

## **Motor Vehicle Policy & Van Safety Policy – February 2025**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of those individuals who drive Georgian Court University (GCU) vehicles and to provide guidance on the proper use of such vehicles.

Vehicle accidents are costly to GCU, but more importantly, they may result in injury to you or others. It is the driver's responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. As such, GCU endorses all applicable state motor vehicle regulations relating to driver responsibility. GCU expects each driver to drive in a safe and courteous manner pursuant to the following safety rules. The attitude you take when behind the wheel is the single most important factor in driving safely.

This policy applies to both (1) employees who drive GCU vehicles; and (2) employees who drive personal or rental vehicles while on GCU business. "GCU business" is defined as driving at the direction, or for the benefit, of GCU, but not including normal commuting to and from work.

### **The Office of Human Resources manages this policy and is responsible for the following:**

- Reviewing driving records of individual employees and making recommendations to their respective manager when driving privileges should be suspended or revoked.
- Reviewing all other issues that arise with respect to compliance with this policy.

### **Driver Criteria & Administration**

- Active and authorized employee of Georgian Court University.
- To operate a GCU vehicle, (including rental cars used during University business) employees must have a valid and current driver's license.
- To operate a personal vehicle while on GCU business, employees must have a valid and current driver's license and current auto insurance.
- Must be at least 21 years of age.
- Employees are expected to drive in a safe and responsible manner and to maintain a good driving record.
- The Office of Human Resources is responsible for the annual review of driving records, including accidents, moving violations, etc., to determine if an employee's driving record indicates a pattern of unsafe or irresponsible driving, and to make a recommendation to the respective manager for suspension or revocation of driving privileges (including the operation of a rental car while on University business).  
Criteria that may indicate an unacceptable driving record includes, but is not limited to:
  - Will not qualify to drive a vehicle if during the last three (3) years the driver had any of the following:
    - Been convicted of a felony.
    - Been convicted of sale, handling or use of drugs.
    - Been convicted of an alcohol or drug-related offense while driving.
    - Had a driver's license suspended or revoked.
    - Been convicted of three or more speeding violations or one or more other serious violations.

- Been involved in three or more chargeable accidents.

***\*Chargeable: the driver is determined to be the primary cause of the accident through speeding, inattention, etc. Contributing factors, such as weather or mechanical problems, will be taken into consideration.***

***\*\* Violations include any ticket, charge, or other law enforcement proceeding relating to these, as well as independent evidence of violations deemed satisfactory by the Office of Human Resources.***

### **Driver Guidelines and Reporting Requirements**

GCU vehicles, including rental vehicles are to be driven by authorized employees only, except in case of repair testing by a mechanic.

1. Any employee who has a driver's license revoked or suspended shall immediately notify the Office of Human Resources no later than 9 a.m. eastern time the next business day, and immediately cease operating the GCU vehicle. Failure to comply with this provision may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.
2. All accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported to the Office of Human Resources.
3. Accidents are to be reported to the Office of Human Resources immediately (from the scene, during the same day, or as soon as practicable if immediate or same day reporting is not possible).
4. An employee who sustains personal injury while driving must report the injury to Human Resources for Worker's Compensation purposes.
5. Failing to stop after an accident and/or failure to report an accident may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
6. Within 72 hours of receiving any moving violation, employees must report the ticket violations to the Office of Human Resources.
7. GCU will obtain motor vehicle records on all drivers prior to employment and on an annual basis. A driving record that fails to meet the criteria stated in this policy, or a driving record that the Office of Human Resources considers to be in violation of the intent of this policy, will result in a loss of the privilege of driving a GCU vehicle.
8. Employees are strongly discouraged from transporting students in their private vehicles.

