

Vehicle and Driver Safety Policy

Purpose and Scope

A basic component of an institution's risk management program is a vehicle and driver safety policy that establishes the safety guidelines for authorized drivers when driving for institution business. The administration of Alma College's vehicle and driver policy requires the consistent implementation of strong policies and procedures to ensure that drivers and departments know their responsibilities and carry them out. The following guidelines have been established to help us control the operation of The College's owned, leased or rented vehicles.

I. Compliance

- I. Driver Acknowledgement- All approved drivers of Alma College must:
 - Agree to comply with the Vehicle and Driver Safety Policy
 - Agree to immediately inform my supervisor and Human Resources should my license be revoked or suspended for any reason. Failure to notify the supervisor or Human Resources may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 - Authorization to drive for college business is contingent upon a tri-annual review of the Vehicle and Driver Safety Policy and check of the motor vehicle record.

II. Driver Qualification

To help select only well-qualified drivers, we will adhere to the following procedures:

A. Driver's License

1. All Alma College faculty and staff whose duties may require them to operate an institution vehicle will have a valid driver's license appropriate for the type of vehicle they will be driving.
2. Employees must complete the [Motor Vehicle Record Release](#) form in order to drive on institutional business.
3. Driver's license will be checked at least once every three years or upon request thereafter. Human Resources and Facilities and Services Management will maintain these files.

B. Motor Vehicle Record

1. Only drivers with an approved driving record are allowed to operate institutionally owned vehicles or vehicles rented for institution business. If a driver's record contains one of the following violations within the past five (5) years, he/she is ineligible to serve as an institution driver:

- a. Driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs
- b. Failure to stop/report an accident

Reckless driving

- c. Driving while impaired
- d. Making a false accident report
- e. Homicide, manslaughter, or assault arising out of the use of a vehicle
- f. Driving while license is suspended/revoked
- g. Speeding contest
- h. Attempting to elude a police office

The following chart is used to determine whether an individual is eligible to serve as an institution driver. Should a driver's record fall outside of the acceptable number of accidents or violations, that individual should not be allowed to operate an institution vehicle or drive on institution business. This chart does not take the place of or supersede State of Michigan's Motor Vehicle Record guidelines and requirements regarding the maintenance of a driver's license in good standing.

# of Moving Violations Within the Past 5 Years	# of Infraction Within the Past 5 Years			
	0	1	2	3
0	Yes	Yes	No	No
1	Yes	Yes	No	No
2	Yes	No	No	No
3	No	No	No	No
4	No	No	No	No

Note: On a case-by-case basis, this rule may be temporarily over-ridden by specific authorization of the Chief Financial Officer of the Institution. An employee may be asked to present confirmation or official document from the Michigan Secretary of State that their license has been reinstated after meeting the guidelines established by the Secretary of State.

2. It is the responsibility of the driver to report any changes in the status of their driving record to Human Resources within five (5) business days. Failure to report

could lead to discipline up to but not limited to losing driving privileges, which could result in automatic resignation of employment.

C. Approval Process

1. All those who are requesting driver approval through Alma College must complete the [Motor Vehicle Record Release](#) form found on the Human Resources Communication SharePoint site. Human Resources or Facilities and Services Management will use a third-party vendor to conduct all motor vehicle record (MVR) checks.

D. Authorized Drivers List

1. If there are vehicles which need special certifications to be driven, e.g. CDL, the authorized drivers for those vehicles will be identified.
2. Human Resources and Facilities and Services Management will maintain a consolidated authorized driver list to maintain control of the ongoing driver authorization process.
3. The Institution reserves the right to restrict the status of an approved driver.

E. Assigned Vehicles

Some vehicles may be assigned to individuals as part of their job duties, such as Facilities and Services Management, Campus Safety or the President. These employees should operate and maintain vehicles responsibly, reporting any concerns promptly.

Institution vehicles may be operated by faculty, staff, volunteers or students, depending on the need. Control of these vehicles will be maintained through Facilities and Service Management.

1. When a department wishes to use a vehicle for a specific purpose, the requestor will complete the Facilities and Services Management [Motor Pool Reservation webform](#) within 24 hours of needing the vehicle. The names of all drivers should be provided with Motor Pool Reservation webform and the drivers should be verified against the institution's list of eligible drivers.
2. Vehicles cannot be loaned, leased or rented.

F. Key Control

1. Facilities and Service Management will notify the department of the approval and provide a time for the driver to pick up the keys.
2. All vehicles and keys must be returned to Facilities and Service Management immediately upon returning to the campus.
3. A night drop box is provided for after-hours returns.
4. Loaning vehicles to unauthorized users, hiring it out to others, using it in any livery operations, or any other enterprise not approved by the institution is strictly prohibited.

G. 15-Passenger Vans

Given the historic safety record of 15-passenger vans in general, Alma College has elected to discontinue the use and rental of these vehicles for institutional travel, with the grandfathered exception listed below.

