

# HOTEL DRIVER

HANDBOOK





# Welcome!

At Hotel, we pride ourselves on delivering exceptional service to our guests from the moment they arrive until they've departed. As a Hotel Driver, you're in a great position to create an outstanding first and last impression of your hotel.

This handbook does not cover core driving skills, which are taught and tested independently by local licensing authorities. Instead it covers the standards and procedures that will help you deliver the kind of service that defines the Hotel brand.



In addition to driving safely, always engage with your passengers.



The most common vehicle for guest transportation is the Hotel Van.



Use your hotel's Vehicle Inspection Checklist while performing a Vehicle Walk-Around Inspection.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR JOB

- The information provided in this handbook is important to any Colleague who transports guests in a hotel vehicle
- Keep in mind that when you are carrying arriving or departing guests
  - » You are probably the first and last representative of your hotel they will encounter
  - » Your guests may spend more time with you than with any other single Colleague
  - » In addition to providing safe and comfortable transportation, always
    - Engage your passengers
    - Ask about their travels and their stay
    - Provide the kinds of helpful information described elsewhere in this handbook
    - Do everything you can to make them feel served and cared-for – and to help create a great impression of your hotel

## A NOTE ABOUT HOTEL VEHICLES

- The vehicle most frequently used to provide guest transportation is the Hotel Van
- For the purposes of illustrating your responsibilities as a Hotel Driver, this handbook features a van
- Some hotels may also offer transportation via
  - » Limousine
  - » Luxury SUV
- If your duties also include transporting guests in a limousine or SUV, pay special attention to the last section of this handbook.

## THE DAILY WALK-AROUND INSPECTION

- Before making your first trip, and at the start of your shift, you must perform a Vehicle Walk-Around Inspection
- Always use your hotel's Vehicle Inspection Checklist to ensure that you cover every item that needs to be examined
- Some of the inspections require a second person – so enlist the help of a qualified Team Member to complete those items
- If you find any problems
  - » Make detailed notes of them
  - » Inform your Supervisor, who will determine whether you need to use an alternative vehicle
- If there are any parts of the inspection you don't know how to do, ask your Supervisor for instructions

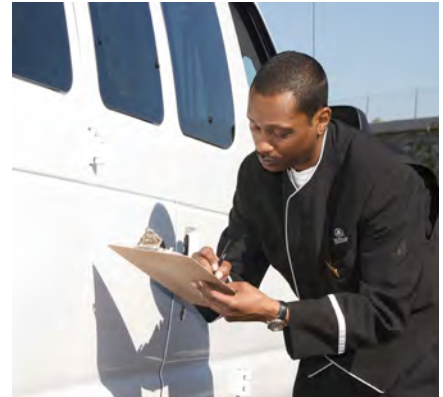


## THE EXTERIOR INSPECTION

- Begin by looking underneath the vehicle for any evidence of fluid leaks
- Inspect all of the vehicle's glass for
  - » Cracks
  - » Dirt
- Next walk around the vehicle
  - » Check the windshield wiper blades to make certain they're in good working order
  - » Inspect the body of the vehicle to make sure
    - It's free of dents and scrapes
    - It's clean
- Check the exterior mirrors to make sure
  - » They are firmly fixed to their mountings
  - » They are unbroken
  - » They are clean
- Next, inspect the tires
  - » Make sure they are properly inflated
  - » Use a tread gauge (your Supervisor can provide one if necessary) to confirm that there is sufficient tread
  - » Look for any areas of uneven wear or tear
  - » Always remember to confirm that the vehicle has a
    - Working spare tire and
    - Jack

## THE INTERIOR INSPECTION

- Check for basic cleanliness using your sense of
  - » Sight
  - » Touch
  - » Smell – pay close attention to odors, since they could
    - Indicate a problem and
    - Affect the guest's experience
- Check all installed seatbelts to ensure that
  - » They're all properly attached
  - » They all extend and retract easily
  - » Their buckling mechanism is secure
- Note: Some vehicles, including vans, may not have seatbelts installed



If you find any problems in your inspection, like a dent on the van body, make a note of it.



As part of the inspection, check the exterior mirrors to make sure they are firmly mounted.



Inspect the tires to make sure they are properly inflated.



Check all installed seat belts to ensure they extend & retract easily and buckle securely.



Check that the windshield wipers work.



Look under the hood to check the fluid levels, including engine oil, coolant, brake fluids, etc.