### **Accident Procedures**

1. In an attempt to minimize the results of an accident, the driver must prevent further damages or injuries and obtain all pertinent information and report it accurately. The driver must do the following:

- Call for medical aid if necessary.
  - Call the police. All accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported to the police by the employee.
  - Record the names and addresses of drivers, witnesses, and occupants of the other vehicles and any medical personnel who may arrive at the scene.
2. Do not discuss the accident with anyone at the scene except the police. Do not accept any responsibility for the accident. Do not argue with anyone.
  3. Provide the other party with your name, address, driver's license number, and insurance information.
  4. Immediately report the accident to the Office of Human Resources. Provide a copy of the accident report and/or your written description of the accident to the Office of Human Resources as soon as possible.
  5. There will be a formal accident review conducted on each accident to determine cause and how the accident could have been prevented.

### **Driver Safety Rules**

1. The use of a GCU vehicle, or use of a personal vehicle while on GCU business, while under the influence of intoxicants, including but not limited to alcohol, and other drugs that could impair driving ability is forbidden and is sufficient cause for discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
2. Cell phone use while driving should be kept to a minimum; drivers should not hold or handle a cell phone while driving. Whenever possible, drivers should complete calls while the vehicle is parked and/or use the phone in a "hands free" mode via a headset or speaker. Drivers need to be aware when use of the cell phone is creating a distraction from safe driving and adjust their usage accordingly, including pulling off the road to continue/finish the conversation if needed. While driving, attention to the road and safety should always take precedence over conducting business over the phone.
3. No driver shall operate a GCU vehicle, or operate a personal vehicle while on GCU business, when his/her ability to do so safely has been impaired by illness, fatigue, injury, or prescription medication.
4. All drivers and passengers operating or riding in a GCU vehicle must wear seat belts, even if air bags are available.

5. Drivers are responsible for the security of GCU vehicles assigned to them. The vehicle engine must be shut off, ignition keys removed, and vehicle doors locked whenever the vehicle is left unattended.
6. Headlights shall be used 2 hours before sunset and until 2 hours after sunrise, during inclement weather, or at any time the driver cannot clearly see a distance of 500 feet ahead of the GCU vehicle.
7. Employees must obey all federal, state, and local laws.

### **Personal Automobiles**

1. GCU non-owner auto insurance covers only liability to GCU for damage to a personal car or rental car or personal injury while the automobile is being used by the employee for GCU business. Damage to rental or personal vehicles, as well as injury to family members, friends, etc., will not be covered by the GCU liability coverage and, therefore, is the sole responsibility of the employee.
2. All traffic violations received while operating a personal vehicle or rental car are the sole responsibility of the driver. These violations are inclusive of both moving and non-moving violations. GCU will NOT be responsible for these violations.
3. Employees who use their personal vehicle for GCU business will be reimbursed for mileage pursuant to IRS regulations. Reimbursed mileage is defined as mileage driven over and above the employee's normal commuting mileage.

### **Van Safety Policy**

(10+ Passenger Van Safety Policy for University Owned or Leased Passenger Vans)

#### **Purpose**

This policy pertains to 10+ passenger vans operated by employees of Georgian Court University and has been prepared due to the risks associated with these vehicles. These vans are manufactured to truck standards, with the end use intended for the hauling of cargo. 10-15 passenger vans can be considered cargo vans with rows of bench seats bolted to the floor. Studies by The National Traffic Safety Administration indicate that these vans have an increased propensity to rollover during evasive maneuvers as the number of passengers or load increases.

The following Policy has been developed to prevent injuries, promote safety, and minimize financial loss.

#### **Office of Human Resources**

- The Office of Human Resources is responsible for annual review of driving records, including accidents, moving violations etc., to determine if an employee's driving record indicates a pattern of unsafe or irresponsible driving, and to make a recommendation to the respective manager for suspension or revocation of driving privileges (including

operation of a rental van while on university business). Motor vehicle driving abstracts will be requested from the corresponding state once per year for all.

- Reviewing all other issues that arise with respect to compliance with this policy.

## **Dean/Director Responsibilities**

The Dean or Department Director must notify Human Resources of new employees that will be driving the University vans. This will allow HR to ensure that all drivers are authorized and that they complete the necessary training requirements.