The 1999 15-passenger Chevy van assigned to the Biology Department may continue to be used under the following conditions:

1. The vehicle can only be used for late spring, summer and early fall trips on dry roads.
2. Travel is restricted to trips between the college and field research locations in Gratiot, Isabella and Montcalm counties.
3. Only faculty and staff who have received and maintain authorized driver status as outlined above may drive the vehicle. Students may not drive the van.
4. In the event of an accident, the Vehicle Accident Reporting procedures outlined in 5.A. below must be followed.
5. Facilities and Service Management will conduct an annual inspection of the vehicle.
6. When the van is retired or determined to be no longer safe to drive, it will not be replaced with another 15-passenger vehicle.

H. Personal Vehicles

1. Employees who are transporting students on institutional business may use their personal vehicle if no motor pool or hired transportation vehicles (motor coach) are available or if transporting student(s) in an emergency situation.
2. Employees are encouraged to utilize motor pool or Enterprise/National rental vehicles.
3. Employees may use personal vehicles on institution business, however are subject to the same rules as drivers of institution owned, leased, and rented vehicles. The employee is assuming all risk and liability when choosing to use their own vehicle. The college may not reimburse employee's personal auto insurance deductible.
4. If requested, drivers must provide evidence of auto liability insurance that meets or exceeds the state minimum requirements.
5. All personal vehicles used for institution business must be maintained per manufacturer's recommendations, in compliance with all state laws, and be presentable with clean interiors and exteriors. Vehicles used on a regular basis, must complete a pre-trip inspection annually.

I. Student Drivers

1. Any student whose duties may require him/her to operate an institution vehicle will meet the same criteria as an employee driver.

2. Student must be age 21 or over to operate a vehicle on the roadway. Any exception to this requirement must be approved by the President of the College or a member of the President's Cabinet.

J. Approved Volunteers

Approved volunteers must submit the Motor Vehicle Record Release form and be approved prior to driving institutional, or college rented vehicles. Volunteers of the college must comply with all the guidelines of the vehicle and driver policy when driving an institutional or college rented vehicle for institutional business. Under no circumstances can a volunteer transport college faculty, staff or students in their own personal vehicles. See the Volunteer policy for more information.

K. Disciplinary System

An authorized institution driver's behavior and driving record will be reviewed regularly and is subject to discipline regardless of when an infraction occurs.

L. Vehicle Safety Policy

The Vehicle Safety Policy will be posted online and be easily accessible to all institution authorized drivers.

III. Pre-Trip Safety

A. Trip Forms

1. The driver will complete the pre-trip safety checkpoints section of the vehicle trip form. The driver will notify Facilities and Service Management if there are any concerns regarding the vehicle before departing from campus.
2. Headlights, taillights and windows must be clean before operating the vehicle.
3. The driver should also verify that a copy of the registration and insurance cards are available in the vehicle.
4. Upon return from the trip, the driver will return the completed copy of the Vehicle Trip Report form to Facilities and Service Management when turning in the vehicle keys. The driver will complete the post-Trip evaluation and document any mechanical problems with the vehicle, service required, new damage, and the amount of gas added, the number of miles driven and any service that may have been provided to the vehicle. Facilities and Service Management will retain the original copy along with the Vehicle Use Request form in the vehicle file.

B. Trailers and Equipment

If towing a trailer, prior to the trip, a walkthrough process must be completed to ensure the trailer is secured and lights are in working order. Attaching equipment, such as trailers, snowplows, winches, or luggage carriers for personal business to Institution owned, rented, or leased vehicles is strictly prohibited.

C. Maintenance

In order for Alma College vehicles to have a long and useful life, they must be maintained regularly. Accordingly, we have established a Preventive Maintenance Program to include all institution's vehicles and equipment.

1. The Facilities and Service Management will maintain a list of all institution vehicles. The list will include the manufacturer's recommended intervals for preventive maintenance services, as well as the dates/times and types of services that have been performed on the vehicles.
2. At least once a week, the Facilities and Service Management will review the list to determine which vehicles are due for maintenance services. The Facilities and Service Management will then designate a person to either perform that service or take the vehicle to the designated service provider.
3. For vehicles assigned to one person or department for their exclusive use, such as the President or Campus Safety Office, the Facilities and Service Management will notify that person or department when the service is due. That user will then be responsible for having the maintenance services completed and documented with the Facilities and Service Management.
4. If a vehicle has operational problems while off-campus, the driver will notify the Facilities and Service Management during normal office hours and Campus Safety after hours. If the vehicle cannot be operated safely, the Facilities and Service Management Office will make the necessary arrangements to bring the driver back to campus and have the vehicle transported to a designated service location.

D. Rental Vehicle Insurance

1. When driving the United States, its territories and possessions, and Canada and renting under the College's Enterprise/National account, do not purchase rental vehicle insurance.
2. When driving in countries other than the United States, its territories and possessions, and Canada, rental vehicle insurance must be purchased.

E. Limit Passengers

Driver will not transport people who are not involved in the institution's business.

F. K-12 Transportation

1. When transporting children, ensure that there are an adequate number of approved passenger seats and seatbelts for the number of children to be transported. See also the Policy on Services of Minors.

