

**This policy applies to all vehicles being operated for official university business whether university owned, rented, leased or a personal automobile used for university business**

**Mississippi University for Women**

**Motor Vehicle and Fleet Management Policies**

Summary/Purpose: Defines policy for the safe, legal and responsible operation of any vehicle used for official business on behalf of Mississippi University for Women. The goal of this comprehensive policy is for the protection of life, property and the good stewardship of public resources.

This policy has been endorsed by appropriate University administration including the President. The public and the University expect safe and courteous drivers in University vehicles. Unsafe or aggressive driving can result in bodily injury, death or property damage. Driving a University vehicle is a privilege, not a right.

The term vehicle, when referenced in this policy, shall mean any and all vehicles licensed for travel on public roads including vehicles owned by the University, the State of Mississippi, rented, leased or when using a private automobile in the scope of one’s university duties.

**Enforcement/Consequences:**

**University employees and student drivers are warned that failure to follow this policy (Sections I and II) will be addressed immediately and will subject the person violating this policy to disciplinary action, including possible immediate dismissal from their job. AN EMPLOYEE CAUGHT DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR WITH A SUSPENDED/REVOKED LICENSE IS SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL**

Section I defines the policy for vehicles owned by the University to conduct official business. Section II further defines added policy requirements for 15 passenger vans and the rental of vehicles to conduct University business.

**SECTION I.**

**1. Accidents/Insurance:**

1. Immediately report an accident involving a University vehicle regardless of who was at fault to law enforcement, the department head, and the Director of Resources Management (662-329-7126). Obtain the name, driving license number, tag number, and insurance carrier from the other person involved in an accident.
2. **Do not make statements except to answer questions asked by law enforcement officials.**
3. Make certain to ask the responding law enforcement officer/agency how to secure a copy of the Uniform Accident Reporting form. Our insurance provider and Resources Management will always request this document.
4. All University owned vehicles carry liability insurance coverage secured through the Institutions of Higher Learning. Vehicles should have a current **insurance card** on board at all times. Current cards can be accessed on the Procurement Services website or by calling the department.
5. The Mississippi Tort Claims Act provides liability protection to the Institutions of Higher Learning and is the exclusive remedy when using a vehicle within the scope and course of one’s duties. The limit of liability within Mississippi is $500,000.00 per occurrence. Other laws apply when outside Mississippi.
6. Injured employees are covered by Worker’s Compensation coverage which is the exclusive remedy under law.
7. University vehicles do not carry physical damage insurance coverage. When a vehicle is damaged in an accident, unless the damage can be shown to be the fault of someone else, any repairs to the University vehicle will be at the expense of the department.

**2. Drivers:**

1. Employees (part time or full time) must be 18 years old to operate vehicles owned or rented by the University, except fifteen passenger vans (addressed in Section II), off campus. Only drivers with a valid Class R - Regular Driver’s License from Mississippi or one of its contiguous states are authorized to drive University vehicles under Mississippi law.
2. Students employed by the University can operate vehicles provided they are 18 years old and have a valid driving license. Where applicable, Sections I and II will apply to students.
3. If a University employee or student’s license is suspended or revoked, they are not permitted to drive a vehicle, personal or otherwise, while conducting University business. The employee or student must notify Procurement Services (in writing) that his/her license has been suspended or revoked. Failure to provide this notification may result in immediate disciplinary action on the driver and any University personnel having knowledge of the suspension or revocation. Personal vehicles are included, because employees are covered under Workers Compensation and Tort Liability while acting in an official capacity. If an unauthorized person elects to drive anyway, reimbursement for the rental car, the Comptroller’s Office will not reimburse gasoline or mileage. If traveling in a personal vehicle, the driver is assuming all risk associated with the trip. The MUW insurance policy requires drivers to have a valid driving license to be covered by the policy.
4. Driver must obey all traffic rules and regulations in the state where they are traveling. Tickets for traffic violation (speeding, failure to yield, and so on) will be paid by the driver of the vehicle and immediately reported to the Resources Management office. No radar detectors are allowed to be used in MUW vehicles.
5. It is illegal for a driver to operate a University owned or rented vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The University shall enforce a zero-tolerance alcohol and drug standard for drivers of University owned or rented vehicles. Zero tolerance means that *any* positive level of alcohol or illegal drugs shall preclude the individual from operating a University owned or rented vehicle and may be grounds for disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.
6. Smoking and smokeless tobacco is not permitted in University vehicles.
7. Because of the pedestrian traffic and vehicle congestion on campus eating or drinking while driving on campus is prohibited.
8. Making or receiving cell telephone calls while driving is prohibited.

