



**THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC

**Responsible University Official:** Senior Associate Vice President for Safety and Security

**Responsible Office:** Health & Emergency Management Services

**Last Revised Date:** March 15, 2017

## VEHICLE SAFETY

### Policy Statement

It is the policy of the university that all University-Owned, Leased or Rented Vehicles be operated in a safe and responsible manner in accordance with local and federal regulations, that all operators possess a valid driver’s license from a U.S. state or territory, and that all operators follow the requirements and procedures set forth in the university’s Vehicle Safety Policy.

### Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safe operation of University-Owned, Leased or Rented Vehicles, to encourage the safety of drivers and passengers, and to minimize physical damage to the university fleet. The university currently operates University-Owned or Leased vehicles distributed among numerous departments. Faculty, staff and students also rent vehicles for university-related activities.

### Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff and students

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## **Policy**

Health & Emergency Management Services performs several tasks for the university to assist in encouraging vehicle safety, including performing motor vehicle record checks for *prospective* drivers (described below), advising departmental coordinators of any suspended licenses or unlicensed drivers, and investigating accidents in which University-Owned, Leased, Rented Vehicles or personal vehicles, used for university business, are involved. The Office of Risk Management manages accident claims involving University-Owned, Leased or Rented Vehicles or personal vehicles used for university business.

In order to operate a University-Owned, Leased or Rented Vehicle or drive a personal vehicle on behalf of the university, all prospective drivers must have a current and valid driver’s license and any licenses for vehicles requiring additional licensure for operation. Drivers also must agree to operate vehicles in accordance with applicable local and federal laws, as well as university policies. Seat belts must be worn by drivers and passengers at all times, and drivers must comply with applicable law that precludes or restricts the use of handheld mobile devices or other electronic devices while driving. Drivers must also have authorization or direction from their supervisors, directors, or advisors (in the case of students) that such travel is within the scope of the individual’s duties.

### **For drivers of University-Owned or Leased vehicles**

Along with the aforementioned requirements, to operate a University-Owned or Leased Vehicle, all prospective drivers must meet the following:

- A. Must possess a valid and current driver’s license from a U.S. state or territory;
- B. Must notify Health & Emergency Management Services immediately of any suspension or expiration of a driver’s license. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or termination.
- C. Must complete and submit an [Annual Driver Authorization Application](#), which allows Health & Emergency Management Services to obtain the driving records of the applicant; and

- D. Must complete Health & Emergency Management Services' driver safety training program; (faculty and staff are exempt from this requirement, unless they are operating 12 passenger vans).

Departments are responsible for allowing only approved faculty, staff or students to operate vehicles on their behalf, and are responsible for maintenance and registration of all departmental vehicles.

University-Owned or Leased Vehicles must not be used for personal use. If it is determined that faculty and staff are using such vehicles for personal use, their driving privileges will be suspended immediately and they may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **For drivers of University-Rented Vehicles for university-related business**

Departments are responsible for allowing only approved faculty, staff or students to rent and operate vehicles on their behalf. All employees are responsible for notifying their departmental managers of any license suspension that may affect their department's operations.

Students driving University-Rented Vehicles must always purchase the physical damage insurance offered by the rental company. Faculty and staff driving University-Rented Vehicles domestically do not need to purchase the physical damage insurance offered through the rental company. However, when faculty and staff rent vehicles internationally, they must purchase the additional physical damage insurance.

### **Use of a vehicle for university-related business during inclement weather**

Each department authorizing university travel must adhere to the following guidelines:

- A. When planning the travel route, check the forecast to see if inclement weather is predicted.
- B. During inclement weather, travelers should follow guidelines set forth by the National Weather Service.
- C. Drivers should also rely on local law enforcement for additional guidance during inclement weather.
- D. During inclement weather drivers are to use appropriate caution.
- E. When driving in inclement weather and conditions are deemed dangerous or unsafe, immediately cease all travel and find the nearest shelter or hotel.

The university will defray the cost of an overnight stay if inclement weather impedes safe university travel. The extension of stays due to weather conditions must be approved by the advisor of record/supervisor.

## **Accidents**

All vehicle accidents involving University-Owned, Leased or Rented Vehicles, or personal vehicles being used for university business, must be reported immediately to the Office of Risk Management and GWPD. If a driver is involved in an accident, the university reserves the right to request a copy of the driver's motor vehicle driving record from the appropriate Department of Motor Vehicles.

For accidents involving a personal vehicle being used for university business, the driver's personal vehicle insurance shall be the primary form of insurance coverage. If the loss limit exceeds the driver's personal vehicle insurance coverage, the university's insurance would apply secondarily.

## **Passenger Vans**

Due to multiple advisories and warnings issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regarding the risk of rollover of 15 passenger vans, the university will not permit the use of 15 passenger vans. Drivers who will operate 10-12 passenger vans must first submit to Health & Emergency Management Services a completed 10-12 Passenger Van Safety Acknowledgment Form, and complete the mandatory training.

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## **Definitions**

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**University-Owned or Leased Vehicle:** a vehicle that is registered in the university's name or that has monthly lease terms.

**University-Rented Vehicle:** a vehicle that is used for a short period of time, that is not registered in the university's name, and was rented from an established vehicle rental agency.

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## **Forms**

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[Annual Driver Authorization Application](#)

[PA Drivers Licence Release](#)

[10-12 Passenger Van Safety Acknowledgment Form](#)

[Motor Vehicle Accident Report](#)

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## Contacts

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Contact	Telephone	Email
Health & Emergency Management Services	202-994-4347	<a href="mailto:safety@gwu.edu">safety@gwu.edu</a>

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## Document History

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- **Last Reviewed Date:** June 26, 2018
- **Last Revised Date:** March 15, 2017
- **Policy Origination Date:** February 11, 2002

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## Who Approved This Policy

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Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

*This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance's](#) home page.*