



Boston University Risk Management

Automobile Safety Guidelines

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Purpose

Boston University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all members of the University community while they are traveling. These guidelines are intended to:

1. Inform standards for appropriate use of vehicles used for University related business by **students, coaches, and volunteers**.
2. Reduce the frequency and cost of motor vehicle accidents.
3. Recommend training schedules, as needed.
4. Minimize risk by ensuring that drivers are validly licensed and trained, and that driving histories are satisfactory.

These guidelines establish minimum standards; departments are encouraged to modify or enhance driving safety programs to meet the needs of the operation.

Safety Considerations by Vehicle Type

11-15 Passenger Vans

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has published comprehensive road safety guidelines for large passenger vans that can be found [here](#).

These vans have an increased risk of rollover under certain conditions. The following recommendations reduce risk to fellow passengers and other drivers.

Closely monitor speed and conditions

- Vans are substantially longer and wider than a car, requiring more space to maneuver.
- Vans require additional braking time and cannot handle abrupt maneuvers.
- Appoint a “Spotter” to assist driver while backing up.

Strategically place passengers and cargo

- The number of passengers should not exceed the number of seat belts available.
- The use of seat belts is required by all passengers at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
- Passengers should fill the seats from front to back; if the van is not full, passengers should sit forward of the rear axle.
- Cargo should be placed forward of the rear axle and should never be mounted to the roof.

Avoid distractions while driving; appoint a navigator to provide directions and adjust any entertainment systems.

Ensure vehicle maintenance is up to date

- Inspect seat belts for proper function before every trip.
- Inspect tires (including spares) for proper inflation; spare tires should be replaced regularly as tires degrade with age.

Private Passenger Vehicles

- Number of passengers should not exceed the number of seatbelts available.
- The use of seatbelts is required by all passengers at all times while the vehicle is in motion.
- Avoid distractions while driving including talking/texting on your phone, eating and drinking, adjusting stereo or entertainment systems.
- Employ hands-free device holders.

Towing & Trailers

- Leave enough distance between you and the car in front of you to stop. The extra weight will reduce braking ability.
- Remember the contents of your trailer when braking hard. Sudden movements can dislodge items and cause shifting of cargo.
- Make wider turns to avoid running over curbs.
- Cars following you will tend to tailgate. They are not aware of your inability to stop, so it is up to you to be more vigilant when on the roadway.
- If your trailer begins to sway, release the accelerator pedal to reduce your speed. Do not apply the brakes as this can make the sway worse.

Spare Tires

per NHTSA

All tires weaken with age—even unused tires; avoid using an old spare on your 15-passenger van. Used 15-passenger vans may come with dangerous spare tires that are many years old. Check a tire's age by finding its Tire Identification Number (TIN) on the tire's sidewall. The last four digits of the TIN indicate the week and year the tire was made (e.g., 1010 = March 2010).

Driver Selection

Considerations when selecting from prospective drivers:

- Is the driver **patient**?
- Is the driver **responsible**?
- Is the driver **optimistic** and **enthusiastic** about driving?
- Is the driver **considerate of others**?

Considerations for monitoring driver performance:

- Does the driver have **experience driving in comparable conditions** (weather, traffic, etc.)?
- Does the driver **adhere to rules and guidance**?
- Does the driver show **pride in ownership** of their personal assets?

Driver Eligibility

Driver must have 120+ hours of driving experience on US roadways. Exceptions can be considered by the program or department on a case-by-case basis if individual meets all other eligibility criteria and passes a road-test.

Experience: It is preferred that drivers have...

- Minimum of three years of driving experience
- Minimum of 1,500 miles driven per year (equivalent to 40 hours of driving)
- *First-year students are discouraged from driving for university-sponsored activities*

Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) must show that you have not had

- Six or more traffic violation points
- A chargeable accident within the past 24 months
- A conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs or other major violations, such as reckless driving, hit and run, driving with a suspended license, or fleeing from a police officer

Training

- Have completed and passed the university-sponsored Safe Driving Program
- Have completed and passed the road testing program (at department discretion)

University Drug & Alcohol Policy

- Students are not permitted to drive a university vehicle if the Judicial Affairs office has recorded a violation of university policy on drug and alcohol abuse.

Becoming an Authorized Driver

1. Application

2. MVR authorization

*What is an **MVR** (Motor Vehicle Record)?*

A Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) is a report of your driving history, as reported from your state Department of Motor Vehicles. Information on this report may include Driver's License information, point history, violations, convictions, and license status on your driving record.

Most states report driving records for three to five years of history.

