

# **Fatigue Management & Fitness for Work Policy**

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## **1. Purpose**

The Geelong College is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment that is safe for all employees.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Employees recognise the effect of fatigue as related to safely being able to perform their work and to establish guidelines for work hours to reduce fatigue.

The Geelong College recognises fatigue management as a shared responsibility between management and its employees as it involves factors both inside and outside of work.

## **2. Scope**

This Policy applies to all College staff and volunteers. The Fatigue Management Policy also applies to all approved Providers & Contractors whilst on College sites or whilst carrying out activities on the Colleges behalf.

## **3. Responsibilities:**

### 3.1 Management

- a. Ensure all relevant staff are trained and refreshed in driving hour requirements including when they will be required to use their Driver Work Diary
- b. Ensure drivers are trained as part of their induction on the requirements of driving hour regulations as set out by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- c. Provide annual Fatigue Management training
- d. Provide drivers with an up-to-date Drivers Handbook at their induction and ensure they acknowledge that the Handbook has been read and understood
- e. Ensure that all daily roster allocations in the Bus Schedule are up to date
- f. Ensure all drivers have an up-to-date fitness-to-drive medical by running a scheduled end of term report from Synergetic
- g. Ensure that all driver's rosters and schedules are in accordance with the limits prescribed in legislation and incorporate fatigue management measures
- h. Ensure that drivers are not required to drive unreasonable distances in limited time and without sufficient adequate rest
- i. Ensure all trip schedules and driver rosters are planned and assigned with driving/rest limits included, taking into account the time of day, road conditions, forward planning and time to complete the task safely
- j. Ensure all training and refresher training is documented and maintained in a register

### 3.2 All College Employees and Contractors

All College Employees and Contractors are responsible for complying with the requirements of this procedure.

Employees and Contractors are responsible for carrying out their duties in a safe manner and that they present fit for work.

All employees & Contractors must:

- Report problems relating to their fitness for work as soon as these become known
- Cooperate with the College in assessing fitness for work problems and designing suitable controls
- Manage individual factors such as fatigue, alcohol and drug use

### 3.3 Bus Safety Workers

- a. Ensure compliance with driving hours regulations as set out by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- b. Report any potential breach of driving hours to Bus Coordinator/Property Manager
- c. Being responsible for completing a Driver Work Diary whenever the daily work schedule takes them more than 100km radius away from the Geelong College base and hand in the duplicate copy to the Property Manager within 48 hours of completion
- d. Read and understand the [Geelong College Driver Handbook](#) and acknowledge by signing
- e. Be in a fit state, free from alcohol and drugs
- f. Be aware to not chronically use over the counter or prescription drugs to increase mental alertness
- g. To not take any substance known to increase fatigue, including fatigue that sets in after the effects of the drug wear off
- h. Report tiredness/fatigue in a co-worker to management
- i. Report fatigue/tiredness and lack of mental acuity to management
- j. Ensure suitable rest time prior to starting work
- k. Monitor own performance and take regular periods of rest to avoid continuing work when tired
- l. Consider the impact of social and recreational activities on their well-being and capacity to work safely
- m. Ensure the Geelong College is aware of any secondary employment undertaken
- n. Undergo annual fitness to drive medical assessment from a regular medical practitioner
- o. Advise management of any health issues which may affect ability to drive and obtain a medical clearance if requested

## **4. Definitions**

Fatigue is a subjective experience that results from a lack of sufficient restorative sleep and/or quality sleep. Signs and symptoms of fatigue include:

- a. Repeated yawning
- b. Loss of attentiveness
- c. Slower reaction times
- d. Impaired judgement
- e. Feelings of drowsiness or tiredness
- f. Reduced alertness
- g. Sore, red, and tired eyes
- h. Dim or fuzzy vision
- i. Droning or humming ears
- j. Wondering, disconnected thoughts
- k. Mood swings (feeling irritable and restless)
- l. Daydreaming
- m. Muscle stiffness and cramps
- n. Difficulty keeping your head up or eyes open
- o. Driving speed creeps up or down
- p. Difficulty in maintaining lane position when driving

Work Related Fatigue may be induced by the work environment, the work tasks or sleep patterns whilst Non-Work-Related Fatigue may result from non-work activities and lifestyle.

## **5. What is driver fatigue?**

Driver fatigue, or tiredness, is a general term used to describe the experience of being “sleepy”, “tired” or “exhausted”.

The effect of fatigue is both a physiological and a psychological experience which reduces a person’s ability to perform work safely and effectively. Fatigue can severely impair judgement when driving. Driver fatigue can cause lapses in concentration which could prove fatal.

Fatigue is involved in up to 30% of fatal crashes and up to 15% of serious injuries requiring hospital treatment. Being awake for more than 17 hours is similar to having more than two standard drinks and having a blood alcohol reading content of more than 0.05.

Fatigue slowly develops, and drivers often do not realise they’re too tired to drive safely. Managing fatigue is one component of the approach to employee well-being. Drivers must learn to recognise the warning signs and take a break before it is too late.

## **6. Causes of fatigue**

- a. Inadequate amount or quality of sleep over an extended period
- b. Sustained mental or physical effort
- c. Disruption of the normal cycles of daytime activity and night sleep
- d. Environmental stresses during sleep (such as light, heat and noise)
- e. Medication (some medications cause drowsiness)
- f. Diagnosed or undiagnosed sleep disorders (sleep apnoea, insomnia, and narcolepsy)
- g. Obesity/bad dietary habits
- h. Night work (causes sleep implications as daytime sleep is less restorative than nocturnal sleep)
- i. Workload and lifestyle choices (illness, children, sport, socialising, studying)

## **7. How to prevent fatigue**

- a. Stop regularly, at least once every two hours and take short breaks. Walk around for a while, exercise and breathe deeply
- b. Counteract fatigue with regular healthy food and drink. High protein and low glycaemic index (GI) foods are best, for example, a salmon sandwich on wholegrain bread.
- c. Carry plenty of drinking water in the vehicle
- d. Wear sunglasses when driving to minimise glare
- e. Do not exceed the maximum driving periods specified by legislation
- f. Check what prescription medicines you are taking – some can affect your alertness or cause drowsiness. Check with your pharmacist or doctor.

## **8. General fatigue management strategies**

- a. Ensure adequate sleep (minimum six consecutive hours in a single 24-hour period, however the average required a sustained basis is about seven to eight hours)
- b. Set up conditions at home so you can get as much sleep as possible. (Reduce noise, light and disturbances)
- c. Enlist family support for a peaceful environment when sleeping
- d. Stress management (work related and personal)
- e. Promote healthy lifestyle both at work and at home
- f. Have regular health checks. Ensure that you do not have a medical condition that could affect your driving ability

## 9. References:

- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
- National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- Workplace Health and Safety Australia

## 10. Related Documents:

- [OH&S Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Risk Management Program](#)
- [Risk Management Operational Processes](#)
- [Staff Workplace Behaviour Policy & Procedure](#)
- [Incident, Injury, Trauma, Illness and Investigation Guideline](#)
- [TGC Drug and Alcohol Policy](#)
- [TGC Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Fatigue Management & Fitness for Work Procedure](#)
- [Driver Fitness to Drive & Work Rest Hours Guideline](#)
- [TGC Driver Handbook](#)