

**POLICY MANUAL**  
**OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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**Number 514**

**Subject: Vehicle Use Policy**

**Effective Date: February 1, 2006**

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**514.1 USE OF UNIVERSITY VEHICLES**

1.1 All use of vehicles whether owned, leased, rented, or otherwise made available for use by Utah State University (University vehicles) must be authorized by a Department Head, Director, Dean or Vice President. Owned or leased vehicles must be documented as part of the University Fleet and maintained in the state-wide Fleet database. Departments must not exceed the existing number of vehicles allocated to their department unit.

1.2 University vehicles may only be used:

(1) for authorized University purposes; or

(2) by authorized student organizations (a) registered under Article IV, Section 2, of the Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University, (b) registered as a USU club sport with the Campus Recreation Office, or (c) exempt from registration under Article IV, Section 3, of the Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University.

1.3 Drivers of University vehicles must be at least 18 years old and have a valid driver's license.

1.4 Drivers of University vehicles must have a driving record in compliance with Utah Administrative Services Rule 27-7-3 (<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code.htm>). The authority to operate a state vehicle shall be suspended or revoked for up to three years if a driver meets any of the reasons defined in the above rule.

1.5 Drivers of University vehicles must complete an approved Driver Safety Program at initial employment and every two years thereafter. In the event of a moving violation citation or accident in a University vehicle, the Driver Safety Program must be retaken prior to driving a University vehicle again.

1.6 It is the responsibility of each Department Head/Director or designee to ensure that all employees who drive vehicles are up-to-date with the above Driver Safety Program and are aware of the USU Vehicle Use Policy. Departments are required to keep a copy of the completed Driver's test for each employee and to forward a copy to the Motor Pool in order to update the Fleet Management database.

1.7 Proof of adequate insurance is required from the owner for vehicles that are owned by another organization and loaned to the University for use. Departments should contact the USU Risk Management Office regarding this process.

## **514.2 VEHICLE PURCHASING AND REPLACEMENT**

2.1 Departments purchasing new vehicles or replacing vehicles with more recent models shall obtain smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles. The appropriate Dean or Vice President will review each vehicle purchase to assure it is "right-sized" as prescribed by the Fleet Energy Efficiency Plan (see 7.1(6)). Exceptions to purchasing "right size" smaller and/or more fuel efficient vehicles must be approved in writing by a Department's Dean or Vice President.

2.2 Departments are encouraged to purchase vehicles that include readily available safety equipment.

2.3 If a department disposes of a vehicle and does not immediately replace it, the vehicle slot will be held for five years.

## **514.3 VEHICLE OPERATION STANDARDS**

3.1 Drivers of University vehicles must observe all state and local laws, including those stated in Utah Code Annotated 1953, as amended, Title 42, Chapter 6 (Traffic Rules and Regulations).

3.2 Drivers and all occupants **must** wear a seatbelt at all times and observe all posted speed limits including reduced speed construction zones and road hazard warnings. All seatbelts need to be fastened before the vehicle is put in motion.

2.3 Drivers are encouraged to briefly rest from driving every 2 hours.

3.4 Total driving time must not exceed 12 hours per day, irrespective of the number of drivers.

3.5 University vehicles must not be operated for travel purposes between 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., except where (1) the trip (a) is solely to return to a home base and (b) the return trip is less than 4 hours in duration or (2) it is necessary to leave home base prior to 5:00 a.m. in order to reach a destination less than four hours away or (3) the driver is within two hours of the destination.

3.6 Drivers must use good judgment concerning weather and driving conditions by reviewing weather conditions in advance of the trip and make prudent travel adjustments when necessary. Travel plans should allow for emergency stop-overs and associated expenses due to bad weather. Drivers must slow down if adverse weather conditions exist.

Travel should not proceed in extreme weather conditions.

3.7 Drivers are responsible for the safe operation and condition of the vehicle they are driving and should be familiar with the vehicle safety equipment. Vehicle problems or concerns should be promptly reported to: (a) Motor Pool if the vehicle is a Motor Pool vehicle or (b) appropriate department personnel if the vehicle is a departmental vehicle.

