



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 77.08, **Student Travel Policy**

AUTHORITY: This policy is required by Section 51.950 of the Texas Education Code.

PURPOSE: This policy regulates any travel undertaken by one or more TTUHSC students to an activity or event that is located more than 25 miles from the campus of TTUHSC. This operating policy applies to any event or activity which is organized, sponsored and/or funded by TTUHSC, is undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by TTUHSC, or is a required event or activity by a student organization registered at TTUHSC.

Modes of travel by students to events or activities as defined above include:

1. personally-owned vehicles;
2. commercial vehicles, including but not limited to rental cars, vans, chartered buses;
3. commercial airlines; and,
4. use of TTUHSC-owned vehicle.

The purpose of this policy is to help minimize the risks of liability connected with motor vehicle travel by TTUHSC faculty, staff and students. The policy applies to the use of the above modes of travel in any activities directly related to the academic, research, and/or administrative responsibility of the department involved. This policy also applies to travel undertaken by one or more students presently enrolled at TTUHSC to reach a university-related activity located more than 25 miles from TTUHSC. It applies to travel required by a registered student organization. This HSC OP does not create a claim or cause of action against TTUHSC or its employees, and TTUHSC retains all defenses to any such action including, but not limited to, sovereign immunity.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed on July 1 of each even-numbered year (ENY) by the Associate Provost for Student Affairs, Directors of Procurement Services and General Services, Office of General Counsel, Academic Affairs and Curriculum Committee, and Academics Council with recommendations for revision forwarded to the Executive Vice President for Finance and Operations by August 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. Generally Applicable Definitions.

- a. **Student.**
A Student is anyone eligible to hold a current student identification card.
- b. **Sponsor.**
The sponsor of a student activity is selected by the organization from faculty or full-time staff members who have been employed by the TTUHSC for at least one year.
- c. **Authorized Passenger.**
Any employees, sponsors, students, or prospective students being recruited to participate in specific TTUHSC program or activity. In all such cases, reasonable efforts shall be made by the responsible department to ensure that each passenger executes a release and hold harmless agreement.

- d. **TTUHSC-Related Activities.**
TTUHSC-related activities are those activities that are consistent with TTUHSC's mission and that are approved by the appropriate administrative unit. This includes activities organized or sponsored by TTUHSC, funded by TTUHSC, and using vehicles owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, TTUHSC.
- e. **Student Travel:**
In accordance with [Texas Education Code Section 51.950](#), student travel is defined as travel undertaken by one or more currently enrolled TTUHSC students to reach an activity or event that is organized and sponsored by TTUHSC and is located more than 25 miles from the TTUHSC campus where the travel originates and that meets one of the following criteria:
 - 1) Travel to the activity or event is funded and undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the TTUHSC, or
 - 2) Attendance at the activity or event is required by a student organization registered at TTUHSC.

2. **Travel Using TTUHSC-Owned Vehicles.**

- a. **Appropriate Use.**
Only persons who are acting within the course and scope of university-related activities are permitted to use TTUHSC vehicles, owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, the system or its components.
- b. **Drivers.**
Because of the risks of personal injury, it is required that only those persons whose names appear on the approved driver's list be asked or allowed to use any motor vehicle owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, the system or its components. To request a driver be considered for approval and addition to the approved drivers list, the following are required:
 - (1) The requesting department or unit must submit a completed request through the Texas Tech Vehicle Operating System (<https://www.texastech.edu/offices/risk-management/traveling.php>). The request must include an attached copy of the Texas Tech University System Driver Approval Request form (see Attachment C) and a copy of the driver's current license.
 - (2) Qualifications for drivers of all motor vehicles owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to TTUHSC are as follows:
 - (a) Must possess a valid Texas driver license or license from another state or District of Columbia appropriate for the class of vehicle being operated;
 - (b) Must have held a valid driver license, as defined in (a) above, for at least two years and have attained 18 years of age. The two-year experience requirement may be satisfied by providing an English translation of the official driving record from the individual's home country, or the equivalent thereof;
 - (c) Must comply with annual driver record information check (or its equivalent);
 - (d) Must achieve an "approved" status using the [Driver Rating Evaluation Form](#);

- (e) Must report all driving violations or convictions or any license revocations, suspensions or reinstatements, following revocations or suspensions to their immediate supervisor within five business days of the occurrence. This includes violations, convictions, suspensions, and revocations that result from driving a privately-owned vehicle. Approval to drive a university-owned vehicle may not be granted for one year following reinstatement of a revoked license, and;
 - (f) Must not have had any convictions for driving while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or reckless driving in the five years immediately preceding the date of the Driver Approval Request;
- (3) Additional qualifications for drivers of vans equipped for 15 passengers or extended cargo:
- (a) Must be at least 20 years of age and held a valid license, as defined in (2)(a) above for at least two years;
 - (b) Must successfully complete a 15-passenger driver training course;
 - (c) Must complete 15-passenger refresher training annually;
 - (d) Must not have more than one moving violation in the last 18 months;
 - (e) Must successfully pass an annual drug screen; and
 - (f) Must complete the [15-Passenger Van Inspection Checklist](#) for each trip. The inspection checklist should be kept in the vehicle for the duration of the trip.