**3. Driver Records/Training:**

1. Authorized drivers must agree to abide by University policies and procedures and to provide the necessary information or consent to allow the gathering of necessary information.
2. Necessary information could consist of signing a vehicle use agreement, release of driver information, copy of current driver’s license, copies of driver medical exam results, copies of drug and alcohol test records, documentation of motor vehicle record (MVR) checks, training/testing records, citations and accident reports and any other information related to the driver’s ability to operate a University vehicle safely.

**4. Fuel/State Inspections**

1. The University uses Fuelman cards to fuel our vehicles. This is a nationwide commercial fueling network of thousands of convenient fueling locations linked to an electronic purchasing, management, and reporting system. It works like an ATM card. When you reserve a University vehicle, you will receive a Fuelman card. You will also receive your own personal pin number. Slide your card at the pump, enter your pin number, and vehicle mileage and begin fueling. You can use your Fuelman card at approximately 1,000 sites in Mississippi and over 20,000 sites across the U. S. To find the site that accepts Fuelman cards, visit the Fuelman Site Locator tab on our website.
2. Purchasing gasoline for a personal vehicle with a Fuelman card is strictly prohibited.

**5. Marking of Vehicles**

1. All state vehicles owned or leased by an agency of the State will have a permanent decal or paint on both sides of the vehicle in letters at least three (3) inches in height and on the rear in letters not less than one and half (1½) inches in height, stating the name of the university. The vehicle is to be properly marked before being put into service. The marking must be in a color, which is in contrast with the color of the vehicle. Section 25-1-87, Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, allows a few exemptions of marking for law enforcement vehicles. The State Property Office must report to the Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER Committee) vehicles with improper markings, and those which have no markings at all.
2. All University vehicles qualify for a state license tag. The same tag is valid as long as the vehicle is being operated by the University.
3. Resources Management will acquire all license tags for new vehicles from the vehicle title or application for title.

**6. Passengers:**

1. Only University employees, students, and approved guests can ride in a University owned or rented vehicle.
2. Passengers, unless employees, cannot operate a University vehicle.
3. Anybody riding in the back of a pickup or truck must be seated in the bed of vehicle at all times. Do not stand up, sit on the side or hang your feet off the tailgate. The tailgate must be in the “up” position when the vehicle is moving.

**7. Personal Use:**

1. Mississippi Code 25-1-79 strictly prohibits using University owned or rented vehicles to conduct personal business.
2. Drivers are prohibited from taking a University vehicle to their residence because of the perception that a University vehicle is being misused for private purposes.

**8. Seat Belts:**

1. The wearing of seatbelts is mandatory, on or off campus, in a University or rented vehicle. If an employee or student is issued a citation for not wearing a seat belt, the citation will become part of the employee’s personnel file. Repeated disregard for the policy would result in further disciplinary action. The employee will be personally responsible for paying the citation.
2. The driver should ensure that all passengers wear seat belts. The use of seatbelts has significantly reduced auto fatalities and injuries.

**9. Vehicle Appearance and Operation:**

1. The Physical Plant Department has the authority to park (impound) a University vehicle with mechanical problems if operating the vehicle could result in a hazard to other vehicles or pedestrians. The vehicle will remain impounded until such deficiencies are corrected.
2. The Physical Plant will conduct monthly inspections to make sure the vehicle is in acceptable condition to drive. This checklist should include: operable seat belts, windshield washers, washer blades, brake lights, signal lights, horn, doors closing properly, windows operable, brakes, and so on.
3. The Physical Plant will inspect vehicles monthly for service that should be performed to keep the exterior appearance at the highest standard. This is in reference to dents, paint damaged, and a vehicle in need of washing, and so on.
4. University vehicles should be road worthy, carry proof of insurance and emergency phone numbers. A state approved service station or mechanic approves the condition of a vehicle. University vehicles must have an annual safety inspection.
5. Departments are responsible for reporting maintenance repairs to the Resources Management office.

**10. Cargo:**

1. Cargo must be secured to prevent items from moving about in the vehicle or being thrown out onto the roadway.
2. Passengers may not be transported in vehicles if the rear seats have been removed.

**11. Distractions:**

1. While operating a vehicle the driver may not use cell phones, PDA/laptop computers, MP3 players, portable radios, GPS systems, read, write, use tobacco or otherwise engage in distractions.

