Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 7780: Use of University Vehicles

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1. General

University vehicles may be used for only University related business, and generally are provided for trips only when the driver is a University employee. In certain circumstances, students, contractors, and community members may be granted permission to drive University vehicles. Passengers are limited to University employees, students participating in authorized trips, and invited guests engaged in University related activities.

When not in use, a University vehicle must be secured and legally parked near the department or work site of the user to whom it is assigned. Personal use of University vehicles is prohibited. Transportation between the University and the driver’s residence is normally prohibited, even if the driver is required to return to the campus to perform his or her job outside of regular business hours. If a driver needs a vehicle to attend an out-of-town meeting, the driver may take the vehicle home to facilitate an early departure, but no personal use of the vehicle is allowed. In special circumstances, when job duties warrant, a vehicle may be provided to an employee as a condition of employment. All such employment agreements must specify the terms and conditions for the use of the vehicle and must have advance written approval by the University President.

This policy states rules regarding the use of University vehicles, which include any motorized (electric, gas, or diesel powered) vehicle operated on roadways. These rules are based on state and federal regulations, University policies, and the "The Right Way" brochure, mentioned in Section 10, herein.

2. University Vehicles
2.1. Rental Vehicles

The University maintains a small number of passenger vans for short term use by the University community. Only University employees, including student employees, may drive the University vehicles that are available for rental.

2.2. Vehicles Purchased by and Leased or Donated to Departments

Departments may purchase vehicles for departmental use with funds from contracts, grants, or other funding sources subject to the New Mexico State Purchasing Act, Procurement Code, University policies, and contract or grant restrictions. All main campus, Health Sciences Center, and UNM Hospital vehicles purchased by and leased or donated to a department must be checked in through the Automotive Center. Purchase orders must specify to the vendor that the vehicle is to be shipped directly to the Automotive Center. This is critical for inventory accuracy, placement of UNM vehicle decals, safety inspection, and insurance. UNM branch campuses must notify the Automotive Center when vehicles are purchased by and leased or donated to the campuses as soon as they are acquired. New vehicles with the capacity to carry more than ten (10) people that are purchased to primarily transport children between K-12 must meet all of the minimum federal safety requirements applicable to school buses.

2.2.1. Insurance Coverage

Departments will be charged a monthly fee that includes the cost of liability, comprehensive, and collision insurance. Comprehensive and collision coverage is subject to a $2,500 deductible. The insurance coverage extends to the use of University vehicles in other countries, with the exception of Mexico. Prior to traveling to other countries in a University vehicle, notify the Manager of Risk, Insurance, and Claims in to Mexico in a University vehicle, contact Safety and Risk Services. In the case of travel to Mexico, contacting Safety and Risk Services will ensure that the vehicle can be added to the Mexican Auto Liability Policy that the State Risk Management Department maintains for all state-owned vehicles.

2.2.2. Maintenance, Repairs, and Testing Requirements

The department is responsible for the costs of operating, maintaining, and repairing the vehicle, as well as replacement costs of vehicle parts.

Albuquerque campus departments should have all maintenance, repair work, and emissions testing done by the Automotive Center. If emergency maintenance or repair work is performed elsewhere, the service records must be forwarded to the Automotive Center. Branch campuses and off-site locations must have all non-emergency repairs
pre-authorized by the UNM Automotive Center. Maintenance and repair work service records must be forwarded to the UNM Automotive Center on a timely basis.

The University department, faculty, or staff member in charge of the trip shall make all reasonable efforts to prevent misuse of the vehicle, ensure the safety of the passengers and the care of the vehicle, and return the vehicle in a satisfactory state of repair. Abuse of any University vehicle will be justification for refusal to permit the use of vehicles in the future.

2.2.3. Color

University vehicles must generally be white. Vehicles acquired by the University subsequent to the effective date of this policy shall comply with this color requirement. Vehicles donated to the University do not need to be repainted; however, when the vehicle's paint requires refinishing it must be painted white.

2.2.4. Identification

All University vehicles must be numbered with two- or three-inch vinyl numbers, and must have a University of New Mexico decal or a University of New Mexico department-specific decal (approved in accordance with UAP 1010 (“University External Graphic Identification Standards”). Branch campuses must notify the Automotive Center when a vehicle needs to be assigned a number. Decal, stickers, signs, or other markings other than official University markings are prohibited on any University vehicle.

