

STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES: Vermont State Colleges Driver Safety

I. BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

These standards and procedures are designed to minimize risk and maximize safety. When individuals are allowed to drive on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges they are entrusted not only with the operation and care of the vehicle, but also, the reputation and fiscal operation of Vermont State Colleges and its member institutions. Therefore, only drivers who meet the standards outlined in this document are allowed to drive a vehicle on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges. This includes all motor vehicles regardless of ownership status including but not limited to vehicles: owned or leased by the VSC, rented by the VSC from a commercial or private rental agency, or the use of a personally owned vehicle by an employee who is driving to a location other than their normal place of business.

II. DRIVER STANDARDS AGES 21 AND OVER

A. Vehicles of seven (7) seats or fewer:

Each individual driving a vehicle with seven (7) or fewer seats on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges must independently meet all of the following criteria:

1. Valid driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked in the state of issue
2. No **major conviction** in last 3 years. Major convictions include:
 - a. passing a stopped school bus
 - b. driving under the influence
 - c. refusal to take a sobriety test
 - d. driving with suspended/revoked license
 - e. refusal to stop when requested
 - f. failure to report an accident
 - g. leaving the scene of an accident
 - h. failure to maintain car insurance
 - i. permitting an unlicensed person to drive
 - j. operating a vehicle without owner's consent
 - k. attempting to elude a police officer
 - l. reckless driving
 - m. using motor vehicle while committing a felony
 - n. negligent homicide or involvement in a fatal accident
 - o. assault with a motor vehicle
3. In the last 3 years, you may have no more than **two accidents**. You may have no more than **two minor traffic violations**. If you have both accidents and traffic violations on your record in the last three years, you may have no more of **three, combined**.

Minor traffic violations include:

 - a. motor vehicle equipment violations including load or size violations,

- b. improper display of, or failure to display license plates,
 - c. failure to sign or display of registration when requested,
 - d. failure to have a driver's license in possession if a valid license exists
4. Acceptable driver matrix for seven seat or fewer vehicles.

Last 36 months	Number of Accidents			
	0	1	2	3+
Number Minor Traffic Violations				
0	Clean	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
1	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
2	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Not Acceptable
3+	Not Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Not Acceptable

any major conviction: NOT ELIGIBLE TO DRIVE

B. Vehicles of more than seven (7) seats:

- 1. Meet the requirements of section II.A.1 and II.A.2
- 2. Have a clean motor vehicle record defined as **zero accidents** and **zero minor traffic** violations in the last three years.

C. Commercial Vehicles requiring a commercial driver's license (CDL):

- 1. Meet the requirements of section II.B
- 2. Hold a valid commercial driver's license that has not been suspended or revoked in the state of issue

III. STUDENT DRIVERS

Students ages 21 or more operating VSC vehicles are limited to an operating radius of **400 miles surrounding the respective campus**. The ability to drive additional mileage will be on an exception basis with written prior approval from the institution's Chief Business Officer or designee. Vehicle reservations for student drivers must be approved by the club or student advisor (staff or faculty member). Student drivers must comply with the same requirements placed on all operators as described in these procedures.

As a limited provision, the Vermont State Colleges may authorize up to one-hundred (100) individual drivers between the ages of 19 and 20. These drivers must meet all of the following criteria:

- 1. Meet the requirements of sections II.A.1 and II.A.2

2. Have a clean motor vehicle record defined as **zero accidents** and **zero minor traffic violations**.
3. Motor vehicles driven by those ages 19 and 20 must also meet the following criteria:
 - a. Have seven (7) seats or fewer
 - b. Vehicle must be wholly owned or leased by the Vermont State Colleges. It may not be rented from a commercial or private enterprise

IV. DRIVER AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE

A. Vermont State Colleges Owned or Leased Vehicles:

Each individual driving a vehicle owned or leased by the Vermont State Colleges must be independently authorized to drive for the Vermont State Colleges using the following procedure:

1. The Vermont State Colleges shall maintain a formal approval process to receive and manage requests to drive. An intake form to commence this process shall be available on the Vermont State Colleges portal with links to the form from each institution.
2. **Intake Form.** The intake form will, at minimum, include the following:
 - a. A signed request to become authorized to drive on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges
 - b. Demographic information including such items as requester's name, date of birth, employment status (faculty, staff, student), and affiliated entity (CCV, VTSU, Office of the Chancellor, Shared Services)
 - c. A listing of all states where the requester has held a driver's license in the last thirty-six (36) months
 - d. Copies of the following documents:
 - i. Driver's license
 - ii. Commercial driver's license (if applicable)
 - e. Copies of motor vehicle records for states that do not exchange electronic records with the State of Vermont. These states shall be listed on the intake form along with instructions sharing such documents
3. **Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) Check.** Each entity shall assign responsibility to obtain, review, and evaluate the individual's MVR and shall do so within five (5) business days of request.
 - a. An MVR will be obtained from each state where the requester has held a driver's license in the last thirty-six (36) months
 - b. Each MVR will be scored according to the matrix found in section II
 - c. Requesters will be informed of the outcome of the MVR evaluation. The requester may seek a copy of the MVR in the event of the outcome is "not acceptable"

