



## 13.04.99.W1.01 Student Travel

Effective January 1, 2002

Current Revision November 13, 2023

Next Scheduled Review November 13, 2028

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### Procedure Summary

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The purpose of these procedures is to protect the health and welfare of the West Texas A&M University community by regulating travel that is undertaken by one or more students presently enrolled at the university under certain conditions.

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### Procedure

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#### 1. General

- 1.1 It is the intent of West Texas A&M University to promote safety and to encourage safe conduct when traveling to and from university activities or events. Accordingly, in addition to encouraging the use of good judgment, the university has adopted the Student Travel Rule and set out safety procedures designed to encourage safe behavior. These procedures herein apply to all travelers (and/or employees traveling with students) who travel to an activity or event that is organized and sponsored by the university:

1.1.1 When the travel will be (a) more than 25 miles from the University or (b) to and from Palo Duro Canyon; and

Travel	Requirements/Forms		
	Travel Manifest	Individual Release	Parental Release
If travel is...			
Less than 25 miles from campus	Optional	Optional	***
To and from Palo Duro Canyon	Yes	Yes	***
More than 25 miles from campus	Yes	Yes	***
<b>AND the travel is...</b>			
WTAMU funded	Yes	Yes	***
In a state-owned or university leased vehicle	Yes	Yes	***
Organized by a WTAMU registered or recognized student group	Yes	Yes	***
Organized by a University employee and endorsed by WTAMU	Yes	Yes	***
To a destination outside the United States	Yes	Yes	***
***Participant is under 18 years of age			Yes

1.1.2 When (a) attendance at the activity or event is organized by a student group properly registered or recognized by the university; or (b) the activity or event is funded by the university [including Campus Organizations/Forums Committee (COFC) funds]; or (c) travel is in a state-owned or university leased vehicle.

These procedures do not apply when travelers are responsible for their own transportation. For example, an off-campus site where a class is meeting; or internship, field study, clinical, or student teaching sites.

1.1.3 Traveling to and from university organized or sponsored events and activities may require the use of various modes of transportation and travel under different conditions. Each form of travel requires the traveler to follow common and mode-specific safety precautions. In addition to following federal and state laws that encourage safe travel, travelers should use sound judgment and follow the procedures set forth in this document when traveling.

1.1.4 Students traveling in state-owned or university leased vehicles, to university organized or sponsored events and activities, must return in state-owned or university leased vehicles, unless the trip sponsor/advisor is notified and documents approval to do otherwise.

## 2. **Compliance and Enforcement**

- 2.1. Departments that encourage or require one or more students to travel to university organized and sponsored events and activities are responsible for verifying that students are aware of the procedures outlined in this document.
- 2.2. Travelers who fail to comply with the rule and the procedures herein are subject to disciplinary action. Student organizations that violate the rule and the procedures herein also are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension. University departments who fail to comply with the rule and the procedures herein may be removed from the University's approved driver's list and may lose future travel privileges.

### **3. Required Documentation**

- 3.1. **Required Documentation and Related Compliance Components** - All required documentation must be submitted through the approved WTAMU electronic travel process. For foreign travel, this process must be completed 90 business days prior to the departure date. For all other travel, the process should be completed at least 72 hours prior to travel. After 72 hours, notify the department travel approver for changes. The approved electronic travel process is designed to be compliant with the Clery Act and to provide travel information necessary for Clery reporting. Additionally, the process provides for adherence to Export Control and Data Privacy requirements for foreign travel.
  - 3.1.1. **Travel Manifest** - The completed travel manifest must be routed via the approved WTAMU electronic travel process to be accessible by:
    - (a) University Police Department – confidential information only
    - (b) Travel Sponsor/Advisor
    - (c) Business Office Travel Coordinator
    - (d) Export Control Officer
    - (e) Student Travel Administrators
  - 3.1.2 **Individual Release Forms** - Travelers must electronically consent and sign the authorized release form stating that they will assume responsibility for their participation in sponsored travel. Individuals under the age of eighteen (18) must have a release form signed by their parents or legal guardian.

Only individuals submitted through the travel manifest process and as a part of university organized or sponsored events and activities are

permitted as passengers.

3.1.3 **Authorization for Student Travel in Personal Vehicles Form** - Travelers driving personal vehicles must have departmental approval through the electronic personal vehicle authorization form.

3.1.4 **Export Control Survey (Foreign Travel)** - Any individual participating in foreign travel is responsible for the export control implications of their work and must ensure that their activities conform to export control laws and regulations.

