safeDRIVE: Policy and Procedures for Driver Safety and Motor Vehicle Use

Introduction
The safeDRIVE Policy provides procedures and safety guidelines for faculty, staff and student use of University vehicles. Adhering to this policy enables the University to provide its auto insurance coverage for those who drive a University vehicle while conducting University business.

Policy Statement
It is the policy of Brown University that only authorized drivers affiliated with Brown University are permitted to drive a University vehicle. Use of a University vehicle is restricted to authorized University related activities.

If you are faculty or staff, you do not need to become an authorized driver for occasional business rentals that are less than six times per year. However, this exception does not apply if you are driving a 12-15 passenger van. All 12-15 passenger van drivers must become a Brown authorized driver.

Any damages and/or liabilities arising out of the personal use of a University vehicle are the sole responsibility of the driver. The University will expect the driver's personal auto insurance to respond in the event of an accident or any other event arising out of such personal use.

Failure to comply with these procedures set forth, by a department or driver, will result in the department bearing a minimum of $2,000, up to 100% of the financial burden incurred by the University.

Definitions

**Authorized Driver:** A driver who meets and completes the driver qualification process.

**University Vehicle:** A vehicle that is owned, leased or rented for University business.

**Auto Liability Insurance:** Insurance that provides coverage for the non-University vehicle that is involved in an auto accident with the University Vehicle.

**Auto Physical Insurance:** Insurance that provides coverage for damage to a University vehicle.

Responsibilities

**Departments with vehicles and/or drivers:**

- Identify a departmental vehicle coordinator who will:
  - Be familiar with safeDRIVE: Policy and Procedures for Driver Safety and Motor Vehicle Use.
  - Ensure that the appropriate authorization process takes place for all drivers prior to driving.
  - Instruct drivers to report any damage or needed repairs.
  - Coordinate with Insurance & Purchasing Services to follow the fuel use card program.
  - Coordinate with Insurance & Purchasing Services to follow the University’s vehicle maintenance program.
  - Ensure that departmental vehicle rentals follow University Auto Rental Policies such as: Enterprise and National Contract #XZ49501 (refer to the Rental Car section on the Auto Insurance webpage.)
• Vehicle Maintenance: University vehicles shall be operated and serviced in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner. At a minimum
  ◦ Departments with University vehicles will follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule for each vehicle.
  ◦ Vehicles are to be maintained in accordance with the University’s vehicle maintenance program.
  ◦ All maintenance and repairs performed on University vehicles must be documented and retained for the life of the vehicle.

• Safety Inspections: All University owned vehicles must have a valid State of Rhode Island motor vehicle safety inspection sticker displayed on the vehicle’s windshield.
  ◦ 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 electric cars and low-speed vehicles do not require safety inspections. However, they should be maintained in accordance with their manufacturer’s recommendations.
  ◦ Instruct drivers to routinely inspect vehicles including, but not limited to:
    ▪ Oil/fuel levels
    ▪ Windshield wipers and fluid
    ▪ Tire inflation/tire condition
    ▪ Lights
    ▪ Horn
    ▪ Leaks (coolant or oil on the ground under vehicle)

• Maintain vehicle use logs for records of maintenance, inspection and driver use so the department knows who had possession of the vehicle at all times. (Vehicle use logs should include a process for reporting damage and/or service issues to the vehicle coordinator.)

• Place insurance ID cards, registration and accident report kits in each vehicle.
  ◦ Insurance ID cards and accident report kits are sent to the department vehicle coordinator prior to July 1 each year.
  ◦ Registration renewals are coordinated through Insurance & Purchasing Services.

• Remove any unsafe vehicle from service.

• Work with Insurance & Purchasing Services to surplus, trade in, or acquire new University vehicles.

• Pay for the annual cost of insuring and maintaining the department's vehicles.
  ◦ Bear the cost of insurance deductibles in the event of damage to a University vehicle,
  ◦ Incur additional costs if safeDRIVE Policies are not followed.

**To file a claim for damage to a University owned or rented vehicle**
2. If a rental vehicle, also provide a copy of the damage report submitted to the rental agency together with a copy of the rental agreement.
3. Insurance & Purchasing Services will guide you as to obtaining a repair estimate for the damage. When Insurance & Purchasing Services authorizes the repair, the department will proceed with the repair.
4. There is a $1,000 damage deductible for the expense to repair the vehicle that the department will bear.
5. If another vehicle is involved in the accident, there is a liability claim deductible of $1,000 that the department will bear, as well as a damage deductible.
6. All claims must be processed within 90 days of the incident.

