



Rental Vehicle Operators

Code of Practice for
Informing Overseas Drivers

2023-2024

DRIVESAFE

Introduction

The New Zealand rental vehicle sector, in partnership with Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) and the Rental Vehicle Association of New Zealand (RVA), has developed a safe driving Code of Practice for rental operators in New Zealand.

The aim of this Code is to establish a set of agreed standards and practices that operators can follow when assessing and educating overseas visitor preparedness for driving on New Zealand roads.

Whilst the responsibility for safe driving remains primarily with the hirer, the rental sector recognises that it has a role to play in informing visiting drivers and preparing them for road conditions and weather, in New Zealand.

This Code provides a set of minimum standards that can be applied to any rental vehicle company in Aotearoa. Also provided are Good Practice suggestions that support the implementation of the minimum requirements.

Implementation

All rental operators in New Zealand that provide rental vehicles to visiting drivers will be asked to sign up to the Code of Practice.

This is a voluntary code, as such there is no legal mandate for its enforcement. It is therefore anticipated that membership of, or affiliation with, industry bodies including TIA, RVA, the Tourism Export Council, Qualmark and Tourism New Zealand will entail rental vehicle operator compliance with the Code of Practice.

An opt-in quality assurance system has also been developed to assess operators' compliance against the Code.

Operators should make all company policies regarding Visiting Drivers available to hirers by making them easily available on site and/or via clear placement on their website.

Operators are expected to be compliant with all legal requirements relating to Visiting Drivers including certification to operate (e.g. RSL), checking (and validation) of overseas driver licences, and ensuring non English speaking licences are accompanied by an English translation.

By signing up to the Code of Practice, operators agree to be an active advocate and supporter of safe driving in NZ, including a commitment to safer vehicles through the adoption of technological improvements over time.

Code of Practice - Definitions and Interpretations

<i>Good Practice</i>	The provision of supporting information that assists operators in implementing the Code
<i>Operator</i>	Any organisation that provides rental vehicles for hire to international drivers, operating under the appropriate licence from NZTA.
<i>NZTA/Waka Kotahi</i>	New Zealand Transport Agency
<i>Third Parties</i>	Agencies such as wholesalers who act as booking agents for the rental operator

Stage One: Pre-Arrival

Minimum requirement:

Link to [Drivesafe.org.nz](http://www.DriveSafe.org.nz)

Rental operators will provide pre-arrival information to visitors on the New Zealand Road rules and what is different about driving in New Zealand.

1. Operators will make information on NZ road rules and driving conditions available in a prominent position on their homepage/landing page. The information will be visible and promote the DriveSafe logo. The minimum requirement is a direct link to www.DriveSafe.org.nz.

Good Practice:

- Put the information on the operator's home page
- Use the DriveSafe tile to link through to the website (tile available from TIA).
- Provide the information in the language of the hirer
- Encourage the hirer to consider whether self-drive is still an appropriate option for travel, based on the information they have received
- Provide direct links to videos on safe driving in New Zealand
- Provide direct links to the ten key road rules and NZTA's 'Driving in New Zealand' (<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/driving-in-nz/docs/driving-in-nz.pdf>).

2. Operators will provide educational information to the hirer upon booking confirmation. Minimum requirement is a link to www.DriveSafe.org.nz. Operators must encourage visitors who are arriving on long-haul flights to stay overnight in that destination.

Good Practice:

- Advise the hirer of the requirements for driver's licence translation (<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/licence/residents-visitors/driving-nz.html>)
- Advise the hirer to investigate the driving conditions in NZ before arrival
- Provide information to the hirer within 3-14 days prior to arrival that re-emphasises the New Zealand road rules, plus what the hirer may need to prepare for at the vehicle check-out on arrival (e.g. bad weather, road closures, EV charging infrastructure etc)
- Provide the information in the language of the hirer
- Provide information in a welcoming and friendly manner
- Use videos, pictures and diagrams to reinforce the messaging.