3.8 Vehicle Load and Towing Capacity: Vehicle operators must not exceed the manufacturer's total rated payload capacity either in cargo or passengers. Adding storage or luggage racks above any vehicle that substantially changes the safe operation of the vehicle is not allowed. Towing must not exceed the manufacturer's rated capacity both in terms of the total payload being towed and/or the amount of tongue weight being placed on the vehicle. The amount of additional tongue weight must be factored in to ensure that amount of payload (plus tongue weight) does not exceed the rated GVRW of the vehicle. It is the responsibility of the vehicle operator to know the rated capacities of the vehicle being operated and to ensure that towing and/or loading does not exceed the manufacturer's rated capacities.

#### **514.4 FULL SIZE VANS**

4.1 Use of 12 or 15 passenger vans is prohibited with the following two exceptions: (These exceptions apply when traveling from an origin point remote to the USU Campus location.)

(1) in rare circumstances where no other suitable transportation is available, a Dean, Vice President, or the Athletic Director may approve the use a full-size passenger van. However, in such circumstances, drivers must meet the certification requirements as outlined in section 5.3(2) and vehicle capacity is limited to nine (9) occupants.

(2) in the event that transportation is provided by a hosting organization using 12 or 15 passenger vans (e.g. airport-hotel shuttle, conference events, etc.), University employees may accept the transportation or arrange alternate transportation at their own discretion.

4.2 As an alternative to 12 and 15 passenger vans, 15 passenger buses will be available from the Motor Pool. These vehicles will have dual rear wheels and meet Federal school bus standards. Additional conditions and training requirements apply as outlined in section 5.3.

4.3 Full-size vans used for cargo purposes only may continue to be purchased and used by departments where the wheelbase does not exceed 139" (no extended body vans) and seating capacity is limited to two passengers. Continued use of existing cargo vans with a wheelbase greater than 139" will be limited to a 10 mile radius of the USU Campus location and will be phased out as vehicles are replaced. Drivers must meet the certification requirements as outlined in section 5.3(2).

#### **514.5 VEHICLE CAPACITIES AND ADDITIONAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

5.1 Departments may own or lease vehicles with a seating capacity of seven (7) occupants or less.

5.2 In order to ensure consistent maintenance and complete vehicle history, all vehicles with seating capacity greater than seven (7) occupants will be managed and maintained by the Motor Pool and made available for use by departments with properly trained drivers as outlined in section 5.3.

5.3 In addition to meeting all general conditions specified in sections 514.1--514.2, drivers of vehicles with seating capacity greater than seven (7) occupants must:

(1) be at least twenty-one (21) years old.

(2) have satisfactorily completed the National Safety Council (NSC) driver certification course as approved by the Manager of Fleet Operations on an annual basis; or, have a current Commercial Drivers License (CDL) with a passenger endorsement in which case the approved (NSC) safety course must be taken every other year.

(3) take sufficient time before each trip (and on a daily basis thereafter) to become familiar with all operations of the vehicle including cruise control and to perform a pre-trip inspection on the vehicle to ensure proper tire inflation, correct fluid levels, and brake operation as well as safety and other operational features of the vehicle.

(4) ensure that cargo does not exceed physical limits imposed by the Motor Pool and that the spare tire and all cargo is safely secured in the cargo area of the vehicle and that the vehicle is not overloaded with passengers or exceeds rated weight capacity limits.

(5) insist on the use of seatbelts by all passengers and observe all traffic rules including slower driving under difficult or adverse conditions. All seatbelts need to be fastened before the vehicle is put in motion.

5.4 For short term rentals, a sedan or minivan is recommended. However, an SUV may also be rented with a maximum of eight (8) occupants.

## **514.6 RESPONSIBILITIES AND SANCTIONS**

The privilege to use University vehicles, by individuals or units/organizations or both, may be withdrawn for up to one year for violations of the Vehicle Use Policy.

6.1 It is the responsibility of each Department Head/Director or designee to ensure the safe operation and condition of departmental vehicles including regular maintenance and safety inspections. Departments must coordinate with the Motor Pool to perform the work or make sure that all vehicle repair and maintenance is completed on schedule and that documentation is forwarded to the Motor Pool in a timely manner.

6.2 All vehicle safety inspections must be performed under the direction of the Motor Pool on an annual basis to ensure compliance to University maintenance standards. The Motor Pool is empowered to ground and remove from service any vehicle deemed unsafe until appropriate repairs are made or the vehicle is replaced.

