

[Agency Driver Information]

The use of agency drivers is inevitable in today's economic environment. Whilst they may pose a greater risk to the organisation than established, full-time employees, there are procedures firms can put in place to mitigate these risks.

Firstly drivers are more at risk if they have not been subject to assessment and training procedures. Because agency drivers are often called upon at short notice, before sending them out you need to check they are competent and safe on the road.

Agency Drivers might be higher risk than permanent drivers if they are 'moonlighting' as a driver and carrying out another job during the day. How long is their working day?

Have they had the same training as your permanent employees?

Are they experienced at driving the vehicles you ask them to drive?

Have they been given detailed directions and instructions for their journey?

Have credentials been checked– including qualifications and licence?

What can managers do to reduce the risks?

One thing is to choose a reputable agency. This may be an agency you have used before and can trust or an agency that has been recommended by another company.

The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) has issued a joint agency driver code of conduct with the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association (RHA) which includes guidance and checklists for both suppliers and users of agency drivers.

You should look at whether the agency's drivers have completed a risk assessment?

The REC code requires agencies to:

- Take up references on a driver's previous two years of employment
- Check and copy the driving licence and record the expiry date
- Carry out written or oral tests to verify a driver's knowledge of road transport law and responsibilities
- Ensure the driver completes a form confirming that they are fit to work
- Keep records on drivers, showing qualifications, experience and references
- Keep comprehensive records of their clients' needs

Agencies that join the REC membership scheme must meet the above criteria.

This can provide a useful starting point when choosing an agency.

You may wish to ask other questions when choosing a driver agency. Please see our Agency Driver

Checklist for more details.

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