3. Online and/or Classroom training (Alert Driving, Coaching Systems, etc.)

4. Renew authorization

MVR's to be reviewed every two years, minimum

5. Road test (at department discretion)

- a. Mix of city/highway environments
- b. Merging
- c. Parking
- d. Backing up

Evaluating a Motor Vehicle Record

Examples of Major Violations

- Leaving the scene of an accident
- Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Racing or excessive speed (>20 MPH over speed limit)
- Reckless, negligent or careless driving
- Felony, homicide or manslaughter involving the use of a motor vehicle
- License suspension or revocation resulting from accidents or moving violations
- Following too closely or tailgating
- Erratic lane-changing
- Attempting to elude a police officer

Minor Violations

- Speeding <20 MPH
- Failure to obey sign
- Failure to yield
- Illegal turn

Non-Moving Violations

- Parking tickets
- Motor Vehicle equipment violations
- Failure to have a valid operator's license available where one actually exists

No. of minor violations	No. of at-fault accidents		
	0	1	2+
0	Clear	Borderline	Poor
1	Acceptable	Borderline	Poor
2	Acceptable	Poor	Poor
3+	Poor	Poor	Poor
Any Major Violation (past five years)	Poor	Poor	Poor

Borderline cases should use the totality of the driver's application in determining acceptability.

Driver Responsibilities

- For long trips, drivers are encouraged to take the following safety precautions:
 - During long distance trips, drivers should rotate every 2 ½ hours or 150 miles.
 - No driver should drive more than 10 hours during a 24 hour period.
 - If there are not enough drivers to rotate, an overnight stay should be planned.
- Drive with diligence at all times, following the regulations for the state within which you are traveling.
- The number of passengers may not exceed the number of seat belts. All vehicle occupants must wear seat belts while the vehicle is in motion.
- Turn off the ignition, remove key and lock the vehicle when unattended.
- The driver assumes all responsibility for any fines resulting from traffic or parking violations arising out of the use of a University vehicle.
- DO NOT drive while under the influence of controlled substances such as alcohol, drugs, or medications that could adversely affect driving performance.
- DO NOT use cell phones while driving a University vehicle.
 - Exception: Employees may, for work purposes, only use completely hands-free cellular devices that are physically or electronically integrated into the vehicle, if the driver can do so without diverting his or her attention from the road ahead.
 - There are no exceptions for student use of a cell phone while driving a University vehicle, including use of hands-free cellular devices.
- DO NOT pick up hitchhikers or unauthorized passengers.

Navigator Responsibilities

Drivers are encouraged, whenever possible to appoint a navigator for the duration of travel. The navigator role is intended to support the driver by:

- managing trip route including use of GPS or mapping devices,
- adjusting any climate control, radio and any other on-board entertainment,
- manage all communications including phone calls or text messages
- provide a second set of eyes while in transit, ex. while merging, changing lanes
- by stepping outside of the vehicle, act as a spotter to ensure clearance while the vehicle is backing up

Department Responsibilities

- Maintain current MVR records for all drivers driving on behalf of the department
- Coordinate delivery of Driver Training including:
 - Online driver training modules
 - Road-tests
 - Driver training should be completed every two years
- Appoint a transportation/logistics manager to assist in pre-trip planning for new drivers or new routes that may encounter unique road conditions or weather
- Develop and monitor pre-trip vehicle inspection policies checking (at minimum):
 - Headlights, turn signals, brake and parking lights
 - Warning lights
 - Tire pressure
 - Seat belts
 - Emergency road-side kit
- Develop preventative maintenance policies checking (at minimum):
 - Braking system
 - Tire tread depth & age
 - Windshield wipers
 - Battery performance
- Maintain registrations and vehicle inspections

Records Review & Retention

Review of Approved Driver motor vehicle records and training will be conducted every **two years**. Motor vehicle records should be retained for **three years**.

Reporting of Motor Vehicle Driving Infractions

It is the responsibility of each approved driver to notify their supervisor or program director of any motor vehicle infractions resulting in points assessed to their motor vehicle record as well as any damage to vehicles.

Revocation of Driving Privileges

- Upon receipt of the MVR with negative results, the student driver's privileges may be revoked
- Students are not permitted to drive a university vehicle if the Judicial Affairs office has recorded a violation of university policy on drug and alcohol abuse.

All MVRs that include moving violations involving drugs, alcohol and/or reckless driving will be reviewed and discussed by the Department. Decisions to not authorize or to revoke driving privileges of employees or students will be made by the Department

Boston University may withhold an employee's or student's driving privileges despite the individual's driver license being in "good standing" with a state motor vehicle agency.