

Vehicle Use Policy

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Purpose

The University promotes safe driving practices, especially on University business, whether the driver is operating a University-owned vehicle or a personal vehicle.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and students who drive any vehicle on University business, including University-owned vehicles, privately-owned vehicles, and rented vehicles. Policy statements extend to automobiles, vans, trucks, special equipment, emergency vehicles, and low speed vehicles. All vehicles/equipment noted above will be referred to as “vehicle” in the remainder of this policy.

Policy Statements

Driver Qualifications and Requirements

1. All drivers of a University vehicle must have a valid driver’s license (Class D) prior to driving any vehicles on University business as required by the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security. If a person’s main job is to drive or transport people or property in a Class D vehicle, a For-Hire endorsement must be added to the Class D license.
2. Student drivers, although not required to have a Tennessee driver’s license, must have a valid license from their home state. If the situation requires a “F” endorsement, then the home state license must have an endorsement equivalent to the Tennessee “F” endorsement.
3. All drivers must complete the [Driver Approval Process](#) and be listed on the Approved Driver Listing maintained by the Sewanee Police Department.
4. No one may drive a University-owned vehicle until the University completes a motor vehicle records (MVR) review. Such reviews will be conducted at least annually and prior to approving new driver applicants.
5. Those with unacceptable driving records will not be allowed to drive University vehicles or personal vehicles on University business. Unacceptable driving records include, but may not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Conviction for an alcohol and/or drug related driving offense
 - b. Refusal to submit to a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) test
 - c. Conviction for reckless driving

- d. Any combination of three or more moving violations, “At Fault Accidents” or “Preventable Accidents” within the most recent three years
 - e. Suspension, revocation or administrative restriction within the last three years
 - f. Leaving the scene of an accident as defined by law
 - g. At fault in a fatal accident
 - h. Felony committed involving a vehicle
 - i. Two or more physical damage claims in any 12-month period.
6. Operators are responsible for the protection and safe operation of any University vehicle. The operator must observe all traffic laws and rules for safe driving. The operator is responsible for traffic violations and fines including parking violations. Fines and related costs may be deducted from an employee’s wages if the University pays the fine.

Using Personal Vehicles

1. Students and employees are encouraged to use University vehicles or rental vehicles for University business, rather than their personal vehicles. **NOTE:** *The University does not inspect personal vehicles, and it is the owner’s and passengers’ responsibility to determine whether the vehicle is safe and the driver qualified.*
2. Personally owned vehicles must be covered by insurance that is valid in Tennessee, including minimum coverage requirements.
3. Even when using personal vehicles, a driver must still observe all traffic laws and rules for safe driving and is responsible for traffic violations and fines including parking violations.
4. Any accidents resulting in property damage or injury should be promptly reported to the Risk Manager, when using a personal vehicle on University business.

Use of University-Owned Vehicles

1. Only University employees, students, or “for hire” University/certified drivers are permitted to drive a University-owned vehicle.
2. University vehicles shall be used only for University business in accordance with University vehicle policies and procedures. Personal use of University vehicles is prohibited.
3. University vehicles may not be driven to and from an employee's home except as specifically authorized by University vehicle policies outlined herein.
4. A [current driver qualification](#) form must be on file for all persons requesting the use of a Motor Pool vehicle. This form will be retained on file by the Motor Pool and updated by the driver when requested by the Sewanee Police Department (SPD).
5. The operators of University vehicles are required to report any mechanical problems as soon as possible in order that they can be corrected before the vehicle is dispatched for another trip.
6. All operators are required to report any damage to the vehicle immediately upon return to the Motor Pool. Failure to do so will result in withdrawal of driving privileges.

Certain employees are granted take-home vehicles, generally in accordance with standard terms of employment for those positions. These guidelines do not apply in those cases.

Additional Conditions for Student Use of University Vehicles including Low Speed Vehicles (LSV)

1. Student drivers are limited to a 100-mile radius of campus if not accompanied by a University faculty or staff member.
2. Use of motor pool vehicles by students with less than three years driving experience on U.S. highways must be approved in advance by the Sewanee police chief. If driving a 12-passenger van for hire, the driver must have an “F” (or equivalent) endorsement.

Safe Vehicle Use

Accidents

1. Accidents involving vehicles used for University business must be reported by the driver to local law enforcement officials if the accident involves death, injury or property damage.
2. **Stop immediately** at the scene and notify the local police. In addition, certain accidents in Tennessee called “reportable accidents” must be reported to the Tennessee Department of Safety within 20 days. “Reportable accidents” are defined as any accident within the state of Tennessee in which any person is killed or injured, or in which damage to the property of any one person, including oneself, is in excess of \$400. Insurance information is located in each University-owned vehicle.

Vans

1. No 15-passenger vans may be used on University business, and no 15-passenger van may be purchased or rented with University funds.
2. Fifteen passenger vans that have had the rear seat removed are not subject to this prohibition.
3. No more than 12 passengers, including the driver, are permitted to ride in a van.
4. Trips in passenger vans should be no longer than 10 driving hours without relieving the driver for five hours.
5. The use of cargo racks on top of vans is prohibited.

