Maintenance & Responsibility for University Vehicles

**Introduction**
Each department that has University vehicles is responsible for the proper maintenance of those vehicles and must designate a representative in the department to be the Departmental Vehicle Coordinator. The Department Vehicle Coordinator will be the primary contact for vehicle issues along with responsibilities for vehicle maintenance, authorized drivers and vehicle use.

**Policy Statement**
University vehicles shall be operated and serviced in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner. Each department that has a University vehicle will have a vehicle preventative maintenance program listing the required maintenance activities for each type of vehicle it owns or leases.

- At a minimum, departments that have a University vehicle shall follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule for each vehicle.
- If the vehicle mileage use is low, preventative maintenance is to be performed at least once per year by the University's Fleet Management service provider.
- All maintenance and repairs performed on University vehicles must be documented and retained for the life of the vehicle.

The department should also include plans for replacing vehicles when they have been in operation for 7 years. When a vehicle is due to be replaced due to age and/or mileage, departments should review the need for the vehicle and consider alternatives such as Zipcar.

**Responsibilities**

**Authorized Driver:** Driver of University vehicles must:
- Hold a valid driver's license
- Received Departmental approval to operate a University vehicle
- Properly reserve and sign out a vehicle consistent with departmental procedures.
- Operate the vehicle in a safe manner consistent with Brown Policy and State Department Motor Vehicle laws and regulations.
- Conduct a vehicle safety inspection prior to the daily use of a University vehicle.

**Department Vehicle Coordinator:** Designated representative of the department who is the primary contact for vehicle issues including vehicle maintenance, authorized drivers and vehicle use.

**Fleet Maintenance Service Provider:** A supplier who has been retained by the University to perform vehicle maintenance and repair of University vehicles. See Procedures section for authorized Fleet Maintenance Service Providers and Forms/instructions for contact information.

**Fleet Manager:** Representative of Environmental Health & Safety who oversees the management of the Brown Vehicle Fleet.

**Procedures**

**Fleet Maintenance Service Providers:**
To assist departments in meeting vehicle maintenance requirements, the University has partnered with Enterprise Fleet Management and BTS Tire & Service Store in Pawtucket to provide regular repairs and routine maintenance on all University vehicles.

**Required Fleet Management Cards:**
Departments with vehicles are required to pick-up Enterprise Fleet Management Maintenance Cards.
from the Fleet Manager at Brown (863-2206). The maintenance card includes a key fob card that can be attached to the vehicle’s key chain. If you have multiple sets of keys you may get multiple key fobs.

When a vehicle is taken in for service please present the Enterprise Maintenance Card to the service center. This card will identify your vehicle to Enterprise and provide a means of payment to the service center.

**Department Billing Charge Responsibility:**
Departments are responsible for reviewing their monthly maintenance charges on the Enterprise Fleet Management website and checking that against their Workday cost center charges. Should there be any changes in the status of the department vehicle(s) please contact the Fleet Manager.

**Safety Inspections:**
All University owned vehicles must have a valid motor vehicle safety inspection completed biennially with the following exceptions:
- New motor vehicles not previously titled and registered are not required to be inspected for the two year period following their model year of manufacture.
- Specialty vehicles, such as solar cars and low-speed vehicles, do not require State of Rhode Island safety inspections.
- Some vehicles may be required by State of Rhode Island Law to have annual inspections.

**Vehicle Care:**
Drivers are responsible for the day-to-day care of the vehicles they are using. Under no circumstances should a university driver operate a vehicle that may be unsafe or ignore an unsafe condition. Follow the advice listed below to maintain the vehicle in a safe, operable condition:

- **Fluids:** Make (at least) weekly checks of fluids on the vehicle and fill as necessary.
  - Have your vehicle checked by the fleet maintenance garage (BTS) if you are low on engine oil, automatic transmission fluid, power steering fluid, brake fluid, or engine coolant.
  - In order to prevent freeze-up, **do not add plain water** to the radiator, coolant reservoir or windshield washer container.

- **Leaks:** Look on the ground under the vehicle for fluid leaks. Report any leaks immediately to the department’s vehicle coordinator.

- **Tires:** Visually inspect the tires daily.
  - Look for imbedded nails
  - Check regularly for uneven wear and for proper air pressure.

  - Correct air pressure is a major contributor to extended tire life.
  - Recommended tire pressure may be found on the driver’s door post or in the vehicle’s owner’s manual.
  - Tire pressure gauges should be kept in the vehicle glove box.

- **Flats:** DO NOT drive the vehicle with a flat tire as it may ruin the tire and/or the rim and your department may be held responsible for the damages.
  - Call the roadside assistance phone number which is located on the fuel use/vehicle maintenance card for assistance with flats.

- **Damage:** Check the vehicle frequently for body damage.
  - Report any damage promptly to your department vehicle coordinator, and
  - Complete an Insurance Office auto accident report form.

- **Lights:** Check exterior lights and turn signals regularly for proper operation.
• **Noises:** Be alert for unusual noises that may signal mechanical problems.

• **Gauges:** The following gauges/lights indicate a potential problem. Have the vehicle checked as soon as possible. Problem indicators are:
  - The temperature gauge reads abnormally hot
  - The oil pressure gauge reads low,
  - The red critical engine light is “on”
  - The amber caution light (check/service engine light, power loss light or emissions light) in the late model vehicles is “on”

• **Visibility:** In winter months, clear snow and ice from windshield and windows to maintain clear visibility. This is required by RI General Law:
  [http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE31/31-23/31-23-16.HTM](http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE31/31-23/31-23-16.HTM)

Frequently Asked Questions

**What do I do if I am in a traffic accident in a University vehicle?**

- Never leave the scene of an accident. Call Public Safety for EMS services if there are any injuries and for reporting the accident at 863-4111. If away from campus, call 911.
- All off-campus accidents must be reported immediately to the local police department.
- Contact your supervisor immediately after contacting authorities & EMS personnel.
- Make no statement that would assume any obligation or admit liability.
- Provide the other party with insurance information contained in the vehicle, as well as your name, address and phone number.
- Complete the Brown University [Auto Accident Report Form](#) within 48 hours and submit to Insurance & Purchasing Services, fax 863-1566.
- Rental car accidents must be reported to the rental agency as well as Insurance & Purchasing Services.
- Failing to report an accident to Insurance & Purchasing Services within 48 hours is a violation of safeDRIVE and will result in financial penalties to the department.

**Am I covered by University insurance when using a University Vehicle?**
Yes, as long as you are driving on University business.

**Do I get reimbursed for gas when using a University Vehicle? If so, how?**
If the provided Wright Express Fuel Card for that vehicle is not being used, and you use your own funds, you can be reimbursed through the Expense Report process in Workday.

**What do I do if I am out of town and require a vehicle repair when using a University Vehicle? A flat tire?**
Call the toll free number on the Enterprise Fleet Maintenance card and assistance can be arranged 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Related Policies [Vehicle Maintenance Policy](#)
Policy Owner [Contact(s)]
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