3. UNM Fleet Cards

UNM Fleet (fuel) Cards are assigned to University vehicles and may be used only for gas, oil, car washes, or emergency repairs.

3.1 Rental of University Vehicles

UNM employees who rent a University vehicle from the Automotive Center will be provided with a Fleet Card for their use while driving the vehicle. The driver is personally responsible for proper use of the card. When returning the vehicle, the driver must return the card and all credit card receipts to the Automotive Center.

3.2. Vehicles Purchased By or Leased or Donated to Departments

Drivers of University vehicles purchased by or leased or loaned to a department may use the UNM Fleet Card assigned to the vehicle. Fleet Cards are issued by the University Purchasing Department and may be recalled by the Purchasing Department if drivers do not comply with this policy. Drivers must forward copies of their credit card receipts for authorized automotive purchases to the individuals in their departments who are responsible for
administering the Fleet Cards. This must be done in a timely manner for account reconciliation purposes. Contact the Purchasing Department with any questions or concerns about the card.

4. Licensing and Training Requirements

4.1. Vehicle License

University vehicles are state owned. All motorized vehicles equipped for road or highway travel, boats, and trailers must be licensed in accordance with state law. Vehicle licenses are processed by the University Property Accounting Inventory Control Department.

4.2. Driver’s License and Safety Training

New Mexico residents who drive University vehicles are required to have a current New Mexico driver’s license. An out-of-state license may be used in place of a New Mexico driver’s license only if the driver is not a New Mexico resident and provides certification from the state that issued the license that the license is valid and current. The department or the out-of-state licensee bears the cost of obtaining the certification. International driver’s licenses will not be accepted.

All drivers of University vehicles must certify that they have completed the National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course (NSCDDC). The NSCDDC Certification of Completion is used as a University vehicle operator permit, and the certification must be renewed every five (5) years. The NSCDDC will be offered to non-UNM employees and students (including contractors, community members, retirees, and spouses) provided they pay for the cost of the course. In the case of contractors and community members, it may be appropriate in certain instances for departments to cover the cost of the NSCDDC.

Safety and Risk Services will check the driving records of all drivers requesting to drive University vehicles. The NSCDDC certification may be revoked if drivers of University vehicles have been convicted of a major traffic law violation.

For drivers of University vehicles who need a commercial driver’s license in order to perform their jobs, additional requirements apply.

Safety and Risk Services will check the driving records of all drivers requesting to drive University vehicles. An out-of-state license may be used in place of a New Mexico driver’s license only if the driver is not a New Mexico resident and provides certification from the state that issued the license that the license is valid and current. The department
or the out-of-state licensee bears the cost of obtaining the certification. International driver’s license will not be accepted.

5. Non-Employee Drivers

Non-employee drivers (UNM students and contractors, and partnering community members) may be authorized to drive University vehicles that have been purchased and leased or donated to departments. Non-employee drivers are not authorized to drive the University’s rental vehicles. In order to be authorized to drive, non-employees must meet the additional requirements noted below, as well as the general requirements of this policy for drivers of University vehicles, such as possessing a valid driver’s license and taking the NSCDDC.

- Students may drive University vehicles provided they have a departmental sponsor and written authorization from the applicable dean, director, or department head on file in the department. The department must send a copy of this written authorization to the Automotive Center before the student will be allowed to drive a University vehicle.

- Contractors may drive University vehicles provided they are: (a) authorized in writing to drive by their University contract manager, (b) on official UNM business, and (c) working under a contract that provides for driving.

- Community members who are partnering with the University on clinical or research matters may be authorized to drive University vehicles provided they: (a) have a department sponsor and written authorization from the applicable dean, director, or department head on file in the department, and (b) only drive when they are on official UNM business. The department must send a copy of this written authorization to the Automotive Center before the community member will be allowed to drive a University vehicle.

6. Responsibilities

Drivers are responsible for having an accident report form and the documents described in Section 4.2 herein in their possession while driving a University vehicle.

