

Guidelines for Tour Guides and Driver Guides

The Aim of this document is to provide basic information and advice on ideal practices in the New Zealand tourism industry. To highlight what a guide should discuss before accepting any contract or agreement with a company or an employer. Despite careful control we assume no liability for the content of external links. The operators of the linked pages are solely responsible for their contents. All information without guarantee. Unless otherwise specified "Guide" refers to Guides and Driver Guides.

Accommodation:

- As a guide how will you be accommodated? What type of accommodation will you have?

Note: This depends on type of tour. As a rule, your own bedroom with en-suite bathroom. Sharing with clients or with another crew member is not acceptable unless you agree to do so.

Cancellations: Check the company's / employer's policy.

- What is the situation for you if the tour is cancelled before the starting date?

Note: Ensure that the contract has a cancellation policy, including time line details and compensation for loss of income (eg 100% within 7 days; 75% within 14 days; 50% within 21 days, especially during peak season).

Commissions: Ask about the company's policy, if any, regarding commissions on optional excursions.

- Will commissions be paid to the inbound tour operator or to the guide ?
- Are you expected to share with your driver?
- How will income tax liability be managed?
- Is the guide expected to market optional excursions to the clients?
- What are commission percentages payable to the guide?
- How are commissions be collected / paid?

Note: While on tour you may be required to book activities, rides, tours, etc. for your clients and you may be asked by the company you book with if they should pay you a commission directly or the company you work for and you may be sharing the commission with the driver if any? Do not assume you will always get a commission but it is not rude to ask the company what their policy is.

Common Industry Acronyms:

ACC – Accident Compensation Corporation www.acc.co.nz
BCA – Bus and Coach Association www.busandcoach.co.nz
BB – Bed and Breakfast
DBB – Dinner, Bed and Breakfast
DOC – Department of Conservation www.doc.govt.nz
ESDG – English Speaking Driver Guide
ESG – English Speaking Guide
FIT - free independent traveller
FOC - Free of charge
GST – Goods and Service Tax
TEC – Tourism Export Council (formerly ITOC - Inbound Tour Operators Council) <http://www.tourismexportcouncil.org.nz>
NZTA – NZ Transport Agency <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/>
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
NZ – New Zealand
PAYE – Pay (Tax) As You Earn
RO - Room only
TIANZ – Tourism Industry Association of NZ www.tianz.org.nz

Assignment:

- Check exact dates of the assignment offered

Note: Before you accept a tour check the exact dates when your services are required. These should include the start and end of the tour with total number of part, full or extended days. Does the company require you to have a 'home base' (e.g. Auckland or Christchurch)? Some operators do not include time on tour spent in 'home base' as 'on duty' and do not pay for that time. You may also be required to have a rest day (non-paid day) while on tour. Will you be responsible for your own expenses on this day?

On Tour Expenses:

- Money to pay for guides and clients' needs during the tour. What mode of payment is used? Credit card, Eftpos, cheques, cash, vouchers?
- How are you expected to account for this?

Note: You may request a cash advance for your expenses and clients' expenses. Keep details (including invoices and receipts) of amounts spent and return balance, if any, at end of tour.

Food allowances:

Clients may not have meals included with their accommodation. Before you start check the following:

- Will you pay for your own meals but receive a fixed meal allowance per day which includes breakfast, lunch and/or dinner?
- Or will your meals be included on the group voucher with the accommodation?
- Will your meals with clients be paid in total on the same basis as clients by company?

Note: Clarify on what basis accommodation is booked. RO (Room Only); BB (Bed & Breakfast); DBB (Dinner, Bed & Breakfast).Lunch is often at own cost. Breakfast is almost always included. Often dinner is included but some companies prefer to pay a meal allowance.

Important websites:

Department of Labour www.dol.govt.nz
Employment Relations Authority www.era.govt.nz
Inland Revenue Department www.ird.govt.nz
New Zealand Transport Agency <http://www.nzta.govt.nz>
Service IQ (Former ATTTO) Industry Training Organisation – www.attto.org.nz

Invoices:

Note: As a contractor, send your invoice as soon as the job is finished. Set up a template as below on your computer (excel is easy) or use your accounting software

Jo Bloggs
123 Tourist Place
Timbaktu

XYZ Ltd
You know where
Main City

Date TAX INVOICE #... GST NO if applicable

Date (days) of service Service description Charge

Plus GST if applicable

Total amount

State how payment is preferred – 7 day invoice – 20th month following
Payment direct into bank account – state account, etc.