IV. Trip Safety

A. Seat Belts

Seat belts are one of the most important pieces of safety equipment installed on a motor vehicle. Thus, it should be noted that the use of seat belts is entirely under

the control of the driver. All assigned vehicle drivers should follow the procedures listed below as a condition of assignment as a vehicle driver for Alma College:

1. When going on a trip (even a short trip across town), ensure that there is a seat belt for every passenger. If not, limit the number of passengers to the number of seat belts available.
2. Before shifting from "Park," the driver must secure his/her seat and shoulder belt and verify that all passengers are appropriately secured by their seat and shoulder belt.

B. Alcohol and Drugs

It is important for all drivers to recognize their responsibilities for operating an institution vehicle in a safe and sober manner. We require each driver to acknowledge that he/she pledges to comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding drug and alcohol use, including institution policies, when operating any vehicles for institution business. No driver authorized by the institution should be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while operating an institution owned vehicle at any time.

C. Cell Phones and Electronics

Cell phone and other electronic device use while the vehicle is in motion is strictly prohibited. Cell phones may only be used to make calls through the assistance of Bluetooth or other hands-free devices. Headphones that reduce hearing should not be used. For navigation devices, program the destination before starting the vehicle, pull off the road to make changes and rely on the voice directions to guide you.

D. Stowed Items

1. Items that can become loose during travel should be properly secured and placed in proper storage areas or separated by a cage from the passenger area to prevent injury to passengers or damage to other vehicles.
2. Stowed items should not obstruct the driver's view.

E. Vehicle Theft

1. To reduce the potential for theft and vandalism, the vehicle should be locked when left unattended, no valuables should be left in sight and the vehicle should be parked in a well-lit area at night.
2. Alma College is not responsible for personal items left in a vehicle.

F. Extended Trips

To reduce the possibility of fatigue-related accidents on extended trips, no driver may exceed 10 total hours of driving in any 24-hour period. The front seat passenger will stay alert and act as co-pilot to assist with maps and directions.

G. Smoke Free Vehicles

No smoking or other use of tobacco products (including, but not limited to, cigarettes, pipes, cigars, snuff, vaping, or chewing tobacco) is permitted in vehicles owned, leased, or rented by the institution

H. Weather

The best rule in any kind of bad weather or extreme road conditions is to get off the road safely as soon as possible. In the case of bad or extreme weather conditions the driver should determine the best and safest course of action. If the driver continues, he/she must slow down, increase following distances, and continue to assess the conditions. If a state of emergency is declared for a specific area or the State, the driver must pull off the road safely and as soon as possible. The driver and/or passengers should keep the sector Vice President informed of any action taken.

I. Entering and Exiting Vehicle

When entering or exiting the vehicle driver and passengers should be careful to watch for oncoming traffic or other threats that may pose damage to the vehicle or driver including an awareness of the increased potential for slip, trip and fall incidents.

V. Post-Trip Safety

A. Vehicle Accident Reporting Procedures

Vehicle accidents can seriously impact the lives of those involved, both as drivers and as passengers. To minimize the long-term effects of those accidents and to ensure that they do not recur, the following policies and procedures are in effect:

1. If a vehicle driven on behalf of or owned by Alma College is involved in a collision with another vehicle, object or person or a one-car accident, such as rolling over and going into a ditch, the driver should call the police and, if there are any suspected injuries to driver or passengers, request emergency medical assistance.
2. The Facilities and Service Management, or Campus Safety after normal office hours, should be contacted after contacting the police. The following information should be provided:
 - a. Driver's name and the vehicle involved
 - b. Location of the accident
 - c. Description of any injuries to driver, passenger(s) or occupant(s) of other vehicles
 - d. Indicate whether the police and/or ambulance been notified and
 - e. Indicate the medical facility where injured people have been taken
3. After calling the Facilities and Service Management, retrieve the current insurance card from the vehicle. This card shows evidence of insurance to police authorities

and provides the driver with basic information on the insurance company, their claim reporting phone number and the policy number.

4. Be particularly careful to discuss the accident only with the police or the Facilities and Service Management Office even though the driver may feel that he/she was the cause of the accident, the driver should not make any admissions of liability or assume any blame. There may be factors that the driver is unaware of at the time that could mitigate any responsibility.
5. Exchange basic information with the driver of each vehicle involved. Only the following information should be provided:
 - a. Name, address and telephone number of the driver and any passengers
 - b. Type of vehicle and license plate number
 - c. Insurance company name and policy number

B. Accident Investigation

The Facilities and Service Management Office will notify the Financial Services Office and coordinate the accident investigation. Either office will gather reports from police investigators and will begin the investigation as soon as reasonably possible. This will generally be within 24 hours of the accident. Depending on the distance from campus, time of day/night and the extent of injuries, the President or Chief Financial Officer may designate an employee to travel to the accident site to begin the investigation.

VI. Actions

Revised by Policy and Planning on January 16, 2023 and approved by Alma College cabinet on January 18, 2023

Review of revised draft by Policy Council and recommended to Cabinet: 1/23/2026

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