3. Operator Conduct.

Any operator of a TTUHSC vehicle must take 15-minute break every 3 hours and **may drive no more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period**. When the vehicle driven is a van with passengers, **a second person must remain awake at all times and must ride in the front passenger seat**.

- a. Those that operate a TTUHSC vehicle represent TTUHSC to the general public. The image conveyed does affect TTUHSC; therefore, an operator:
 - (1) DO NOT use TTUHSC vehicles for personal transportation or business;
 - (2) DO NOT allow alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs to be consumed or illegally transported in any TTUHSC vehicle;
 - (3) DO NOT smoke or allow any passenger to smoke in any TTUHSC vehicle. TTUHSC prohibits tobacco use in a state vehicle.
 - (4) DO NOT text message, read or compose emails, or use a handheld cell phone while operating the vehicle. A Bluetooth or other hand-free device is acceptable;
 - (5) DO NOT pick up hitchhikers or transport family members or any other unauthorized passenger(s);
 - (6) DO NOT allow the vehicle to become unnecessarily dirty and present an unfavorable image to the general public;
 - (7) DO NOT allow the number of passengers to exceed the authorized capacity of the vehicle (the capacity of a vehicle can typically be determined by counting the number of available seat belts);
 - (8) DO NOT operate the vehicle unless all occupants are wearing the appropriate restraints;
 - (9) DO NOT operate the vehicle while fatigued at the time of travel.
 - (10) DO observe all traffic rules and regulations;
 - (11) DO drive carefully, safely, and courteously;
 - (12) DO require driver and all passengers to use seat belts and other appropriate occupant restraints at all times the vehicle is being operated.
 - (13) DO complete all trainings required to operate the particular mode of travel.
- b. When a vehicle is damaged through operator misuse or operated by a person under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, the department head is responsible for obtaining a complete statement of the circumstances and a copy of the police report for the appropriate administrative action. Citations, fines and penalties for all parking and traffic violations will be the personal responsibility of the operator.

- c. Operators shall use common sense when driving. For road trips of 100 miles or more, driving should be shared, if possible, and frequent breaks should be taken.
- d. Operators of university vehicles may not use, possess or transport weapons, illegal substances, and/or alcohol while on a university sponsored trip.

4. **Collision Reporting.**

The following procedures should be followed whenever a TTUHSC vehicle is involved in a collision, regardless of the extent of damage:

- a. Stop immediately and notify local police so that an official report can document the collision;
- b. Take necessary steps to prevent another collision;
- c. Contact a doctor, ambulance, or emergency medical team, if necessary. Shall remain with the injured person until help arrives;
- d. Obtain names, addresses, or telephone numbers of all witnesses;
- e. Provide all required information to the law enforcement officer;
- f. Notify the department head or supervisor. If the operator is unable to contact or reach the department head or supervisor, the operator shall contact the Texas Tech Police Department; and
- g. Refer to TTUHSC OP 76.34 for the completion of required vehicle accident documentation, summarized in the Vehicle Fleet Management Handbook, Section 1, M.

An operator may be asked to submit to a “for cause” screen in compliance with TTUHSC OP 70.39, Drug-Free Workplace Policy, when there is any accident-causing injury to anyone, damage to property of TTUHSC or others, or when the operator received a traffic citation as a result of an on-the-job motor vehicle accident. If the operator refuses the screen, the individual will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Authorization:

Employees who drive vehicles owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, TTUHSC, or have driving listed as one of their functions of TTUHSC employment, must have a current driver record of file with the Texas Tech University System Office of Risk Management. This office may be contacted for information on how to add and delete names on the list of approved drivers.

5. **Travel by Commercial or Charter Aircraft.**

All students traveling on official TTUHSC business or activities will use only those aircraft and aircraft operators that meet the requirements set forth below. The travel regulations contained in the Texas Appropriations Act and other applicable laws will be followed by TTUHSC.

TTUHSC will only use aircraft and aircraft operators that are flight worthy and are certified and operate under Subchapters F & G, Parts 91, 119, 121, 125 or 135 as applicable in Chapter 1, Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 Code of Federal Regulations (the “C.F.R.”). In addition, all aircraft used pursuant to this provision must be piloted, at a minimum, by pilots that are fully qualified and insured in the aircraft being flown, possessing a commercial pilot certificate with instrument rating.

6. **Travel Using Personal Vehicles.**

TTUHSC recognizes that individuals occasionally use personal vehicles while engaged in TTUHSC-related activities on campus and in the local area. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their personal vehicles while conducting university business should be made aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use. No coverage for personal injuries or property damage is available to students if they drive their personal vehicles on university-related activities as defined hereinabove.

