



DUTY OF CARE GUIDE AND CHECKLISTS

Introduction

If your employees travel for business of any kind, it's up to you to do everything you reasonably can to ensure their safety while away on business and communicate to them what to do in the event of an emergency.

However, duty of care is not just about emergencies – someone losing their passport, missing a flight, or leaving their luggage in a taxi. It's also about those details that can improve your employees' mental and physical health, like making sure they don't have to drive after a long-haul flight.

If you want to implement a duty of care strategy for your business travellers, this guide will walk you through the key issues you need to address to keep your employees safe.



What is Duty of Care?

You have a duty of care to your employees and must take every step possible to ensure their health, safety, and welfare. While caring for the physical and mental health of your staff can help improve employee retention and engagement, as well as increase productivity, legally, as an employer, you are required to comply with health and safety laws alongside common law duty of care.

You also have a moral obligation not to cause or fail to prevent physical or mental harm. An employer may breach its duty of care by not doing everything reasonably possible to protect the employee from harm.



Why Duty of Care is important to business travel?



When it comes to business travel, Duty of Care is important because your staff could be exposed to risks that may not apply when they are in their usual place of work. In large businesses, travel risk management is a regular part of their business travel programme, but for smaller companies that don't have a business travel strategy, the risks associated with business travel can be overlooked.












Risks to business travellers include:

- Visiting and driving in unfamiliar places
- Standing out from the local population
- Fatigue and jetlag can impair their judgements
- Sexual predation and hate crimes
- Natural disasters such as hurricanes or earthquakes
- COVID-19 & other infectious outbreaks
- Terrorist attacks
- Healthcare availability

As well as the impact on an individual employee, any such risks may also affect a company's productivity, profits, and reputation. Mitigating any risks can help reduce the likelihood of them happening altogether or minimise the impact if an employee is affected.

PRE-TRAVEL CHECKLIST

Regardless of where your employees are going, this advice is applicable to all destinations.

-  Make a note of your passport number and take a photocopy with you, or store it securely online
-  Fill in the emergency contact details in your passport. This will help government officials to contact next of kin if you have an accident
-  If you plan to drive while you're away, make sure you have your valid driver's licence and insurance with you. You might even need an international driving permit (IDP) to drive in some countries
-  Make sure your HR colleagues have your emergency contact details and full details of your itinerary
-  Check the latest [foreign travel advice](#) provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
-  Make a note of the [nearest British embassy, high commission, or consulate](#) in case of an emergency
-  Familiarise yourself with the local culture and etiquette via colleagues and websites
-  Ensure you have access to more than one type of payment method such as credit cards, debit cards and cash
-  Check your mobile phone can be used abroad to avoid being charged a fortune
-  Check if you need vaccinations or if there is other health advice you should follow when abroad
-  Ensure your traveller profile is up to date

High-Risk Destinations

We recommend working with Maiden Voyage, who specialise in making business travel safe in a diverse world.

If your business requires employees to travel to destinations considered to be high-risk, it's important that you've researched the countries and conducted risk assessments which need to be reviewed frequently as any changes may impact the risk to travellers. Any destinations that are considered high-risk are communicated as such.

Once these high-risk destinations have been identified, you need to know which travellers are going so you can ensure they are properly prepared. By working with a Travel Management Company (TMC) all travel will be recorded in one place which means:

- You know where your employees are at any given time
- Be alerted if travel has been booked to a high-risk destination
- You can run reports to show which employees will be in certain countries before they travel. This is useful if travel advice changes.

If your staff arrange their own travel, make sure you have a process in place that notifies the relevant people within your organisation that the trip has been booked. If you don't know where and when your travellers are going, you can't help them prepare for their trip. Once you know where your high-risk destinations are and who is planning to go there, you can arrange for them to take the required precautions that could include:

- Avoiding certain places
- Medical advice
- Only staying in well-known hotel chains
- Not travelling alone
- Training with a security advisor
- Pre-arranging all transportation or arranging routes for them
- Security protection while travelling

Your TMC will be able to advise how high-risk destinations can be catered for in your travel policy and booking process. That could include requiring approval before travel to a high-risk destination can be booked or include a questionnaire to ensure the traveller understands the risks before flying.



Travel Risks and ISO 31030

We all hope that an emergency will never happen, even so, you need to be prepared. If one of your employees is affected by an incident when they're away on business, both you and your employee need to know the process they should follow to help keep them safe and give them the reassurance they'll need.

If you use a TMC or Duty of Care provider, they should have a process that will quickly locate anyone that could be affected, define a plan to get them home, and keep everyone informed of their progress and the traveller's wellbeing. If you're not using a TMC, consider how you'll provide support with help from the new ISO standard, ISO 31030, which provides vital guidance to protect your employees. The standard, ISO 31030:2021, provides a structured approach to the development, implementation, evaluation, and review of a travel risk management policy, as well as an assessment and treatment of travel risks. These range from events such as a road accident, or a health incident, through to disease outbreaks, epidemics, and natural disasters, as well as conflict, crime, security, and health of travellers, and adversely affect the outcome of their travel objectives.

By promoting a culture where travel-related risk is taken seriously, resourced adequately, and managed effectively, the standard aims to garner recognised and realised benefits such as:

- Contributing to business continuity capability and organisational resilience
- Improve worker confidence in travel-related health, safety, and security arrangements
- Enabling business in high-risk locations
- Enhancing an organisation's reputation and credibility – leading to a positive effect on competitiveness, staff turnover and talent acquisition
- Reducing legal and financial exposure
- Increasing general productivity



EMERGENCY PLAN

Whether you use a TMC, follow the ISO 31030 guidelines, or not, you'll still need your own emergency plan that includes the following:



Establish people in your company who can be the primary point of contact for travellers during emergency situations.



Identify what is, and what isn't an emergency, this will allow you to assign the appropriate resources when the time comes.



When an emergency arises, use traveller tracking to identify those affected and the potential risk to them.



Contact any identified travellers to find out if they're safe. Inform them what the situation is and what the company is doing to help.



If the traveller is safe, agree on the actions needed to keep them from harm, if they're not safe, arrange assistance to get them to safety.



Even if the traveller is okay, it's important to keep their family updated as they are likely to be worried.



Communicate frequently with your team about the emergency, the impact on the company and its employees and plans to support the staff affected.



Prevent any further trips to the affected destination from taking place until the emergency is over.

COMPANY TO-DO LIST



Create a travel risk policy.



Ensure traveller profiles are always up to date.



Confirm your company travel insurance is adequate for your needs.



Record all travel itineraries.



Provide travel and country advice for all trips.



Create an approval process for high-risk destinations.



Provide travel risk awareness and safety training where required.



Prepare and maintain a Emergency Plan of Action.



USEFUL LINKS



[Foreign Travel Advice](#)



[Foreign Travel Checklist](#)



[How to minimise your risk and what to do in the event of a terrorist attack](#)



[Driving in Europe Checklist](#)



[Check if you need an International Driving Permit](#)



[Maiden Voyage – Making Business Travel Safe in a Diverse World](#)



[Passports & Visa Information – CIBT Visas](#)



[Fit for Travel – Country information on how to stay safe and healthy abroad](#)

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