3.1.5 **Data Privacy Form (Foreign Travel)** - Any individual participating in foreign travel must provide acknowledgement that WTAMU will collect and use my personal data for academic purposes related to my academic program and for security and emergency response purposes.

3.2. **Record Retention** - All travel documentation is subject to the removal timelines stipulated in the State Records Retention Schedule and must be removed as per the WTAMU records destruction procedure. If the Complainant's Vice President or the respondent's Vice President (if applicable) does not accept the recommendation, he/she/they shall, within the same five (5) working days, inform both the University President and the Assistant Vice President - Human Resources or Director, Human Resources/EEO Officer in writing of the decision or their difference of opinion (if applicable). The decision of the Complainant's Vice President will be the final decision of the complaint if there is no respondent Vice President involved. If both are involved and cannot come to an agreement, the Assistant Vice President – Human Resources or the Director, Human Resources/EEO Officer decision will be final.

### 3.3. **Driver Qualifications and Training**

3.3.1. **Driver Qualifications** - When traveling to or from activities and events, either organized or sponsored by the university, drivers must possess a valid driver's license and maintain current insurance as required by state law.

#### 3.3.2. **Driver Training**

All university employees must successfully complete mandatory approved driver training provided by the WTAMU Parking Services Office to operate state owned or university leased vehicles. The criteria is available online at

the [Parking Services website](#). Departments, who request an employee to operate state-owned or university leased vehicles regardless of the distance traveled, are responsible for coordinating with the Parking Services Office to ensure proper background information is obtained from the Department of Public Safety.

All students must successfully complete mandatory approved driver training provided by the WTAMU Parking Services Office to operate university leased vehicles. The criteria is available online at the [Parking Services website](#). No student may operate a state-owned vehicle.

The department or student organization planning/sponsoring the travel needs to make every available effort to ensure that WTAMU employees operate motor vehicles for university related travel. If, after exploring all available options, the circumstances necessitate a student operating a motor vehicle, the student must have completed and be on the university approved driver list.

For information related to the process of being placed on the approved driver's list, please contact the Director of Support Services, University Police Department at (806) 651-2308. Additional information on the approval process can be found at [Approval to Drive University Vehicles](#).

### **3.4. Modes of Travel**

Travelers may only use private, rental, or commercially owned vehicles with a current vehicle inspection.

Travel in vans with a capacity to hold 15 passengers must be approved by the vice president or director responsible for organizing the travel. Passenger capacity in 15-passenger vans, involving travel subject to the procedures outlined in section 1.1, is strictly restricted to no more than ten (10) individuals, including the driver. The weight of passengers and their gear should be distributed evenly throughout the van. When 15-passenger vans are used, cargo must be limited to the rear of the vehicle and must not obstruct any window view.

If an individual who has been approved to drive state-owned or university leased vehicle receives a ticket or has restrictions or endorsements added or removed from his/her driver's license, that individual must report this change to the VPBF Office immediately. Failure to do so will result in immediate removal from the

University's approved driver list. In addition, anyone having knowledge of an approved driver receiving a ticket or other status change must report it to the Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance.

#### 3.4.1. **Vehicles owned by the University**

Only University employees acting under course and scope of work are allowed to drive state-owned vehicles for university-related business and activities. No one else, under any scenario may operate a state-owned vehicle. To be covered on the Texas A&M University System self-insured auto plan, drivers must be employed by WTAMU, and driving in course and scope of employment.

#### 3.4.2. **Vehicles leased by the University**

University employees acting under course and scope of work are allowed to drive university leased vehicles for university-related business and activities. To be covered on the Texas A&M University System self-insured auto plan, drivers must be employed by WTAMU, driving in course and scope of employment, and be on the approved drivers list.

Students are allowed to drive vehicles leased under the state contract (i.e. Enterprise and Hertz) but only under the rental agreement of a WTAMU department. The student(s) must be listed as drivers through the rental companies insurance policy and be on the approved drivers list.

Insurance is required if driving a university leased vehicle. If the leasing company does not offer liability insurance options, the insurance must be purchased through the WTAMU Risk Management office.

#### 3.4.3. **Privately Owned Vehicles**

While traveling to and from university sponsored or organized activities and events, students using privately-owned vehicles, or any vehicle other than those state-owned or leased by the university, are expected to follow the safety guidelines outlined in this procedure. Student drivers must have a valid driver's license, current motor vehicle insurance, and current state vehicle registration if applicable. If students use their own vehicles, and/or transport other students as passengers, they should be informed, in advance, that the vehicle owner's personal liability insurance will be responsible for any criminal and civil liability that may arise from such use.