6.3 Drivers of University vehicles are empowered to insist that the vehicle they are driving is safe and operational for the intended purpose of the trip. Drivers may refuse to drive any vehicle they deem to be unsafe until appropriate action takes place to correct the noted

problems.

6.4 The Risk Control Committee will review and assess updated test results from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), and other appropriate sources. The Committee will establish and maintain an on-going list of vehicles that meet acceptable safety standards. Proposed vehicle purchases will be reviewed by the Manager of Fleet Operations to verify that selected vehicles are on the approved vehicle list.

The privilege to use University vehicles, by individuals or units/organizations or both, will be withdrawn for up to one year for violations of this policy.

#### **514.7 ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

7.1 The State of Utah has established State Fleet Efficiency Requirements to (1) reduce fleet costs or increase energy efficiency, (2) improve air quality in Utah, and (3) contribute to a general decreased United States dependency on foreign oil. Each department is responsible for following the State of Utah's State Fleet Efficiency Requirements by:

(1) decrease the overall cost per mile average of state vehicles. This can be accomplished by increasing the overall miles per gallon; a minimum of 30 MPG should be sought for any new sedan purchases.

(2) decrease the number of vehicles in the state fleet. Departments should review whether low use vehicles are needed to accomplish the mission of the University. Consideration should be given to sharing vehicle ownership and use between departments.

(3) decrease the total gallons of fuel consumed by State vehicles. Alternative fuel vehicles should be used whenever appropriate.

(4) increase the overall miles per gallon of state vehicles. Consideration should be given to the purchase of hybrid vehicles where appropriate.

(5) decrease the total miles driven annually by state vehicles. Emphasis should be placed on walking, bike riding, carpooling, teleconferencing and other alternatives to driving vehicles.

(6) "right size" state vehicles to the lowest level vehicle type needed to perform the state business required. Departments will have vehicle purchases reviewed for right size (section 2.1).

(7) decrease the overall pollution output by the state fleet. Vehicles should comply with emissions testing and avoid excessive idling.

7.2 All Utah State University vehicles will be required to have emissions testing annually in conjunction with the vehicle's annual inspection.

7.3 All Utah State University Departments will purchase "right size" vehicles unless an exception is granted in writing by their Dean or Vice President (section 2.1).

## **514.8 COMMUTE OR TAKE HOME USE**

8.1 According to Utah Administrative Code R27-1, the following terms are defined:

(1) “Commute Use” means an employee driving a state vehicle from the employee’s place of business to the employee’s place of residence, until the start of the next business day, for more than five calendar days per month.

(2) “Personal Use” means the use of a state vehicle to conduct an employee’s personal affairs, not related to state business.

(3) “Take-home vehicle” means a state vehicle assigned to be driven to and from an employee’s place of residence and their assigned work location and the employee’s use of the vehicle is a working condition benefit and not a taxable fringe benefit under the provisions of IRS Publication 15-B.

8.2 In conjunction with Utah Administrative Code R27-3-7: Criteria for Commute Privilege Approval, Commute use may be approved when one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. 24 hour “On-Call.” Where the department clearly demonstrates that the nature of a potential emergency is such that an increase in response time, if a commute or take home privilege is not authorized, could endanger human life or cause significant property damage.
2. Virtual office. Where a department clearly demonstrates that an employee is required to work at home or out of a vehicle a minimum of 80 percent of the time and that the assigned vehicle is required to perform critical duties in a manner that is clearly in the best interest of the University.
3. Practical Use. When the department clearly demonstrates that it is more practical for the employee to go directly to an alternate work-site rather than report to a specific office to pick-up a University vehicle.

8.3 Commute use is considered a taxable fringe benefit as outlined in IRS Publication 15-B. All approved commute use drivers will be assessed the IRS imputed daily fringe benefit rate while using a University vehicle for commute use.

8.4 Approval for Commute privileges must be obtained annually by submitting a [Vehicle Use Form](#) to the Office of the Vice President for Business and Finance prior to the beginning of each calendar year.

8.5 Unauthorized Commute or Take-Home use may result in loss of driving privileges and possible disciplinary action.