



<b>SUBJECT:</b> Passenger Van Safety	<b>Effective Date:</b> 01-3-23	<b>Policy Number:</b> 4.1.8	
	<b>Supersedes:</b> 09-20-16	<b>Page</b> 1	<b>Of</b> 3
	<b>Responsible Authority:</b> Vice President, Administrative Affairs Director, Environmental Health and Safety		

**APPLICABILITY:**

This policy is applicable to all members of the University community, including all trustees, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and other users of University-owned, leased, loaned, or rented 12-person and 15-person passenger vans (“Passenger Vans”).

**DEFINITIONS:**

**12-Person Van:** Commonly referred to as a 12-passenger van. This is a van that has an official capacity of no more than 11-passengers and a van driver.

**15-Person Van:** This is a van that has an official capacity of no more than 14-passengers and a van driver. Pursuant to this policy, no more than 10 passengers will be permitted to accompany an authorized driver in a 15-person van.

**Authorized Driver:** As defined by [University Policy 4.1.4](#).

**Pre-Departure Vehicle Inspection:** Prior to departing on the trip, the vehicle driver will conduct a visual inspection including the areas of tire pressure, passenger and cargo weight distribution, seat belts, and driver road visibility.

**Van Occupant Observer:** The individual designated by the driver to be seated in the front passenger seat of a van who will monitor passenger activity to ensure adherence to occupant safety requirements. The front seat passenger must be at least 14 years of age if the vehicle is equipped with a passenger-side air bag.

**Van Safety Training:** An online training covering basic safety when operating vans.

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The University recognizes the unique safety measures required to maintain the safe operation of Passenger Vans. This policy set forth the guidelines, responsibilities, and procedures for the safe use of Passenger Vans. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring department to determine authorized travel and drivers. This policy is intended to be consistent with the requirements of University Policy 4.1.4, *Use of University Vehicles*, and in any case where a conflict exists between this Policy and University Policy 4.1.4, Policy 4.1.4 shall govern.

Violations of the policies and laws described herein by an employee or student are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion in accordance with applicable university and the Florida Board of Governors regulations and/or collective bargaining agreements. Such disciplinary actions may also include reprimand or suspension. Violations of these policies and laws by any other users are grounds for terminating their use of university automobiles and other appropriate sanctions.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Departments: Ensure that storage, maintenance, and operation of university passenger vans is in accordance with this policy.

Drivers: Operate university passenger vans in accordance with this policy.

Environmental Health and Safety: Oversight and enforcement of this policy.

## **PROCEDURES:**

### A. Driver Requirements:

- Be familiar with and comply with University Policy 4.1.4.
- Only Authorized University drivers, as defined by University Policy 4.1.4, may operate a Passenger Van.
- To operate a Passenger Van, an individual must complete Van Safety Training for 12-15 person vans.
- The driver shall not eat or use her/his cell phone or other electronic device while operating a Passenger Van.
- Anyone interested in becoming an authorized driver must present a copy of their current valid driver's license consistent with the provisions of University Policy 4.1.4.

### B. Passenger Seating and Cargo Storage

- If operating a 15-person van, the backseat must be removed or remain unoccupied. The maximum number of people who may be transported in a 15-person van is 11 (10 passengers and 1 authorized driver).
- Trailers may be towed provided that the towing capacity and the weight of the trailer hitch under load conditions meets the manufacture's recommendations. If the vehicle is a rental, trailer use must be approved and the use must be consistent with the terms of the rental policy.
- Any internal cargo that is placed in the van (luggage, equipment, etc.) must be secured, is not to be loaded above the top of the seat level and should be distributed evenly. Cargo should be placed forward of the rear axle.

C. Pre-Departure Vehicle Inspection

- Prior to loading the van, an interior and exterior inspection shall be conducted by the driver utilizing the 15-Passenger Van Driver Checklist & Reference Guide to ensure van safety before departure. Once the trip is completed, the form shall be maintained by the respective department for a time period of four (4) years following the inspection date.

D. Occupant Safety

- The van occupant observer shall advise the driver to stop the vehicle if passengers become a driver distraction or any passenger removes their seatbelt while the vehicle is in motion.
- No single driver shall operate the vehicle for more than 4 hours continuously. One 15-minute driver break is required on any travel of 4 hours or greater.
- Driving time more than 8 hours will require a secondary driver to be designated by the department before the trip begins. The designated secondary driver must have completed all training requirements for Passenger Vans.
- Travel shall not occur between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. If extenuating circumstances occur, approval to travel during this time must be received from the Department Director, or designee.
- Drivers should be well rested and focused on their driving duties.
- The headlights shall be on at all times when the vehicle is in operation.
- The driver shall not exceed 65 miles per hour regardless of the posted speed limit.
- Drivers must be aware that towing a fully loaded trailer will adversely affect the time and distance required to pull into traffic or stop the van and may alter the van's normal handling characteristics.

**RELATED INFORMATION:**

University Policy 4.1.4 – Use of University Vehicles.

**INITIATING AUTHORITY:** Director, Environmental Health and Safety

POLICY APPROVAL  
(For use by the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 4.1.8

*Initiating Authority*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Wendy Ash Graves

*Policies and Procedures*

*Review Committee Chair*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Donovan Diaz

*President*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Dr. Stacy Volnick

Signed copies on