Thanks for choosing to use my service, or something similar.

Itinerary:

- Check it is in accordance with NZTA and DOC laws
- Ensure that sufficient time is allowed to study the itinerary before the tour commences
- Driver / Guides - do not jeopardise your Passenger license by working an illegal itinerary. Explain that you must comply with the law and take your rest breaks.
- Check the company has a full Department of Conservation (DOC) Concession or Permit to cover the areas you will visit if any visits onto public conservation land (PCL) are scheduled. Does the Concession or Permit include coach parking (eg at the end/side of roads on PCL) and guided walking?

Note: Ask to see itinerary as soon as possible so that you can make the necessary preparations.

Liability:

- Check the company has insurance against clients' prosecution in case of extraordinary circumstances as a result of an accident or a decision you have made as guide (Public Liability Insurance)
- Are vehicles insured so that the drivers do not have to pay in cases of damage?
- Do insurances cover loss of or damage to company's or clients' property?
- Does the company insurance include third party insurance? (Public Liability Insurance)

*Note: Clarify who is responsible for what when you drive someone else's vehicle. What is the excess amount payable by whom? What damage is acceptable? Who pays for parking tickets? Who pays for speeding fines?
Especially significant: Who pays if you have to change the itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances – ensure you have a defined protocol from the company for this eventuality, also in the event of an accident and activating a safety management plan.*

Permits:

- DOC Concessions or Permits are required to work (guide) on public Conservation land (PCL). If the itinerary appears to include the DOC PCL, ask for details of Concessions or Permits.
- If you have a Passenger Endorsement on your Driver's Licence, you must keep a log book of all your on- duty (paid) work and keep the law regarding rest periods. This is your responsibility.
- Ensure the vehicle and you have the regulatory licences and certifications for and to drive the vehicle supplied.

Note: Ensure you have a copy of the company's DOC Concession Card with you, and one in the vehicle as well. If the company does not have a DOC Concession Card then it is likely that they do not have a DOC Concession or Permit. If the company does not supply the DOC Concession Card or Permit you are advised to refuse to do that section of the itinerary.

Fee / Daily Pay Rate:

- If you work as a contractor (self-employed) you are required to provide invoices, pay your own tax, ACC levies, and GST if applicable
- If you work as an employee then your employer is responsible to pay your tax (PAYE) and provide you with a pay slip. For more details visit the Department of Labour web site, <http://dol.govt.nz/> and Inland Revenue Department www.ird.govt.nz
- Prior to assignment you should agree with your employer on your daily or hourly pay rate and start and finish dates
- First you will need to have an idea of your value, and the lowest and highest expectation of earning currently in practice

Note: Obtain a written contract detailing daily pay rate and hours of work for the tour. Price structure is generally for transfer, ½ day, full day and overnight days, also extended days where you provide a full day and external dinner excursion. Rates vary - from \$120.00 to \$300.00 per day. Rates depend on industry experience and responsibilities.

Statutory holidays: For employees only

- Be conversant with the Holidays' Act and payments for working public holidays.
- Is payment in accordance with current labour laws?
- Time and a half applies and a day in lieu (ie 2.5 times the day rate for that day)

Note: If quoting for your guiding services, you can add extra if the itinerary includes working on Public Holidays

ACC levy: For self employed only

Find out about your Business Industry Code first. Check <http://www.businessdescription.co.nz/Search/index.htm>
Calculate your ACC levy with the online service www.calculator.acc.co.nz or call the helpline 0800 222 776

Transport to and from workplace:

- From where to where?
- Transport? Taxi / Shuttle / Buses / Flights?
- Who pays for what? Fuel / Parking?

Note: As a contractor transport to and from the workplace and your home is usually your own expense but you can usually claim these as business expenses. Some companies pay these expenses but you need to clarify before the tour, who pays for what, and when payment is made, especially if you are working as an employee.

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