## THE INTERIOR INSPECTION continued

- Check and remove anything that should not be inside of the vehicle's storage spaces, including
  - » Pockets
  - » Wells
  - » Doorframes
  - » Glove compartment

## THE OPERATING CONDITION INSPECTION

- Check that the vehicle's safety features work by
  - » Turning on and off the windshield wipers
  - » Honking the horn
- Also turn on climate-control features to confirm they are all in good working conditions, including
  - » Heater
  - » Defroster
  - » Air Conditioner
- Turn the engine on and test the brakes and steering mechanism
- Now ask a fellow Team Member to assist you by
  - » Confirming that all exterior lights are working, including
    - Brake lights
    - Head lights
    - Turn signals
  - » Walking around the vehicle while you're in the driver's seat so you can adjust the rear view mirrors to reveal anything
    - In close proximity to the vehicle
    - Roughly 4 feet away from the vehicle
- During this portion of the inspection
  - » Note any blind spots that may exist
  - » Determine how you need to turn or swivel your head in order to see what's occupying these spots
- Look under the hood to check the fluid levels, including
  - » Coolant
  - » Engine oil
  - » Brake fluid
  - » Windshield wiper fluid
  - » Etc.
- If you are unfamiliar with executing any of these procedures, inform your Supervisor

## THE MONTHLY VEHICLE INSPECTION

- You may also be responsible for making a more detailed vehicle inspection once a month
- If so, your Supervisor will provide you with instructions for what to inspect and how
- Frequently, these inspections require that you work with a fellow Team Member in carrying them out

**NOTE:** In some hotels, these inspections are conducted by an outside vendor; check with your Supervisor to confirm your hotel's inspection procedures

- All major repairs, adjustments, and parts replacements are performed by a professional repair facility; again, check with your Supervisor to confirm your hotel's vehicle maintenance and repair policies



Frequently, monthly inspections require that you work with a fellow Colleague.

## PREPARING TO START YOUR SHIFT

- Confirm that your attire and grooming meet all standards set by your hotel
- Double check to make certain there is nothing on your clothing or hands that could run off on a guest's
  - » Hands
  - » Clothing
  - » Luggage
- Make certain that you have a current Pre-Shift Checklist
- The Pre-Shift Checklist has been designed to ensure that you recognize and take every opportunity to engage your passengers and create a positive impression
- The Checklist includes suggestions such as
  - » Checking the weather forecast
  - » Getting the latest traffic report
  - » Remaining up to date about local sports news
  - » Staying well-informed about local resources that could be of interest or benefit to your passengers, including
    - Shopping
    - Museums
    - Special events
    - Etc.
- Always make certain you know your hotel's policies and resources regarding securing roadside assistance in the event of a breakdown



Before starting your shift, confirm that your attire and grooming meet all hotel standards.



The Pre-Shift Checklist includes tips such as checking the weather forecast.



Any driver related carry-on items should be stored in the door or glove compartment.



As a Hotel Driver, you are responsible for loading and unloading your passengers' luggage.



When loading luggage, load the heavy, sturdy items on the bottom and smaller, lighter luggage on top.

## STORING DRIVER-RELATED ITEMS IN THE VEHICLE

- When transporting passengers in a Hotel Van with a center cowl, do not use its surface to store papers, clipboards, or other small items – they could easily be dislodged during any unexpected maneuver
- Instead, store these and other driver-related carry-on items in
  - » Door compartments
  - » The Glove compartment
  - » Other secure areas where they will be
    - Safer
    - Stable
    - Easier to reach
    - Out of passenger view

## LOADING AND UNLOADING LUGGAGE

- It is every Colleagues' responsibility to help guests manage their luggage and other belongings whenever needed (always ask if you can assist them before touching their belongings)
- As a Vehicle Driver, you are also responsible for loading and unloading your passengers' luggage into and out of your vehicle
- Doing so
  - » Creates a great opportunity for you to engage your guests and make them feel served and cared-for
  - » Gives you control over how items are packed in your vehicle so that
    - They don't shift or turn over during the trip and
    - They don't fall out when the compartment door is opened
    - Large, heavy and/or sturdy items can be stored on the bottom
    - Smaller, lighter, more fragile pieces can be stored on top
- Whenever handling a guest's luggage or belongings, you must avoid
  - » Breaking or damaging their property
  - » Hurting yourself or anyone else
- Before lifting any item, test its weight; if it's heavy
  - » Use your hands and arms to hold it
  - » Use your legs to lift it
  - » Avoid putting stress on your back and neck



## PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION FOR PASSENGERS IN WHEELCHAIRS

- It is very important that you know how to assist passengers who are wheelchair bound into and out of your vehicle.
- Many Hotel Vans are equipped with devices designed to accommodate motorized chairs
  - » While the basic principles of these devices are generally the same, details of their operation can vary from one to another
  - » Always make sure you have been thoroughly trained on how any motorized wheelchair transport devices on your hotel's van operate
- If your hotel has a van that is not equipped with such a device, check with your Supervisor to see if your hotel has an arrangement with a local transportation company with the necessary equipment
- The basic operating procedure for most van-mounted wheelchair lifts involves
  - » Lowering a motorized ramp so that it's flat to the pavement
  - » Assisting the passenger as needed to
    - Roll onto the ramp
    - Lock the chair's wheels
  - » Lifting the ramp to the van floor level
  - » Assisting the passenger as necessary to
    - Roll into the space in the van designed for handicapped passengers
    - Secure the chair
- Always inform wheelchair-bound passengers exactly what is going to happen before beginning any procedure; even if they are familiar with this kind of equipment,
  - » It is important that they not be surprised when their personal safety, comfort, and self-esteem are involved
  - » This provides another opportunity to engage them and make them feel served and cared-for



It is important that you know how to assist wheelchair bound passengers in and out of the van.



Always inform wheelchair-bound passengers exactly what is going to happen before beginning any procedure.

## IMPACT YOUR KPI PERFORMANCE SCORES

By following the procedures shown here you'll positively impact these **Key Performance Indicators (KPI)**

- Use of guest's name
- Helpfulness of hotel staff
- Hospitality of staff
- Hotel safety and security



Greet each passenger, tell everyone your name, and offer assistance to guests if appropriate.



Before leaving any location, do a final walk-around check for unloaded luggage or last minute guests.



While driving, regularly glance around to monitor changing traffic conditions.

## BEFORE BEGINNING A TRIP

- When passengers are preparing to enter your vehicle, make certain to
  - » Know and follow your hotel's policies (as well as local laws and regulations) regarding transporting infants and small children
  - » Greet each passenger
  - » Offer assistance if appropriate
  - » Tell everyone your name
  - » Ask each passenger for their destination
- Once everyone is inside, make certain that
  - » Everyone is sitting in a legitimate seat
  - » No one is standing inside the van
  - » Anyone in a seat equipped with a seatbelt has it securely fastened
  - » You instruct anyone in a seat not equipped with a seatbelts to be prepared to use handholds if needed
- Before getting underway
  - » Re-check all rear-view mirrors
  - » Do a final, quick walk-around the van to check for any
    - Luggage that didn't get loaded
    - Last-minute passengers
    - Potential hazards

## FOR ALL TRIPS

- When you are underway
  - » Remember that your # 1 responsibility is to deliver your passengers safely to their destination
  - » You are also responsible for
    - Getting them where they're going as quickly, efficiently, and comfortably as possible
    - Engaging them during the journey in ways that
      - Meet and exceed their needs
      - Make their journey as enjoyable and effortless as possible
  - » While driving, regularly
    - Glance around to monitor changing traffic conditions
    - Lean forward and from side to side to
  - » Expand your field of vision
  - » Stay alert

- If a passenger ever asks you to drive faster than the law or road conditions allow
  - » Politely acknowledge their concern
  - » Assure them that
    - Their safety is your top concern
    - You are doing everything to help them maintain their schedule
- Your hotel may provide transportation to a range of local destinations, including
  - » Airports
  - » Train stations
  - » Corporate headquarters
  - » Retail centers
  - » Amusement and Sports venues
  - » Off-site restaurants
  - » Etc,
- Confer with your fellow Colleague to identify your area's most frequently-requested destinations and
  - » Know the best routes to each
  - » Stay up to date about road conditions, including construction projects, that could affect trips to these sites
- If you are transporting guests during their stay, engage them by asking
  - » How their stay is going
  - » How they like the hotel
  - » If they have dined in your hotel's restaurant
  - » Etc.
- If any guests share information about their stay of value to your hotel (positive or negative), be certain to pass it along to your Supervisor and fellow Colleague
- If a guest or guests take the initiative in engaging in conversation
  - » Treat it as an opportunity to learn valuable information about them and their travels
  - » Always keep your primary focus on safe driving
  - » If something happens on the road that requires you to halt a conversation
    - Excuse yourself
    - Respond appropriately to the situation
    - Return to the conversation when it is safe to do so, and, if appropriate
      - Explain what just happened
      - Make certain your passengers are still comfortable
      - Offer assurances that everything is alright



Confer with fellow Team Members to identify the routes to your hotel's most frequently-requested destinations.