**12. Specialty Vehicles & Licensure:**

1. Yield the right of way to all emergency vehicles such as patrol cars, ambulances and fire trucks. When in doubt, pull to the side of the road or in a safe location to allow for their passage.
2. Vehicles equipped with booms, bush hogs, mowers, dump beds and high lifts require special operator training. Departments operating these type vehicles must provide adequate classroom as well as hands-on training. Inspections of special equipment are necessary prior to each operation.
3. Certain commercial vehicles require additional licenses beyond the Class R – regular license.
   1. Class A License - vehicles with a gross weight rating greater than 26,000 pounds, provided the gross weight rating of the vehicle or vehicles being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds.
   2. Class B License - any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight greater than 26,000 pounds and any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds.
   3. Class C License - any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 26,000 pounds or any such vehicle towing a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight not in excess of 10,000 pounds used to transport sixteen (16) passengers or hazardous materials.
   4. Class D License - all other vehicles or combination of vehicles, which are not included in Class A, Class B or Class C will require a Class D license.
4. Commercial Drivers licenses may be issued with the following endorsements and restrictions
   1. H - transporting hazardous materials
   2. K - vehicles not equipped with air brakes
   3. T - double and triple trailers
   4. P - vehicles carrying passengers
   5. N - tank equipped vehicles
   6. X - combination of hazardous materials and a tank vehicle
   7. S - driver restricted to school buses for school related purposes
   8. I - restricts driving which requires a commercial license to intrastate driving only.

**13. Donated Vehicles:**

1. This policy applies to vehicles donated to University departments. The University will not accept donations of 15 passenger vans.
2. Vehicles given to University departments must follow all policy requirements of a vehicle purchased with funds controlled by the University.

**14. Impaired Driving:**

1. Drivers are prohibited from operating a motor vehicle while mentally or physically impaired. Reduction or termination of driving privileges may result from the violation of the following policies:
   1. The use of alcohol is prohibited
   2. The use of illegal drugs is prohibited
   3. The use of prescription medication is prohibited when driving abilities are impaired.
   4. Fatigue should be monitored carefully to ensure that it does not impact the driver’s ability to safely operate a vehicle
   5. Medical condition or illness should be monitored carefully to ensure that it does not impact the driver’s ability to safely operate a vehicle
   6. Emotional state should be monitored carefully to ensure that it does not impact the driver’s ability to safely operate a vehicle

**15. Safe and Courteous Operation:**

* + 1. The University and the public expect safe and courteous drivers. Unsafe or aggressive driving can create negative public impressions and result in bodily injury, death, or property damage. Failure to comply with the following may lead to a reduction or termination of driving privileges:
       1. Speeding is prohibited
       2. Improper passing is prohibited
       3. Failure to yield right-of-way is prohibited
       4. Tailgating is prohibited
       5. Failure to adjust to road and weather conditions is prohibited
       6. Failure to use vehicle’s safety devices such as lights, wipers, turn signals, etc. is prohibited
       7. Improper gesturing, language or use of horn or lights is prohibited
       8. Other violations of law or improper conduct is prohibited

**16. Parking/Backing:**

Appropriate actions should be taken to prevent collisions during parking and backing operations. Consider the use of observers to guide the driver, parking so as to avoid the need to back into traffic, walking around vehicle prior to backing and observing other drivers in crowded parking lots. Vehicles should be locked when not in use or when parked for extended periods of time. Keys should never be left in any unattended vehicle.

**17. Damaged/Malfunctioning Vehicle:**

Drivers have a duty and responsibility to report vehicle damage to Resources Management in an expedient manner. Damaged vehicles should not be operated if the damage or malfunction reduces the safety of the driver and/or vehicle. Vehicles that are deemed unsafe should be towed to a secure location

18. **Other Important Procedures:**

1. In order to ensure consistency in the reporting process, fleet inventory data must be reported to the Executive Office monthly in the approved template.
2. All vehicles purchased must be approved by the Institution’s Executive Officer (IEO). The form or paperwork submitted for the IEO’s prior approval must include written explanation as to need for the vehicle and justification that the vehicle type is in line with planned specific use.
3. Vehicles are to be purchased via the State-Contract. Exceptions must be approved and reported to the Executive Office.
4. Resources Management must maintain monthly log sheets in each vehicle. Drivers are to maintain these sheets when using University vehicle to record date of travel, employee name/driver, mileage, and destination.
5. Rea Brothers Mid-South Auto Auction is the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration’s approved mechanism for selling state-purchased vehicles. In addition, Mississippi University for Women may conduct its own auction; however, an experienced auctioneer must lead the auction.

**SECTION II.**

Besides following Section I, drivers are to follow requirements in this section for 15 passenger vans and rental of vehicles.