Department heads are responsible for developing and implementing procedures to ensure that all drivers within their departments who are required or authorized to operate University vehicles have valid driver’s licenses and have completed the NSCDDC (see Sec. 4.2). It is also department heads’ responsibility to make sure that vehicle operators are trained in proper accident reporting as described in Sec. 7.

7. Accidents

If drivers are involved in an accident while driving a University vehicle, their first concern should be for the safety of passengers or pedestrians who might be injured. Drivers should seek first aid and, if appropriate, an ambulance should be called for transporting injured parties to the hospital.
The following procedures should be followed in the event of an accident involving a University vehicle:

- If you are on campus, notify Campus University Police at 277-2241 immediately.
- If you are off campus, notify the local police.
- If the vehicle needs to be towed, call the Automotive Center at 277-3670. If after hours, call Campus University Police.
- Notify your supervisor or manager of any and all accidents.
- Arrange to receive a copy of the accident report filled out by the police authorities.
- Fill out an Automobile/Equipment Accident Report form and submit it to Safety and Risk Services. For additional information and a copy of the Automobile/Equipment Accident Report Form refer to UAP 6150 ("Casualty and Liability Insurance and Claims").

New Mexico Tort Claims Act coverage is provided for authorized drivers operating University vehicles on official business. However, in accordance with Section 41-4-4.E, NMSA 1978, the University reserves the right to recover from the driver the amount expended to provide a defense and pay a settlement or final judgment, if it is shown that, while acting within the scope of duty, the driver acted fraudulently or with actual intentional malice causing bodily injury, wrongful death, or property damage. If drivers use their personal vehicles on University business, their personal insurance coverage is primary.

8. Loss of Valid License

Drivers with suspended, revoked, or expired licenses are prohibited from driving a University vehicle. Drivers must notify their supervisors immediately if their licenses are suspended, revoked, expired, or significantly changed in any way. If driving is a function of the employee’s job, loss of license could mean reassignment, disciplinary action, or discharge. Drivers of University vehicles may be subject to random checks of their driving records.

9. Safety

9.1. Requirements

Drivers of University vehicles are required to observe all city, local, and state traffic regulations and are personally responsible for penalties incurred for violations thereof.

Drivers must notify their supervisors, or for contractors their contract managers, no later than the next working day if they are charged or cited with a civil or criminal violation while driving a University vehicle.
9.1.1. Seat Belts

In accordance with New Mexico state law, as well as good safety practice, all drivers and passengers using University vehicles are required to use seat belts whenever the vehicle is in use. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that all passengers have their seat belts secured prior to the vehicle moving.

9.2. Prohibitions

The following actions and activities are prohibited in University vehicles:

- **Hitchhikers.** Providing transportation to hitchhikers is prohibited.
- **Cellular Phones.** Using cellular phones, including text messaging, is prohibited while driving a University vehicle. Drivers should pull off the road and park before making or answering a call, and before sending, reading, or responding to a text message.
- **Impairment.** Driving while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, medication, illness, fatigue, or injury. A driver should minimize fatigue on long trips by taking appropriate breaks or sharing driving with other authorized drivers.
- **Interlock Device.** Driving while sentenced to use an interlock device when driving. University vehicles do not have interlock devices on them.
- **Tobacco Use.** Smoking (including electronic cigarettes) and other tobacco use is not permitted in any University vehicle.
- **Illegal Drugs and Alcohol.** Transporting illegal drugs and alcohol, in a University vehicle is prohibited unless the alcohol is being transported for an official UNM catered event. Alcohol transported for an official UNM event must remain closed during transportation and should be placed in the vehicle trunk if possible.
- **Hazardous Materials.** Transporting hazardous materials, except by persons who are specifically trained, certified, and authorized to transport such materials. See UNM’s Chemical Hygiene Plan for more information on transporting chemicals.

Drivers shall not drive University vehicles while engaged in activities that adversely affect their driving.

10. Procedures

Specific procedures (including on repairing vehicles, purchasing gasoline, emergencies, and accidents) can be found in the “The Right Way” brochure. A copy should be in the glove box of each vehicle. The brochure is also available through the Automotive Center. Failure to read the brochure could result in a serious violation of state regulations on the use of state-owned vehicles.

11. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Executive Vice President for Administration.