

Student Travel Guidelines

General Application of Travel Guidelines

In compliance with Senate Bill 263, the following provisions apply to any student who travels more than 25 miles from campus to an activity or event that is organized or sponsored by the University, funded by the University, using a vehicle owned or leased by the University; or travel required by a student organization registered at the University. These provisions apply to faculty, staff and students who engage in transporting students off campus on any University business or related travel activities. The following regulations are considered to be a minimum standard; departments may mandate additional procedures. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the suspension of student travel for the department responsible for arranging the trip.

Access to Forms

It is highly recommended that students access the forms provided online. These are the most up-to-date and will save time when completing and submitting them to the Office of the Dean of Students. Forms can be accessed at this link: <http://osa.tamuk.edu>

Travel Planning and Documentation Requirements

It is recommended that a designated staff member(s) and/or faculty accompany each student travel group. In the event that an advisor cannot attend the function with the student group, the group should become familiar with expectations for behavior and all procedures pertaining to student travel. The group should plan its itinerary in a manner that divides up the trip into reasonable segments, avoids driver fatigue, and incorporates the necessary safety precautions.

All travel paperwork must be turned in to the Dean of Students Office no less than two business days before the trip is to begin. The DOS Office will review all paperwork for accuracy and completeness. The Office will keep a copy of the paperwork and one copy will be sent to UPD.

Organizations must submit the following paperwork as a complete packet:

1. Trip Itinerary (one for entire group)
2. Travel Passenger List (one for entire group)
3. Emergency Notification Form (one for each traveler)
4. Assumption of Risk Indemnification Agreement (one for each traveler)
5. The Driver/Advisor Emergency Notification form (one for each driver)
6. At least one copy of the Incident/Accident Report should be taken with the group.
 - The organization should keep a copy of the Emergency Notification & the Assumption of Risk Indemnification Agreement forms while traveling. The information will be needed in the case of an accident or other incident.

Modes of Travel

1. Privately Owned Vehicles: Students who use a privately owned vehicle or any vehicle other than those owned or leased by rental agencies for travel to and from activities and events organized and sponsored by the University are expected to follow the safety requirements related to student travel set out in this policy. Students driving must have a valid state driver's license, motor vehicle insurance and a current state inspection when using a privately owned vehicle. The driver assumes all liability for passengers.
2. Air Travel: Students traveling by air transportation must comply with all federal laws regulating air travel and the rules of the specific airline. This includes laws and rules regarding carry-on baggage and baggage weight restrictions.
3. Rental vehicles or chartered buses: Check with each private carrier about their specific policies. Rental car companies have minimum age requirements for drivers. Many rental companies offer insurance on their vehicles. If the driver elects to not purchase this, then the driver assumes all

liability for damage (property or personal), depending on the individual's own vehicle insurance policy.

Risk Management Safety Guidelines for Travel

1. All occupants must use seat belts and remain seated when the vehicle is in motion.
2. The number of occupants in a vehicle shall not exceed the number of working seat belts in the vehicle. Loading of the vehicle shall be done in accordance with vehicle manufacturers' recommendations. Vehicles may not be loaded with more passengers than manufacturers' recommended passenger load.
3. Occupants and driver of the vehicle must comply with all university travel guidelines.
 - a. Drivers will comply with all applicable traffic laws, speed limits and regulations at all times.
 - b. The driver shall confront rowdy or disorderly behavior by the passengers that may cause driver distractions.
 - c. Smoking or driving while under the influence of impairing drugs or alcohol is prohibited.
 - d. Use of radar/laser detection devices is prohibited in the vehicle.
 - e. Use of headphones or earphones is prohibited by the driver.
 - f. Use of a cellular/mobile phone must be limited by the driver.
 - g. No alcohol is to be in the vehicle at any time.
 - h. Driver must be 18 years of age or older (or meet the rental company's age requirement).
 - i. Driver must possess valid U.S. Class C Operator's License and have adequate insurance coverage for the vehicle they are operating.
 - j. Verified good driver record in the past 12 months (verification will be based upon a Motor Vehicle Records check by the University Police Department).
 - k. Have the completed travel forms on file with the Dean of Students Office TWO days before the trip.

TAMUK Department of Physical Plant will maintain a list of qualified drivers. Directors and department heads will verify that the faculty, staff or student employees who serve as drivers are on the authorized driving list or have met the above requirements prior to each trip.

4. The availability of University vehicles for student/group travel is limited. When using a university vehicle, it will be equipped with the TAMUK Emergency Road Kit, which includes the following:
 - a. Traffic Control Devices (road side reflectors, flares, etc)
 - b. First aid kit
 - c. Approved fire extinguisher
 - d. Flashlight

It is recommended that operators of all vehicles, including privately owned vehicles, obtain the TAMUK Emergency Road Kit (available for checkout from the Physical Plant Department), be CPR/First Aid certified, and carry water, a map of Texas and a cellular phone.

5. Operator fatigue should be considered when selecting drivers. On lengthy trips, alternate drivers should be used to avoid fatigue. It is recommended that the maximum number of hours that a driver may drive in any twenty-four hour period is eight consecutive hours. Each operator, at his or her discretion, should take a 15 minute break every 3 hours.

Operators should recognize that driving a vehicle for long hours is challenging, and therefore should practice certain safety precautions to stay alert and safe. To help reduce fatigue operators should:

- a. Get enough sleep prior to the trip.
- b. Schedule trips during normal waking hours. Establish a reasonable arrival time to the activity or event.
- c. Avoid medication before driving, especially if the label warns against operating vehicles while taking the medication.
- d. Keep the vehicle cool by keeping the window open, a vent cracked, or by using the air conditioner.
- e. Divide the trip into reasonable segments. Take frequent short breaks.
- f. When drowsy, stop for the night or pull off at a safe place and rest.
- g. Avoid any type of drug to stay awake.

In the Event of an Accident

The following procedures should be used whenever members of a University group are involved in an accident, regardless of the extent of the damage:

1. Stop immediately; take necessary steps to prevent another accident; and notify the proper law enforcement agency and/or emergency medical services (9-1-1) so that an official report to document the accident is made.
2. Render aid to the injured until help arrives.
3. Call the University Police Department at 361-593-2611. Do not call the family members of the injured University students or employees. The UPD will do this in accordance with University policies.
4. The following information will need to be obtained from the other driver in the event of an accident:
a) year of vehicle b) make and model of vehicle c) color of vehicle d) license plate number, and e) drivers license number of the other driver.
5. DO NOT make any statement, oral or written, as to who was at fault. Any admission of fault may impair the insurer's ability to defend a case of questionable legal liability. Appropriate legal authority will decide fault or liability.
6. Record the names, addresses and phone numbers of all witnesses.
7. Provide all required information to the law enforcement officer.
8. If in a University vehicle and it is inoperable, the driver should contact the Physical Plant at 361-593-3313 for towing instructions. When towing a vehicle, remove the logbook, keys, fuel cards and all property, which might be lost or stolen.

When returning to campus, the driver must immediately contact the Physical Plant to follow up on the completion of the accident report forms.

To Obtain Travel Forms

Travel forms and specific instructions to complete the forms are available online at <http://osa.tamuk.edu>.