3. Operators will ensure educational information on safe driving in New Zealand is available for Third Parties (e.g. wholesalers, aggregators) to pass on as part of the booking confirmation process.

Good Practice:

- Provide the same information to hirees via a third party as to a direct hirer (e.g. link to DriveSafe website for wholesaler/aggregator).

Stage Two: Vehicle Check-Out

The vehicle check-out is a critical stage in the DriveSafe process. Operators are able to confirm directly with the hirer that they have been informed of the New Zealand road rules and driving conditions, and can undertake an assessment of the driver's preparedness.

1. Operators will have a mandatory policy to assess driver preparedness. Operators will require at-risk hirers¹ to acknowledge the receipt and understanding of road safety material provided to them which must include NZTA's 'Driving in New Zealand'².
2. Operators will advise drivers about useful apps and resources to stay informed about changing road and weather conditions.

Good Practice:

- Use the recommended questions (refer appendix) for assessing driver preparedness
- Hand out road rules to all visiting drivers
- Provide information about apps and resources to keep up to date with changing road and weather conditions.
- Ask hirer to sign a declaration that they have received road safety material
- Provide suitable training to staff re providing advice and information.

3. Operators will have an internal process for managing situations where there are concerns about driver preparedness, from providing more information through to denying hire and suggesting alternative transport.

Good Practice:

- Ensure staff have the ability to escalate concerns to a supervisor and/or are provided sufficient support to make decisions as required.

¹ At-risk hirers include all first-time visitors with the exception of those driving on Australian and UK licences

² Copies can be ordered from NZTA/Waka Kotahi, here: [Driving in New Zealand | Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency \(nzta.govt.nz\)](https://www.nzta.govt.nz)

Stage Three: On-Road

1. Operators will, within all hire vehicles for overseas drivers, place 'Keep Left' stickers in a location visible for the driver and include the NZTA brochure '[Driving in New Zealand](#)' (if not already provided at Check-out Desk).

Good Practice:

- Display a "Keep Left" sticker in a location visible for the driver.

2. When contacted by Police in relation to poor driving behaviour of a visitor, operators should consider cancellation of the hire contract as a response.
3. When advised by the Police of a driving complaint about the hirer (as reported through the *555 network), operators will forward the information to the hirer as soon as practicable and provide further information/material on New Zealand road rules.

Good Practice:

- Contact the hirer by phone prior to forwarding information by email, as the hirer may not be checking emails frequently.
- Advise the hirer that the operator and the NZ Police take unsafe driving practices very seriously and the potential consequences of further complaints or direct observation by the Police e.g. risk of having their rental agreement terminated.
- Have a procedure for suggesting alternative forms of transport to the visitor in the event that their contract is cancelled at check-out or when on-road.

Appendix - general information

1. Resources & Educational Material

A wide range of educational material and resources for educating drivers is available. These resources have been developed by government agencies, industry bodies and commercial operators. Information on the material and resources is available in the New Zealand Rental Vehicle Operator Guidelines for Communicating with Visiting Drivers developed by TIA and RVA.

<https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/visiting-driver-safety/>

<http://www.rentalvehicle.co.nz/>

2. Recommended assessment questions

1. I am familiar with NZ road rules	Yes	No
2. I am familiar with the DriveSafe website	Yes	No
3. I have driven regularly in my home country in the past year	Yes	No
4. I feel well prepared to drive in NZ	Yes	No
5. This will be my first time driving on the left-hand side of the road	Yes	No
6. I have driven a vehicle of similar size or in the same transmission	Yes	No Auto <input type="checkbox"/> Manual <input type="checkbox"/>

If a driver answers NO to any of the above questions, further information and guidance will be provided. This could include a video to watch, a test drive or other support.

The recommended questions are available in English, Mandarin, German and French. Please contact info@drivesafe.org.nz for copies.