- d. Requesters will be informed of the type(s) and sizes of vehicle they can drive and any restrictions placed upon their driving abilities such as mileage restrictions
4. **Driver Training.** All drivers must successfully complete required driver safety training(s) before driving for the Vermont State Colleges.
 - a. Defensive driving must be successfully completed before driving for the first time and once every sixty (60) months thereafter. Defensive driving is offered electronically.
 - b. Drivers of vehicles with eight (8) or more seats must successfully complete an approved large passenger instruction course before driving a large vehicle and every thirty-six (36) months thereafter. Large passenger instruction is an in-person course that requires a hands-on driver's test.
5. **Annual Review of Motor Vehicle Record.** Vermont State Colleges will review all motor vehicle records once every calendar year and inform the requester if there have been any status change that results in an increase or reduction in their driving privileges. By requesting driving privileges, the driver acknowledges and consents to these annual reviews.
6. **Notification of Convictions or Change in Driving Status by Drivers.** All authorized drivers are obligated to inform the Vermont State Colleges immediately for any the following so that a reevaluation of driver status can be conducted:
 - a. Any suspension or revocation of one's driver's license or commercial driver's license
 - b. Major conviction as defined in section II.A.2
 - c. Any conviction of an accident
 - d. Any conviction of a minor traffic violation

Failure to notify the VSC of any of the above violations may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of driving privileges. Note that convictions or violations that occur in non-VSC situations are also subject to this reporting requirement.

B. Heavy Equipment Vehicles:

In addition to the requirements of IV.A, the driver must take an approved heavy equipment instruction course before driving and every thirty-six (36) months thereafter. This instruction is taught in-person and requires a hands-on driver's test.

C. Personally Owned Vehicles:

Employees may use their personally owned passenger vehicles, excluding motorcycles, motor homes, or any vehicle requiring a special license, to perform Vermont State Colleges business using the procedures noted below. The Vermont State Colleges shall maintain a

self-certification process for the use of personally owned vehicles when all of the conditions in this section are met. To receive mileage reimbursement, employees must self-certify they meet the criteria listed in this section.

1. **Student Drivers.** Students may not drive personally owned vehicles on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges under any circumstances.
2. **Supervisor Permission.** A supervisor may require advance permission for use of a personally owned vehicle. If required, the supervisor may deny the request and offer substitute arrangements.
3. **Driver Requirements.** Each driver must independently meet the following criteria at the time of travel:
 - a. No major convictions in last thirty-six (36) months as described in section II.A.2
 - b. Meets the “acceptable” or “clean” driving record standard as described in section II.A.3 and II.A.4
 - c. For the vehicle driven the following will be in force during the period of driving:
 - a. Motor vehicle insurance
 - b. Registration
 - c. Inspection
 - d. Driver’s insurance will be the primary insurance in the event of an accident. The Vermont State Colleges insurance will be considered secondary insurance
4. **Documents upon Request.** If requested, the driver shall provide copies of one or more of the following documents to the designated official. In the event the driver cannot produce the requested document(s) the matter will be referred to Human Resources for further action
 - i. Driver’s license
 - ii. Valid motor vehicle insurance
 - iii. Valid motor vehicle registration
 - iv. Proof of current inspection of the personally owned vehicle

D. Rental Vehicles:

When renting a vehicle on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges requirements vary depending on the type of driver, length of use of the vehicle, and number/type of passengers.

1. **Student Drivers Ages 19 and 20.** Students ages 19 and 20 may not rent vehicles on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges.
2. **Rental of Vehicles with Student Drivers or Passengers.** When one or more students will be a passenger or driver, the procedure for Vermont State Colleges Leased or Owned Vehicles, Section IV.A must be followed.

3. **Longer Term Rental of Vehicles.** For vehicles with long-term rentals (more than one (1) week) the procedure for Vermont State Colleges Leased or Owned Vehicles, section IV.A must be followed.
4. **Short Term Rental of Vehicles.** Vehicles with short-term rentals (rentals of one week or less) may use the procedure for personally owned vehicles found in Section IV.C.
5. **All Vehicle Rentals.** All vehicle rentals require the purchase of the insurance of the “waiver of physical damage to the car”. This coverage may be titled “damage waiver insurance” or similar and is necessary to cover any damage needs.
6. **Vehicle Size.** No vehicle shall be rented where the capacity is more than ten (10) people.