Golf Carts

1. Golf carts may not be driven on any road or street.

Low Speed Vehicles

1. Low speed vehicles that are tagged and titled may be driven on roads and streets. “Low speed vehicle” means any four-wheeled electric or gasoline vehicle, **excluding golf carts**, whose top speed is greater than 20 miles per hour but not greater than 25 miles per hour (25 mph), including neighborhood electric vehicles.
2. Low speed vehicles must comply with the standards in [49 CFR 571.500](#).

Use of Seat Belts and Other Safety Resources

1. All drivers and passengers in any vehicle being used for University business must be restrained by a seatbelt at all times the vehicle is moving.
Tennessee Code 55-9-603 (a) (1) states: “No person shall operate a passenger motor vehicle in this state unless such person and all passengers four (4) years of age or older are restrained by a safety belt at all times the vehicle is in forward motion.” It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that everyone uses seat belts.
2. Consider using headlights while the vehicle is in motion.

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Equipment Safety While Driving

The use of technology (cellular phones, pagers, laptop computers, etc.) has proven to be very effective in improving productivity and customer service. However, there are serious risks associated with usage of this equipment while driving a company or personal vehicle. The availability of this technology is not intended to encourage dangerous behavior during the course of your work or personal life. Responding to pagers, using a laptop computer while driving, and dialing or receiving calls are potentially dangerous. We, therefore, discourage this activity. Your safety and the safety of others are of the utmost importance. You must follow these guidelines to make safety your first priority when behind the wheel of a vehicle:

1. As a driver, your first responsibility is to pay attention to the road.
2. If a phone call must be made while driving, follow these guidelines:
 - a. Never initiate or accept a call while driving.
 - b. If you need to place or receive a call, pull off the road to a safe location and stop the vehicle before using your phone.
 - c. Allow voicemail to handle your calls and return them when safe to do so.

- d. Enter GPS information while stopped.

Impaired driving

1. A "driver" may not operate a "motor vehicle" at any time, when his/her ability is impaired, affected, or influenced by alcohol, illegal drugs, medication, illness, fatigue, or injury.

Scheduling and Reporting Procedures

Reserving University Vehicles

1. Vehicles should be reserved as far in advance as possible by emailing motorpool@sewanee.edu with the name, dates, destination, account number to be charged, and contact information. Vehicles are reserved on a "first-come, first-served basis." When two or more requests are made at the same time, academic related requests will take priority. Department heads should consider other options when vehicles are to be used for transportation to the airport and left in airport parking.
2. The conditions under which a motor pool vehicle may be retained overnight are as follows:
 - a. The employee's home is located some distance from the University and such retention would result in substantial savings in time and distance traveled.
 - b. If an employee is required, by reason of University duties, to leave for or return from a trip after working hours, he/she may retain the vehicle at home overnight, and the vehicle must be returned to the University motor pool immediately the following day.
 - c. If an employee is required to be present on campus in order to perform the duties of their job even in the event of inclement weather, the employee may drive home an appropriate University vehicle (such as a 4-wheel drive) that will ensure their ability to attend work.
3. Vehicles are not delivered. They must be picked up and returned to Facilities Management by the assigned driver. The driver must be on the list of approved drivers to pick up keys for motor pool vehicles.
4. Vehicles should be returned on schedule so trips will not be interrupted. When reservations must be cancelled Facilities Management should be notified as soon as possible.
5. When requested for extended trips, a gasoline credit card is issued for gas, oil, and repair charges. Charges for any other items are not permitted.
6. The vehicle operator is responsible for ensuring that smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted or consumed in a motor pool vehicle.

Reporting Difficulties

1. Drivers are required to report to Facilities Management any mechanical problems as soon as possible in order that they can be corrected before the vehicle is dispatched for another trip.
2. All drivers are required to report any damage to the vehicle immediately upon return to campus. Failure to do so will result in withdrawal of driving privileges.
3. If you have vehicle trouble, call Facilities Management at 931.598.1264. Help will be sent or appropriate instructions given. Again, refer to above section for accidents.

Roadside Assistance

1. In the event of a mechanical problem involving a University vehicle on or near the campus, contact Facilities Management at 931.598.1264 for help or assistance.
2. In the event of a mechanical problem involving a University vehicle while on a trip away from the campus, a Roadside Assistance Plan may be utilized by calling the roadside assistance service provider. Directions for utilizing the roadside assistance plan can be found in the glove box of the specific vehicle. All covered vehicles contain information about roadside assistance in the glove compartment, and note not all vehicles are covered. If roadside assistance services are utilized during a trip, the driver must report details of the issue to Facilities Management upon returning to campus.