**University Drivers. Responsibilities include:**

• All drivers of University vehicles are required to become Authorized Drivers prior to driving for University business.
If driving is an essential function of a position being filled, selected job candidates will be subject to a motor vehicle check and, when hired, must pass the driver training course prior to being authorized to drive.

MVR’s and training will be reviewed every 5 years. The driver training course and authorization process is also required for those who are expected to drive on a regular basis and, for these drivers, the University will check their motor vehicle record on a periodic or as needed basis.

*Drivers of vehicles that fall under the USDOT regulations are subject to more frequent screenings and a more stringent training program.

- Insurance & Purchasing Services will send a notice to drivers and their department vehicle coordinator when it is time to renew their authorization and training.
- Additional training may be required if a driver becomes disqualified due to changes in their driving record.

**Driver Qualifications:**
- Minimum 18 years old for operating a University owned vehicle
- Minimum 21 years old for operating a 12-15 passenger van (owned, leased or rented)
- Minimum 21 years old for operating a leased or rented vehicle
- Valid United States driver's license held for a minimum of 2 years
- Successfully pass appropriate training for the type of vehicle being operating (see below)
- Acceptable MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) check

**Motor Vehicle Records Review:** Any of the following violations within the last two years on your motor vehicle record render you ineligible to drive a University vehicle for two years from the date of violation:
- DWI
- Driving under the influence
- Negligent homicide
- Suspended License (suspensions may be reviewed on a case by case basis, based on violation)
- Using a motor vehicle for commission of a felony
- Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
- Operating a motor vehicle without the owner’s consent
- Permitting an unlicensed driver to drive
- Reckless or careless and negligent driving
- Hit and Run or leaving the scene of an accident with injury or death resulting, or property damage in excess of $1,000
- A combined total of three citations in two years of moving violations, at-fault accidents or any other Brown University driving policy violation

**Procedures**
**To become an Authorized Driver:**

- Complete the on line [Request for Driver Authorization & Training form](#).
- An email with log in instructions for driver training will be sent to the Authorized Driver applicant.
- Please print the Release and Applicant Information Form, after completion of the online Request for Driver Authorization & Training form. Complete, sign and return the printed form to Insurance & Purchasing Services, which gives Brown University your consent to conduct a motor vehicle record check.
  - The Authorized Driver applicant and your department will be notified via email when the Authorization has been approved.
- All Authorized Drivers must agree to notify their department vehicle coordinator if their driver’s license is revoked or suspended for any reason.

**Training Requirements:** Specific training is required if the Authorized Driver meets the following
criteria:

- If driving is indicated as part of the essential functions of your job duties on the Human Resources Job Description Form or drivers routinely drive a University owned, rented or leased vehicle.
- If driving a 12-15 passenger van (specific for vehicle type).
- All student drivers.

Training:

- Training is available through a web based driver training program for passenger vans and for general defensive driving.
  - During completion of the on line driver authorization form, specific questions will be asked which will provide information to assign appropriate training for the Authorized Driver applicant.
- The online training is made available through Insurance & Purchasing Services at no charge to University departments.
  - However, if a driver is provided with a user ID and password for the online driver training and does not complete the course within 30 days, the department will be charged a fee of $25.
- Commercial Motor Vehicle driver’s training is provided via DVD through the Center for Learning and Professional Development.

Driver and Passenger Safety: Drivers must be at least 18 years old, or 21 years old for operating rented or leased vehicles and 12-15 passenger vans, and in possession of a valid United States driver's license at all times when operating a vehicle for University related use. Special RI license requirements may need to be met for certain types of driving e.g. chauffeur's license or CDL.

- Safety Requirements
  - Driver must operate vehicles in accordance with applicable local, state and federal laws and University policies.
  - Smoking is prohibited in all University vehicles.
  - The number of passengers permitted in any vehicle may not exceed the number of seat belts. All occupants of the vehicle are required to wear seatbelts.
  - Texting while driving is illegal in Rhode Island and several other states. Stop the vehicle in a safe area to use a cell phone or have a passenger use the cell phone.
- Safety Guidelines
  - For long distance trips, if there is more than one authorized driver, such drivers should consider rotating every two hours.
    - 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.
    - Avoid driving past midnight.
  - Avoid conditions that lead to loss of control
    - Driving while sleepy or inattentive,
    - Driving too fast for road conditions, or
    - Engaging in any other activities such as cell phone use that could lead to distraction.
  - For 24 hour roadside assistance, if needed, call the number on the vehicle maintenance card.
  - If the weather is inclement, stop and stay overnight in a safe place.
  - Turn off the vehicle, remove the keys, and lock the vehicle when it is left unattended.
  - Avoid distracted driving. Be familiar with the cell phone use laws in the state you are
driving in. [http://www.iihs.org/laws/cellphonelaws.aspx]