**1. Rental of Vehicles:**

1. Drivers must meet and follow Section I applicable to using and operating a rented vehicle.
2. Rental companies may have additional rules/procedures that should be followed, such as minimum age requirements for drivers. None of these recommendations are intended to exempt any rule or procedure from renting and leasing authorities.
3. Departments needing to rent a vehicle to travel for University business should do so with the University approved rental car agency. The department is responsible for submitting documentation to Resources Management for payment of the invoice or reimbursement.
   1. Employees are prohibited from misrepresenting a rental arrangement with the State/University authorized rental car agency (i.e. the authorized state contract agency) for personal travel. The rented vehicle must be for official University business to request the State/University rate.
   2. Employees are prohibited from renting a vehicle and later filing a travel voucher that shows using a personal vehicle to get a higher reimbursement rate. Failure to adhere to these regulations may be grounds for dismissal.
   3. Immediately report any accidents involving a rental vehicle to law enforcement, the department head, the Director of Resources Management and the rental agency. Get the name, driving license number, tag number, and insurance carrier from the other person involved in an accident

**2. Vans (Fifteen Passenger)**

1. The University will no longer be purchasing fifteen (15) passenger vans because of safety concerns for drivers and passengers.
2. Fifteen passenger/cargo vans in operation will continue to be used until such time the vehicle is sold or salvaged. The following requirement apply to 15 passenger vans:
   1. Drivers must be 21 years old and have a valid driver’s license. A copy of the license must be on file with the Resources Management office.
   2. The driver should obey posted speed limits but not exceed 65 mph regardless of posted speed limit.
   3. Luggage racks or hauling items on top of the van is prohibited.
   4. Fifteen passenger vans are not to be used for trips more than 350 miles one way. A bus or several smaller vehicles should be used for trips greater than 350 miles. Some exceptions will be made for special circumstances.
   5. The back seat is to be removed. Luggage, boxes or equipment inside the van must not be stacked higher than the back of passenger seats.
   6. The driver must not operate a van continually for more than eight (8) hours and must take a thirty (30) minute break every four hours.
   7. Trailers or other vehicles must not be towed with a van.
   8. A maximum of 10 passengers, including the driver, is permitted with the number decreasing by one for every 170 lbs. of cargo.
   9. In the event someone suspects a driver is on drugs or has consumed alcohol, the person should be reported to the next level supervisor. The supervisor or department head should contact Human Resources for instructions about the incident. In no case should an individual about whom there is reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use be allowed to drive until the issue has been fully resolved in the individual's favor."
   10. Besides the monthly maintenance check, perform a safety check of the van before leaving on a trip. The safety check includes; tire pressure, light (head and tail), break lights, turn signals, brakes, wiper blades, water in radiator, window operations and functional seat belts for all passengers.

**3. Golf Carts**

1. Gas must be purchased at the Physical Plant Grounds and Automotive Shop. The Physical Plant can provide minor services, some repairs, and replace batteries for electric carts.
2. Departments should be mindful of who operates their carts and how much training they have received. Cart operators are required to follow all traffic rules and regulations. Pedestrians have the right of way in all instances. Travel on sidewalks should be kept to a minimum. Golf carts should be parked in a secure location or in a way that does not hamper pedestrian or other vehicular traffic.
3. Departments owning and using golf carts are responsible for satisfying the following reporting requirements. Cart operators must possess a valid driver’s license and the name of all cart drivers must be reported to Resources Management in order to verify valid driver license and no driving violations. Drivers must provide the Resources Management Office a photocopy of a valid driving license annually or upon permission to operate a cart.
4. Carts operating on campus streets should pull over when safe to allow passage of automobiles. Carts should not be overloaded or operated with more passengers than designed to be carried in the vehicle.
5. No privately owned golf carts are allowed on campus regardless of the circumstance or event unless prior approval is granted by the administration.
6. Having a cart to use is a privilege. Departments that fail to follow the rules and policies are subject to having their carts impounded by MUW Police of having them banned from campus. To ensure vehicle safety, the University highly encourages all cart owners to have carts inspected, at a minimum, once per year. The University Physical Plant or authorized dealers may do the inspections. Carts found to be unsafe may be impounded until properly repaired.

**University employees and student drivers are warned that failure to follow this policy (Sections I and II) will be addressed immediately and will subject the person violating this policy to disciplinary action, including possible immediate dismissal from their job. AN EMPLOYEE CAUGHT DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR WITH A SUSPENDED/REVOKED LICENSE IS SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL.**