Insurance Information (Domestic & International)

General Coverage

The University is appropriately insured for accidents and injuries related to the use of a University-owned vehicle being appropriately operated for University business. In cases of an accident, departments will be charged for amounts not covered because of deductibles in "at-fault" or chargeable accidents.

Coverage for Use of Personal Vehicle

The insurance coverage for an employee use of a personal vehicle on University business is first covered by the employee's automobile insurance policy. The University provides liability coverage in excess of the employee's coverage which covers the University and the employee. Physical damage to the employee's vehicle is not covered by the University.

Coverage for Domestic Rental Cars

When renting a vehicle for University business, employees should NOT purchase the Collision Damage Waiver coverage. The University is appropriately insured for domestic car rentals. (Print an insurance card [here](#).) Vehicle rentals should be made in the individual employee's name and the University's name.

Use of Vehicles Internationally

Students are not permitted to drive an international rental car on University business.

When using vehicles internationally for transportation, employees should contract with a driving service (taxis, car service, buses, trains, chartered buses) for transportation.

If one of the above is not available and an employee deems it necessary to personally operate a vehicle internationally, then alternative arrangements must be submitted to the office for global education and risk management for approval. Submissions should include:

1. An explanation for why a driving service is not feasible
2. Details on travel arrangements (rental vehicle, insurance to be purchased) include trip routes
3. A detailed risk identification and mitigation plan

If an employee plans to rent and operate a vehicle outside of the domestic U.S., then the employee should:

- Purchase insurance coverage as part of the rental
- Rent a vehicle no larger than is familiar to you based on your driving experience
- Before driving, be certain of your responsibilities as a driver
- Familiarize yourself with the rules of the road for the location in which you will be using an automobile
- Make sure that you know how to read and understand all traffic signs of the country you are in
- When possible, be certain that your automobile always contains at least a half tank of fuel
- Make sure your lights, signals, horn, and brakes are in proper order
- When possible, avoid traveling by road after dark (especially in rural areas)
- When possible, park in a well-lighted place
- Avoid riding motorcycles
- Always lock your car and use seat belts, even for short trips
- Never use a mobile device while driving, even GPS navigation. Pre-program GPS devices prior to operating the vehicle

International Safety Precautions

Vehicular accidents are the most common cause of injury or death for international travelers.

View the [U.S. State Department's Driving Overseas: Best Practices](#).

Pay particular attention to all of the following, which are common on the roads of many countries:

- Passing on the side of oncoming traffic and cutting in front of other vehicles from the right side
- Unexpected stops or turns without signaling for no apparent reason
- Stopping in unexpected locations to pick up or let off passengers by cars, buses, and trucks, including main highway entrance ramps, intersections, and along major highways
- Trucks parked at night without lights on the highway rather than on the side of the road
- Disabled vehicles parked without warning signs
- Many countries also require that all vehicles have certain equipment available, check local laws.
- Frequent mandatory items:
 - First aid kit
 - Reflective warning triangle
 - Spare fuses and light bulbs
 - Fire extinguisher

General Charges and Fees

The Motor Pool in Facilities Management establishes charges for vehicle use. See their website for up to date fees. You must give a charge account number when requesting vehicle reservations.

1. Use is charged by the mile and a minimum charge has been established for low mileage use.
2. There will be a charge for vehicles returned that require cleaning. This does not include **normal exterior** road dirt.
3. Considering each vehicle must be serviced and inspected after each use it is important that vehicles and keys are returned on time to the correct location.
 - a. There will be a charge for vehicles not returned to their designated parking area after the reserved time of use.
 - b. There will be a charge for motor pool keys not returned to FM after the reserved time of use. Rental privileges will be suspended for the semester after three late key returns. Lost keys will be charged at the replacement rate plus a 25 percent administrative fee.

Loss of Privileges

Loss of Driving Privileges

The following incidents will result in the loss of driving privileges for at least one year:

1. Operating a vehicle without a valid driver's license.
2. Failure to report the suspension or revocation of a driver's license.
3. Failure to obey University and other traffic regulations.
4. Operating a vehicle in an unsafe manner.
5. Failure to report an accident.
6. Operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
7. Violation of Tennessee law or University policies governing alcoholic beverages or drugs.

Vehicle Abuse

1. Incidents of vehicle abuse will be reported to the department head or person who reserved the vehicle.

2. A written reply from the responsible person will be required outlining action taken to prevent further abuse. FM reserves the right to assess repair and labor cost to the department in cases of abuse. Repairs charged will be at the current labor rate plus part costs.

Responsibilities

1. Primary scheduling and managing the fleet of University vehicles is the responsibility of Facilities Management. This includes vehicle and tire maintenance, maintenance record-keeping, and routine inspections.
2. Driver qualification (motor vehicle record review) and the respective forms in addition to driving safety training is the responsibility of Risk Management and the Sewanee Police Department.
3. This policy is updated by Facilities Management and Risk Management annually, reviewed annually by the Director of Risk Management and General Counsel, and approved by the Provost.