Engage with guests while transporting them by asking them questions.



Make sure you stay up to date on airport route traffic conditions.



If you are transporting departing guests, confirm their flight time and airline.

## IMPACT YOUR KPI PERFORMANCE SCORES

By following the procedures shown here you'll positively impact these **Key Performance Indicators (KPI)**

- Staff made me feel welcome throughout my stay
- Overall arrival and departure
- Overall service

## WHEN YOUR DESTINATION IS AN AIRPORT

- Since many of the trips you make will be to the airport, always stay up to date on
  - » The best routes to all local airports
  - » Traffic conditions along those routes
  - » The location of Arrival and Departure terminals for all airlines servicing the airport
- If you are picking up Arriving guests, engage them by welcoming them to your City and Hotel and asking
  - » How their trip was
  - » How long they will be staying at your hotel
  - » If they have any special needs or wishes; if they do, make sure you share that information with your fellow Colleague
- If you are transporting Departing guests,
  - » Confirm their flight time and airline
  - » Schedule your trip so that they reach their terminal with time to spare
  - » During the trip, engage the guest and ask
    - How their stay was
    - If there was anything the hotel could have done to make their stay better
  - » When leaving the guest at the airport
    - Thank them for staying at your hotel
    - Wish them a safe and pleasant journey
    - Invite them to return
  - » Wait long enough to be certain the guest is at the correct gate before pulling away
- When unloading a guest's belongings
  - » Ask the guest to confirm that they are in possession of all of their belongings
  - » Double-check to make sure there's nothing left behind



## IN THE EVENT SOMETHING GOES WRONG ON A TRIP

- Always know and follow any and all procedures required by your hotel and/or local laws and regulations regarding responding to vehicular incidents – including accidents – when you are carrying passengers
- If anything goes wrong when you are transporting passengers, always
  - » Remain as calm as possible
  - » Take whatever measures are necessary to ensure or restore your passenger's
    - Personal Safety
    - Well-being
    - Comfort
  - » Respond appropriately to the situation
- If the problem involves a mechanical failure or flat tire
  - » Assess what happened
  - » If it's a mechanical failure
    - Determine if it's something you can quickly repair on the spot
    - If so, make the repair
  - » If it's a flat tire, and you are able to change it
  - » Be certain that you don't get dirt or grease on your guests or their belongings.
- If the problem isn't something you can remedy on the spot,
  - » Report the situation to your Supervisor
  - » Follow your hotel's established procedures for
    - Calling for a back-up vehicle for your passengers if one is needed
    - Summoning an authorized repair and/or tow company



If you have a flat tire, determine if you can quickly repair it on the spot by changing the tire.



If you have a problem you can't fix, report it to your Supervisor and call for a back up vehicle.



At the end of your shift, remove any trash, papers, or other items that don't belong in the van.

## AT THE END OF YOUR SHIFT

- When you have made your last trip of the day
  - » Conduct a final inspection of your vehicle
  - » Turn any items that guests may have left behind into Lost and Found
  - » Remove any trash, papers, or other items that don't belong in the vehicle and dispose of them properly
  - » Clean and vacuum or sweep the interior as needed
  - » Conduct a final "Look, touch and smell" test and remedy any problems you discover
  - » Check the fuel level and, if needed, refill it (following your hotel's fueling procedures)
  - » Park the vehicle in its assigned spot, lock it, and place the key in its designated location
  - » Complete any other end-of-day procedures maintained by your hotel

## IF YOU ARE DRIVING A LIMOUSINE OR LUXURY SUV

- Follow all the same procedures for examining your vehicle and preparing it to carry passengers that apply to vans.
- If you are driving an extended wheelbase (“stretch”) vehicle, make certain that you are thoroughly familiar with
  - » Its increased exterior dimensions
  - » Differences in its handling characteristics
  - » Any changes in routing that its increased size might make necessary
- Keep in mind that, especially in limousines, it may be more difficult to converse casually with your passengers – so make certain that you engage them before departure and after arrival to
  - » Confirm their destination
  - » Inquire about their travel or their stay at your hotel
  - » Provide any helpful information
  - » Welcome them or bid them a fond farewell and safe trip
  - » Etc.



If you are driving a limousine or luxury SUV, the same inspection procedures apply to you.

## IMPACT YOUR KPI PERFORMANCE SCORES

By following the procedures shown here you'll positively impact these

### **SALT Key Performance Indicators (KPI)**

- Overall experience
- Overall arrival
- Overall departure
- Return to THIS hotel
- Loyalty

DELIVERING THE BRAND PROMISE