

Student Transportation

University of St. Thomas Motor Vehicle Policy

Issues related to the transportation of students and student groups become more complex each year as members of the University community become increasingly involved in activities such as service learning programs, conferences, and competitions that occur outside of our campus boundaries. The intent of this policy is to provide procedures that encourage responsible and safe motor vehicle behavior for drivers who are transporting our students.

Travel policies are also in place for specific types of travel (clubs and organizations, athletic teams, VISION, etc.). Please refer to the appropriate department's website for more complete information and policies applicable to your travel. If you have questions about this policy, please contact Parking Services (651-962-7275) or contact the Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Services (651-962- 6060).

I. Nature of Activity and Vehicles

A. Covered Activities

This policy applies to situations including, but not limited to, vehicular travel such as student travel for conferences, competitions, field trips, and service learning activities where a student, faculty or staff member is driving University of St. Thomas students. This policy applies to travel where the students and University employees represent the University of St. Thomas.

B. University Owned or Leased Motorized Vehicle

This policy applies to all drivers of University owned motorized vehicles or leased motorized vehicles that are leased or rented for use with students in the course of University business. It is the responsibility of every driver to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the University of St. Thomas Motor Vehicle Operation Policy, Procedures and Certifications Program document.

C. Personal Vehicle

When a University employee uses their personal vehicle to conduct official University business that involves transporting students, the employee, *not the University*, assumes risk as per the University Policy found at

<http://www.stthomas.edu/accountspayable/apforms/Employee%20Reimbursement%20Program.htm>, "Employees using their own cars for University business are obligated for damages to their car and liability for injuries/damages sustained by third parties (students)." Therefore, it is advised that University employees do not transport students in their personal vehicles.

II. Certified Drivers

A. Under the student transportation policy, only certified drivers can drive. Certified drivers must be at least 18 years old and possess a valid United States or Canada driver's license; must be certified to drive a vehicle for University business, and must comply with all of the requirements outlined in the Motor Vehicle Operation Policy, Procedures and Certifications Program document.

B. To become certified to drive a vehicle for University business, the applicant must:

1. Be a University faculty, staff or student
2. Sign a release that allows the University to check the applicant's driver's license records and accident records (*insert link to release form*). The applicant's records will be evaluated by the associate Vice president for Auxiliary Services using criteria developed by the University's insurance provider.
3. Certified drivers must be re-certified every 12 months.

III. Types of Vehicles

- A. The maximum size of a leased or rented vehicle driven by a University of St. Thomas employee is a 12 passenger van.
- B. The number of passengers permitted in any vehicle may not exceed the number of seat belts.
- C. Under no circumstances should 15 passenger vans be used for University travel.
- D. When it becomes necessary to rent or lease a vehicle for use for official University business, follow the guidelines for procedures for vehicle rental that are available on the Accounts Payable website. <http://www.stthomas.edu/accountspayable/apforms/Employee%20Reimbursement%20Program.htm>

IV. Driving

- A. Certified drivers must operate vehicles in accordance with applicable local, state and federal laws and University policies.
- B. All occupants of the vehicle are required to wear seatbelts
- C. For long distance trips, if there is more than one certified driver, those drivers should rotate every two hours. No driver should drive more than ten hours during a 24 hour period. If there are not enough certified drivers to rotate, an overnight stay should be planned. Plan your itinerary such that it is not necessary to drive between midnight and 4 AM.
- D. If the weather is inclement, do not take unnecessary risks. Reschedule if possible or stop and stay overnight in a safe place if you are in route.
- E. All accidents involving any activity covered under Section IA of this policy should be reported immediately to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the location where the accident occurred. Those accidents should also be reported to the University of St. Thomas Public Safety Department.

V. Trip Itineraries

Prior to leaving on the trip, detailed itineraries for overnight travel must be completed and electronically mailed to publicsafety@stthomas.edu. The Public Safety Department will keep itineraries on file in the Public Safety communications center for emergency purposes.

VI. Towing

- A. Avoid towing whenever possible
- B. If it is necessary to tow, refer to The University of St. Thomas Motor Vehicle Operations Policies Procedures and Certifications Program manual (found on the Public Safety Department website: <http://www.stthomas.edu/administration/safety/default.html>) for policies and information on towing safely.
- C. Individuals driving a University owned or rented vehicle that is pulling a trailer must have previous experience driving a vehicle that is pulling a trailer.

VII. Roof Top Carriers

- A. The University strongly discourages the use of roof top carriers.

December 6, 2010