7. **Reimbursement for Costs of Personal Vehicles.**

Mileage costs related to any significant use of personal vehicles to conduct university-related business unrelated to required academic experiences, e.g., clinical rotations, clerkships, etc., may be reimbursed. State Treasury funds (E&G, PH, HEAF) cannot be used for student travel.

8. **Use of Personal Vehicles Not Required.**

No individual shall be required to use a personal vehicle to perform university-related activities, with the exception of travel to and from clinical affiliation sites.

9. **Policy Concerning Use of Personal Vehicles by Students.**

- a. Use of personal vehicles by students to drive to university-related activities is discouraged.
- b. If students use their personal vehicles, and/or transport other students as passengers, they need to be informed in advance that their personal insurance will be primarily responsible for any liability that may arise from such use.
- c. No TTUHSC coverage for personal injuries is available to students if they drive their personal vehicles on university-related activities as defined hereinabove.

10. **Policy Concerning Student Releases and Medical Authorization.**

Each student who travels by any form of transportation to participate in a university-related activity, including but not limited to an academically-related field trip, course, competition, contest, or non-academic activities must, prior to such activity, execute a copy of the Student Liability Release Form (Attachment A) and the Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment (Attachment B) which are attached to this policy.

All TTUHSC students are required by State Law to have continuous medical insurance coverage, including international students.

11. **International Travel by Students.**

- a. Students traveling abroad for any TTUHSC related reason (e.g., conferences, research, competition, community service, mission work, etc.) in any status (i.e., undergraduate, postgraduate, graduate, supported by scholarships, assistantships, institutional, etc.) must coordinate with the Office of Global Health (OGH) to complete the appropriate pre-departure requirements, including completion of required emergency and liability forms. All international travel requests must be submitted to OGH for review and approval with additional oversight from resources such as On Call International. Submitting the required documentation for review does not guarantee travel approval.
- b. Criteria evaluated when processing travel requests may include but is not limited to risks associated with the destination such as crime; health, safety, & security; civil unrest; and environmental concerns such as natural disasters or severe weather.
- c. Without documented approval from OGH travel is not considered university-related.

- d. TTUHSC retains the right to withdraw travel approval and/or require return to the U.S. due to changes in conditions or circumstances.
- e. Higher-Risk Destinations
Travel to destinations that have been determined to be Higher-Risk Destinations, as provided below, will require the completion of additional steps prior to approval to demonstrate special efforts to mitigate risk, including health, safety, and security. Travelers must coordinate such requests through the TTUHSC Office of Global Health.

Destinations considered Higher-Risk Destinations include, but are not limited to:

- U.S. Department of State travel advisory level 3 (Reconsider Travel) and 4 (Do Not Travel), and
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Health Notice Warning Level 3 (Avoid Nonessential Travel).

To determine the travel advisory level assigned by the U.S. Department of State, please visit the following website:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>.

To determine the travel health notice warning level assigned by the CDC, please visit the following website: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

It is the responsibility of the traveler to continually monitor the health, safety, & security status of their destination prior to and during travel and immediately notify the Office of Global Health should the status change to meet the Higher-Risk Destination criteria.

- f. In the event an emergency were to occur while a student is abroad, procedures for Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad will be followed in accordance with HSC OP 10.29a.

12. **Guidelines Concerning Safe Travel Practices.**

- a. Each administrative unit approving university-related travel, especially travel that involves students, is encouraged to promulgate guidelines that encourage safe driving and minimize risks of injury during that travel.
- b. Registered student organizations are free to make such off-campus trips as are deemed worthwhile by the membership and sponsors of the organization. Participation in such off-campus trips and activities is at the students' own risk. If personal injury or accident should occur to students or other persons during such activities, TTUHSC will assume no responsibility, financial or otherwise.
- c. Faculty and staff sponsors and organization officers are urged to take all possible precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of all persons participating in off-campus activities.
- d. There is no official registration procedure for official off-campus trips, and there are no official excused class absences for students who participate in off-campus trips sponsored by student organizations. Students will be responsible for making their own individual arrangements in advance with instructors for class work missed while participating in an off-campus trip. Instructors may set their own requirements for class work missed under such circumstances; they must grant students an opportunity to make up all course work missed while participating in an official off-campus trip.

13. **Clery Act Reporting**

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) requires TTUHSC to report publicly on any crimes that occur on TTUHSC premises - a requirement that includes rental properties and university sponsored trips to off-campus locations under certain circumstances. TTUHSC personnel who are responsible for students on university-sponsored trips (both domestic and international) are considered “Campus Security Authorities (CSAs)” under the law, and are legally obligated to report those crimes.

To comply with the law, students who engage in university-sponsored travel MUST complete the [Clery Travel Form](#) for ANY trip that involves EITHER (1) the rental of a room or facility (excluding lodging) for any length of time OR (2) lodging for two or more nights OR (3) lodging is for ONLY one night but it is a repeated use of the same site each year.