- **12-15 Passenger Van Use:** Please review the information available on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website regarding safe operations and special handling considerations for 12-15 passenger van use.
  [http://www.safercar.gov/Vehicle+Shoppers/Passenger+Van+Safety]
  - Top Safety Tips for 15-Passenger Vans
    - **Seat Belts:** All occupants need to wear seat belts at all times.
    - **Tire Pressure:** Inspect the tires and check tire pressure before each use.
    - **Driver:** A 15-passenger van should only be operated by trained, experienced drivers who operate these vehicles on a regular basis.
    - **Attention:** Driver should be well rested and limit use of cell phones, conversations with other passengers, and limit drive time to eight hours per 24-hour period.

- **Trailer Towing:** Towing a trailer adds a significant risk to automobile operations. Important safety information regarding towing vehicles can be found at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website: [http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/equipment/towing/towing.pdf].

- **Accident Reporting:**
  - 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.

**Motor Vehicle Records Criteria:** The University reserves the right to temporarily or permanently terminate driving privileges on the basis of an individual's driving record, regardless of when incidents occurred.

- Driving privileges for operating vehicles on behalf of the University may be revoked and disciplinary action may result, up to and including termination of employment, due to accident or violation experience, falsification of records, or any failure to comply with these regulations.
- If involved in three incidents, a driver may lose their driving privileges. (A singular incident that in the judgment of the University is sufficiently severe may also result in a termination of driving privileges.)
- Reinstatement of driving privileges may be granted upon the completion of further driver training or evidence that other appropriate measures have been taken and approved by Insurance & Purchasing Services.

**Violations:** Violations are not considered reimbursable costs under the University's Travel Policy. All violations, including parking and speeding tickets, will be the responsibility of the driver, not Brown University.

**Forms/Instructions** [Auto Accident Report Form](#)

[Highway Safety Topics - Safety Laws](#)
[Passenger Van Safety](#)
Request for Driver Authorization & Training Form
Trailer Towing
Wright Fuel Express Card

Frequently Asked Questions

How long does the authorization process take?
Training can be assigned within 24 hours. However, conducting an MVR check may take up to two weeks, depending on the state from which your driver's license is issued.

What states require a special MVR release and not just the general form available online?
If your driver's license is issued from California, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Washington, Guam, Puerto Rico or the US Virgin Islands, contact Environmental Health & Safety for specific forms and procedures.

What if I change departments that I work for? Do I need to repeat the authorization process?
No. The training and MVR check is valid for 5 years.

What if I change the vehicle that I drive?
You will not need to repeat the MVR process, but you will have to take training pertinent to the vehicle that you drive.

What if I have a driver's license from another country?
You will not be permitted to drive a University vehicle.

What if I get into an auto accident?
It is important that you follow the laws of the state that you are in and always call emergency personal such as the police or ambulance. Refer to the Accident Reporting section of this policy.

Related Policies
Vehicle Maintenance Program
Travel Policy: Ground Transportation

Related Information
Program Oversight: The Vehicle Oversight Committee is chaired by the Director of Insurance & Purchasing Services. The committee is made up of representatives from Insurance & Purchasing Services, Human Resources, Environmental Health & Safety, and the Dean of the Faculty office.

This committee meets on a periodic basis to provide oversight to the ongoing management of the University's safeDRIVE Policy, including Commercial Motor Vehicles.

The Vehicle Oversight Committee is responsible for:

- Accident review
- Standards for driver qualifications
- Standards for vehicle usage including standards for University fleet
- Standards for vehicle safety programs

Use of Personal Vehicles: Mileage reimbursement for use of an employee's personal vehicle to conduct University business is outlined in the University's travel policy. This reimbursement is intended to cover the costs to operate an employee's vehicle, including insurance costs. The University's insurance is always excess over any personal automobile insurance carried by the employee, who uses his/her personal auto on University business. The University recommends that employees who regularly use their vehicles on University business maintain auto liability insurance with limits of at least $100,000 for bodily injury.

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