**Departments or advisors that authorize students to travel in privately-**

**owned vehicles are responsible for ensuring compliance with these requirements (i.e. Electronic Authorization Form for Student Travel in Personal Vehicles).**

Departments or advisors are not responsible for verifying the legitimacy of the information the student(s) provide. The student's confirmation of the authorization form attests that the information is current and correct. The department or advisor needs only to review the documents, ensure they have been filled out completely, and then submit them via the electronic student travel process.

If a driver is using a privately-owned vehicle to pull a state-owned trailer, the vehicle owner's personal liability insurance will be responsible for any criminal and civil liability that may arise from such use.

**3.4.4. Commercial Travel**

Those traveling by commercial transportation must comply with all federal laws regulating travel and the rules of the specific carrier. This includes laws and rules regarding carry-on baggage and baggage weight restrictions.

**3.5. Safety Requirements** - Drivers and passengers must act responsibly and use sound judgment when traveling. The procedures set out below do not replace individual judgment in regard to individual safety. Drivers and passengers traveling to and from an activity or event that is subject to these procedures as outlined in section 1.1 must:

3.5.1 When driving, obey all traffic laws and regulations, including posted speed limits and reduce driving speeds as dictated by adverse road or weather conditions.

3.5.2 Wear seat belts at all times. The number of occupants in the vehicle will not exceed the number of seat belts and the load shall not exceed the vehicle manufacturer's recommended load capacity (see owner operating manual for specific instructions).

3.5.3 Avoid the use of personal electronic devices (cell-phones, texting, mp3, ear-phones, etc.) while driving.

3.5.4 Avoid driving when conditions are hazardous (this includes but is not limited to fog, heavy rain, snow or ice conditions). It may be necessary to

stop the trip and check into a motel.

3.5.5 Not consume, transport, or possess alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, firearms or weapons.

3.5.6 Avoid horseplay, racing, or other distracting or aggressive behavior.

3.5.7 Bring a copy of the participant list, emergency contacts, and Travel Manifest on the trip.

3.6. **Safety Recommendations** - Drivers and passengers are encouraged to follow the safe driving practices as follows:

3.6.1. Stay alert and get sufficient rest so you are at the peak of mental awareness and acuity when driving.

3.6.2. Plan routes in advance, and carpool and caravan where possible.

3.6.3. Divide the trip into segments, stopping for rest as necessary.

3.6.4. Immediately contact the organization advisor or designated contact person upon departure and arrival if the advisor is not present on the trip.

3.6.5. Carry at least one cell phone or other two-way communication device in each vehicle for emergency purposes. The driver should only use any communication device when the vehicle is not in motion.

3.6.6. Establish a reasonable departure and arrival time to and from the activity or event.

3.6.7. Limit driving time to between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. unless otherwise approved by the organization advisor or department head.

3.6.8. Whenever possible on extended trips, have at least one other approved University driver in the vehicle. It is recommended that drivers rotate every two hours. A passenger or second driver should ride in the front passenger seat and remain awake at all times to help the driver maintain alertness.



- 3.6.9. Follow proper departmental procedures for emergencies and/or when experiencing mechanical problems.

## Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

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[Texas Education Code 51.950](#)

[System Policy 13.04, Student Travel](#)

[System Policy 33.99.14, Criminal History Record Information](#)

[WTAMU Rule 13.04.99.W1 Student Travel](#)

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## Definitions

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**State-owned vehicles:** State-owned vehicles encompass some different types of vehicles. Make sure to check the status of your vehicle to determine who is eligible to drive.

- State-owned vehicles are those vehicles that are owned by the state
- Long-term (one year or more) leased vehicles are also considered state-owned vehicles
- Golf carts, all-terrain vehicles are all considered state-owned vehicles.

**Leased vehicles:** Leased vehicles are those vehicle rentals that are less than one (1) year in length. NOTE: Insurance is required either through the rental companies insurance or purchased through the WTAMU Risk Management office.

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## Appendix

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## Revision History

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Approved January 1, 2002  
Revised August 7, 2015  
Revised June 20, 2019  
Revised November 2013, 2023

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**Contact Office**

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Division of Student Affair  
(806) 651-2050

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**Approval Office**

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Office of the President  
(806) 651-2100

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**Approval Signature**

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11/13/23

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President/CEO

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Date