UNITED CARS

Modern Slavery Policy

United Cars (Kent) Ltd, trading as United Cars
Policy owner: United Cars management
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1. Our commitment

United Cars (Kent) Ltd, trading as United Cars, is committed to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking in our business and supply chains. We do not tolerate slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, human trafficking or exploitation. We expect everyone working with us to treat people with dignity and respect and to comply with applicable law, including the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

This policy sets out the standards we require and the steps we commit to taking. It applies to our management, employees, drivers, agency workers and contractors. We expect suppliers and subcontracted transport providers to uphold equivalent standards.

2. Our business and areas of risk

United Cars provides taxi and transfer services across Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling and Ashford. Our approach covers our own operations and the goods and services we buy.

We will assess risks associated with driver engagement, recruitment agencies, subcontracted journeys and, where used, vehicle cleaning, maintenance, vehicle supply and other purchased services. We also recognise that transport services can be misused to facilitate trafficking and exploitation.

3. Fair recruitment and working conditions

We require work to be freely chosen. People must be able to leave their employment or engagement subject to lawful and reasonable notice arrangements, without threats or unlawful penalties.

- We will carry out appropriate identity, right-to-work and licensing checks where required, without treating those checks alone as proof that exploitation is absent.

- We will provide clear terms of employment or engagement and meet applicable requirements on pay, working time and working conditions.

- We prohibit coercion, debt bondage, unlawful deductions and recruitment fees charged to workers to obtain work with us.

- We will not retain original identity documents to restrict a person's freedom, or permit threats, intimidation or abusive treatment.

- We prohibit child labour and will follow applicable minimum-age and young-worker protections.

4. Suppliers and subcontractors

We will use proportionate, risk-based checks when selecting and reviewing suppliers and subcontractors. Depending on the risk, these may include checking business identity, licensing and recruitment arrangements; requesting information about working conditions and modern slavery controls; and seeking evidence to clarify concerns.

We will communicate our expectations and seek appropriate contractual commitments. Suppliers must not use forced or trafficked labour and should apply equivalent expectations to their own suppliers. Where concerns arise, we will seek corrective action, monitor progress and consider suspending or ending the relationship where necessary. Our response will take account of the safety and welfare of affected people.

5. Driver and staff awareness

We will make this policy available to staff and drivers and provide guidance appropriate to their roles. This will include recognising possible exploitation and knowing how to report concerns safely.

Warning signs can include someone appearing frightened or controlled, being unable to speak freely, having their documents or money controlled by another person, or describing threats, debt or work they cannot leave. A warning sign is not proof of exploitation; concerns should be reported without assumptions based on nationality, appearance or background.

6. Reporting concerns

Staff, drivers, suppliers and members of the public should report concerns promptly to United Cars management. Contact info@united-cars.co.uk or call 01622 321 321 and ask to speak privately to a manager about a safeguarding or modern slavery concern. These are general business contact channels, so initially share only the information needed to arrange a safe conversation.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. Suspected crimes that are not emergencies can be reported to the police on 101. Anyone may report directly to the police, including where they are uncomfortable reporting internally or the concern involves management.

Do not confront suspected offenders, investigate personally or take action that could endanger yourself or another person. Record factual observations only where safe and lawful, and share them securely with management or the relevant authorities.

7. Responding to concerns and protecting people

Management will take reports seriously, assess immediate safeguarding needs and refer concerns to appropriate authorities or specialist support where necessary. We will handle information sensitively and restrict sharing to those who need it to respond or meet legal obligations; absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

We will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who raises a concern honestly, even if it is not substantiated. Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action or action under the relevant contract, up to dismissal or termination where appropriate and lawful.

8. Responsibility and review

The policy owner is responsible for implementation, communicating requirements and maintaining appropriate records of risk assessments, supplier checks, awareness activities, concerns and corrective actions. Management will review this policy at least annually and sooner following significant changes or incidents.

The review will consider whether checks and guidance are effective, whether concerns are resolved appropriately and what improvements are needed. A low number of reports will not, by itself, be treated as evidence that exploitation is absent.

This policy does not replace an annual slavery and human trafficking statement where one is required under section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.