V. SAFE VEHICLE OPERATION

1. No individual may operate a VSC-owned or controlled vehicle without a valid state operator’s license for the particular class of vehicle. Each Fleet Driver must produce at least annually or upon demand a valid state operator’s license
2. All VSC-authorized drivers and passengers shall wear seat belts at all times
3. Use of any hand-held communication devices including cell phones, walkie-talkies, or any other communication device are expressly prohibited while driving on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges. As a limited exception cell phones utilized with hands-free devices are permitted when driving a vehicle with seven or fewer seats
4. No driver may operate a VSC vehicle while under the influence of any alcohol or drugs.
5. No driver shall allow any other fleet driver to operate an assigned fleet vehicle without the Fleet Manager’s approval
6. The institutional Fleet Safety Manager or their designee will be responsible for determining if a vehicle is in safe operating condition. If a vehicle becomes unsafe during a trip, the driver will have the discretion to remove the vehicle from the road and contact his/her supervisor or the Fleet Manager. No driver may operate a fleet vehicle with identified unsafe vehicle conditions
7. Each driver must report every accident and property damage incident involving the fleet vehicle to local law enforcement and their public safety officer within one workday. Immediate notice is required in all cases involving bodily injury, regardless of severity
8. Each driver must obey the rules of the road. The Vermont State Colleges is not responsible for fines incurred by drivers due to failure to follow the rules of the road or any other avoidable monetary penalty (including but not limited to parking tickets) and will require the driver to pay the monetary fines/penalty.

9. Each driver is responsible for arranging for payment of tolls. Failure to pay a toll which results in a fine to the Vermont State Colleges may result in the revocation of all driving privileges by a driver. It is therefore imperative that each driver arrange for payment in advance, or notify the fleet manager and arrange for payment after-the-fact in the event a toll is missed.
10. Each driver must remove the ignition key and lock all doors on their assigned fleet vehicle whenever it is left unattended and unsupervised.
11. No employee shall refuel a fleet vehicle with the engine running, or smoke near any vehicle that is being refueled or serviced.
12. It is the responsibility of the driver to assure that vehicles do not exceed maximum passenger or weight limits. Roof racks or other cargo attachments are prohibited on vans and may be used on sedans only with the approval of the Fleet Manager.
13. No driver shall prematurely leave the scene of an accident involving the driver or vehicle being operated, except temporarily to summon police or medical assistance.
14. No employee shall cause physical damage to a fleet vehicle, or allow damage or loss to occur by their failure to act.
15. When only one authorized driver is driving more than four hours of total driving time, the driver is required to take a break every four hours. The driver is not to drive for more than a total of 10 hours during a 24-hour period. ***Drivers ages 19 and 20 may drive for a maximum of eight (8) hours in a 24-hour period.***
16. When traveling long distances, at least two individuals are required to be designated drivers. Drivers are required to rotate driving duties at least once every four hour period, and take a break every six hours for all drivers and occupants of the entire vehicle. Any one driver is not to drive for more than a total of 10 hours during a 24-hour period. ***Drivers ages 19 and 20 may drive for a maximum of eight (8) hours in a 24-hour period.***

VI. INCIDENT REPORTING

Each fleet driver is required to report every incident occurring while driving on behalf of the Vermont State Colleges. An incident report form and instructions shall be kept in each fleet vehicle glove box along with instructions for the vehicle operator in the event of a crash. Individuals driving a personally owned vehicle shall notify the fleet manager as soon as practicable of an incident.

The vehicle operator needs to gather the following information in the event of a vehicle crash:

1. Name

2. Description of the incident location
3. Cross streets or local landmarks to help locate the scene
4. Brief description of the incident
5. Brief description of any injuries
6. Location from which you are calling

VII. VEHICLE INSPECTION

Each campus will maintain its fleet of vehicles according to its fleet maintenance policy.

Each authorized driver when checking out a fleet vehicle must ensure that the safety equipment (lights, horn, wipers, brakes, seat belts, etc.) are properly functioning.

Equipment malfunctions must be reported to the Fleet Manager or their designee before leaving on a trip, or, if discovered while on a trip, immediately upon return (assuming the malfunction does not create a safety hazard while driving).

VIII. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT

Any person in violation of this policy will not be reimbursed for mileage and may have their driving privileges revoked. Note that some jobs require driving privileges, the loss of which may lead to other consequences up to and including termination of employment. Deliberately attempting to circumvent these procedures or providing false information may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.