

Rental of University Vehicles

Original Implementation: June 1, 1984

Last Revision: July 27, 2021

Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for university vehicle rental. Vehicles that may be rented by university departments are available through the Physical Plant Department or the Parking and Traffic Office.

General

University motor vehicles may only be rented for official university business. Vehicles will be rented exclusively to university employees, departments, or organizations that have budgeted university funds. All vehicles, except road buses, are rented on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who rent university vehicles must act on behalf of their university department or organization and have a driver certificate issued by the University Police Department. Those who rent university vehicles are responsible for compliance with minimum occupancy requirements and other university policy and procedural requirements. Cancellations should be made as far in advance as possible.

Passengers in university vehicles will normally be university employees or students traveling on university business. Passengers who are not university employees or students may be authorized to ride in university vehicles when their presence is consistent with university business or functions. University employees or students may have authorized guest(s) such as spouses or children accompany them while the university employee or student is traveling on university business provided:

- the non-university passenger does not interfere with the university business of the trip or cause any additional expense to the university;
- the department sponsoring the trip has been advised in advance of the trip that non-university passengers will be traveling in university vehicles;
- if the non-university passenger is a minor child, the parent is responsible for the child's actions and is responsible for ensuring that the child follows all safety policies and regulations including wearing seat belts or child restraints;
- non-university passengers will not be covered by university insurance for medical treatment, unless there is legal liability, which is covered by the general liability policy for university motor vehicles. Personal claims against the driver of another vehicle (non-university) for liability in any accident will be the responsibility of the non-university passenger. Passengers should carry personal medical insurance coverage in case of

accident or emergency. The university does not assume liability for any passenger unless otherwise imposed under law. University employees may be covered by Workers' Compensation for injuries received on-the-job, otherwise, personal medical insurance or applicable legal liability would apply. See the safety website for additional information.

University Road Buses

University-owned road buses provide transportation for university departments and groups. The guidelines in this section have been established to provide a fair and equitable manner for the scheduling of the buses and to generate sufficient revenue to pay for their operation and maintenance. A professional driver will be provided by the physical plant. The use of the bus is limited to those destinations that may be reached by hard-surfaced roads.

Application for the use of a university road bus shall be made to the director of physical plant or their designee. No reservation may be reassigned in whole or in part. The user may not delegate any control or responsibility to any other party without prior written approval of the director of physical plant. Reservation and/or destination changes may not be able to be accommodated within 24 hours of departure. A completed itinerary must be submitted to the transportation dispatcher at least 48 hours before departure.

The following priorities for use have been established:

- Athletic purposes will be given the first priority;
- Activities scheduled at least a year in advance that require maximum utilization of the buses shall receive second priority;
- All other requests will then be considered. Where feasible, the use of the buses will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. If simultaneous requests are received, then distance to be traveled and the number of passengers will be considered in determining priority. In cases of simultaneous requests when the number of passengers and distance are approximately the same, the trip providing the most benefit to Stephen F. Austin State University shall receive priority.

University Shuttle Buses

University-owned shuttle buses provide regular daily service on campus. Shuttle buses may be reserved for university business by university groups after hours and on weekends on a limited first-come, first-served basis. Every effort will be made to provide fair and equitable scheduling of the shuttle buses and to generate sufficient revenue to pay for their operation and maintenance.

Breakdowns and Accidents

All accidents involving a university vehicle must be reported immediately to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Physical Plant Transportation Department. Instructions for proper reporting and handling of accidents and breakdowns will be provided at the time of vehicle pick up and may also be found on the Transportation Department's website.

In all cases in which a vehicle cannot be returned to the campus, the Physical Plant Transportation Department should be contacted during business hours or the University Police Department if during non-business hours. The manager of transportation must arrange all major repairs. Drivers involved in an accident will be required to submit to a drug and alcohol screening in accordance with university policy on Drug and Alcohol Testing (11.6). Departments using fleet vehicles may be charged for damages as the result of accidents or from abusive use.

The Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Department will contact the insurance adjuster, provide appropriate information, and act as general liaison in the event of an accident. The university's insurance covers a driver's liability if he/she is an approved university driver operating the vehicle in an official capacity.

Charges

Rates are established to generate revenue to pay for the operation and maintenance of the rental vehicles. In addition, all expenses, including meals and lodging for the professional driver(s) provided are the responsibility of the renting department. Refer to the physical plant website for current rates.

Fuel is furnished as part of the rental price of the vehicle if purchased on fuel cards provided at the time of the rental. Fuel purchases not using the provided fuel cards will be at the expense of the renting department. Any other purchases on the university fuel card are prohibited.

Special Provisions

- All drivers of buses must have a Class B-CDL license with a 'passengers' endorsement and submit to Department of Transportation physicals and drug baseline and random testing.
- All drivers must have a valid driver certificate issued by the University Police Department.
- Buses must carry at least 1/3 of their capacity.
- No alcoholic beverages will be allowed in state vehicles.
- In accordance with university policy on Smoking, Vaping, and Use of Tobacco Products (13.21), smoking, vaping, and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in vehicles owned or leased by the university.

- Texting while operating a vehicle owned or leased by the university is prohibited. Use of electronic devices while driving a vehicle owned or leased by the university is subject to the Physical Plant Department Procedures for Rental of University Vehicles. The procedures may be accessed from the Physical Plant Department website.
- Individuals may lose the privilege of using university vehicles if the vehicle(s) has been damaged during use or has been used in an unsafe or unauthorized manner.

Passenger Vans

All drivers of eight and 12 passenger vans must be licensed, SFA certified drivers with a van endorsement and be a minimum of 21 years of age. Exceptions to age limits for drivers may only be authorized by the Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Department. For safety, current 15 passenger vans have been reduced to a lower number of passengers by removing a seat. The University will no longer purchase 15 passenger, high gravity, vans. Drivers in an eight or 12 passenger van shall not drive over a maximum of 65 miles per hour speed limit. The driver and all passengers must wear a seat belt as recommended by the State Office of Risk Management.

Eight and 12 passenger vans with a short wheel base (140") and higher center of gravity (Ford, Chevy, Dodge) are limited to eight passengers including the driver with a maximum of 250 lbs. cargo/luggage. Twelve passenger vans with a longer wheel base (170") and a lower center of gravity (Freightliner Sprinters, etc.) may carry passengers and cargo loads in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. All passenger vans rented from a non-university fleet (Hertz, Enterprise, etc.) must follow the limitations specified in this policy.

Cargo and/or luggage inside the van must be stacked no higher than the top of the van seats and should be placed forward of the rear axle. All cargo is prohibited on the roof. Cargo is defined as, but not limited to, boxes, bags, packs, equipment, etc. No trailer hitches may be installed on the vehicle. No towing of any kind is authorized.

Cross Reference: Drug and Alcohol Testing (11.6); Smoking, Vaping, and Use of Tobacco Products (13.21); Physical Plant Department Procedures for Rental of University Vehicles.

Responsible for Implementation: Vice President for Finance and Administration

Contact for Revision: Director of Physical Plant; Director of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Building and Grounds