations in which 'yes was answered for questions 1-5 or 'no ' for questions 6-23 are denied access until controls can be adopted so that the clients may travel safely in a community transport vehicle. Once controls are adopted the new situation needs to be revised using this checklist.

Those Clients whose situation allowed questions 1-5 answers to be 'no' and questions 6-23 answers to be 'yes' at this point in time appear to be able to be transported safely, yet due to the fact that there is no set shape of scooter/ tri- wheeler/ electric wheelchair a risk assessment will also need to be completed in order to ensure these clients can be transported safely.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER SERVICING

Fire extinguishers must be serviced on 6 monthly, 12monthly, 3 Yearly, 6 yearly and after use schedule, in accordance with Australian Standard AS 1851.1- 1995. The service must be carried out by experienced personnel utilizing appropriate safety standards as required by the standard.

A metal tag is to be located around the pin that is stamped to indicate which month it was serviced. This date must be recorded to ensure that extinguishers are being serviced as required.

Type of Fire Extinguisher (i.e. CO2)	Fire Extinguisher Location	Month/ Date Last Serviced	Month/ date extinguisher required to be re-serviced