## **Driving Criteria and Administration**

- Operators: Only employees of Georgian Court University may operate 10-15 passenger vans. Students are not permitted to drive owned or leased passenger vans.
- All van operators **must be authorized** GCU drivers approved through the Office of Human Resources.
- Driver's License: All vehicle operators must have a current, valid state Driver's License, be 21 years of age and have at least two years of driving experience without infractions.
- Distracted Driving: Cellular telephones may not be used while operating a vehicle. In addition to cellphones reading, writing, grooming, locating directions, eating and drinking, and searching for belongings within the motor vehicle are prohibited while operating the vehicle.
- Other Prohibitions: other prohibitions while operating the vehicle include but are not limited to, radar detectors, animals (other than service), smoking, open alcohol containers, firearms, hitchhikers and hazardous materials.
- Number of Occupants: The recommended number of passengers should be limited to 8 in 10 -passenger van, 10 in a 12-passenger van and 12 in a 15- passenger van. At no time should the total weight of passengers and cargo exceed the manufacturer's load limit.
- Professional Behavior: All drivers are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner while on university business.

## **Safety Requirements**

- Seat Belts/Shoulder Harnesses: Seat belts and other occupant restraint devices **MUST** be worn at all times by all drivers and occupants. Malfunctioning or damaged seat belts must be repaired or replaced before using the vehicle.
- Vehicle Operation: The vehicle must be operated in accordance with all traffic laws, ordinances, and regulations. Operators should not drive if drowsy or under the influence of any substance.
- Limit Driving Time: All operators should take frequent breaks from driving at least every 2 hours. Additionally qualified drivers should be available for trips longer than 8 hours or arrangements should be made for an overnight stay.

- **Manufacturer Safety Information:** The owner's manual and other manufacturers' safety material should be available and reviewed by all van operators. Special attention should focus on proper loading according to manufacturer recommendations.
- **Inspection:** Each van will be inspected periodically. This inspection should include, but is not limited to: (1) Brakes, including parking brake (2) Oil and fluid levels (3) Lights, including head, tail and brake lights (4) Tire pressure and tread wear (5) Turn signals (6) Windshield wipers (7) Mirrors (8) Horn (9) Speedometer/instrument panel (10) Seat belts/shoulder harnesses. Inspections will be performed by facilities and be documented accordingly.
- **Tires:** Fatal rollovers of 10-15 passenger vans often involve tire failures. Research by The National Traffic Safety Administration shows that tires on 10-15 passenger vans are often underinflated and used past their service life. Inspect the tires for tread wear and proper air pressure before each use. A placard inside the driver's door pillar or the owner's manual lists recommended tire size and pressure.
- **Size:** A 10+ passenger van is substantially longer and wider than a car and requires more space to maneuver. It also requires additional reliance on side-view mirrors for changing lanes.
- **Weather and Road Conditions:** Drivers must be aware of weather and road conditions and make prudent decisions regarding travel based on those conditions.
- **Speed:** Drive at safe speeds based on driving conditions and operators should never exceed posted speed limits. Always slow down if the roads are wet or icy as these vans do not respond well to abrupt steering maneuvers. Maintain the proper following distances as these vans require additional braking time.
- **Cargo:** Cargo should be placed forward of the rear axle. Cargo may not be placed on the roof. Consult the vehicle owner's manual for the maximum passenger and cargo weight to avoid overloading.

### **Training Requirements**

- **Driver Training:** All operators must complete specialized on-line training prior to operating a 10-15 passenger van. This training is offered online through the Human Resources Department and must be completed by each driver prior to initial operation and at least every two years, thereafter. The online course will be "Van Safety Training, Higher Education". Assignment details will be sent in a separate email. If you have questions, please contact [gcuhr@georgian.edu](mailto:gcuhr@georgian.edu). The training course that will be assigned to you is offered through the Gallagher Step program. After successfully completing the course, you will receive verification of completion. Please print a copy of your certificate. Provide a copy of your certificate to HR and maintain a copy for your records. The course will take 40-45 minutes to complete.
- **Accident Reporting**

All accidents involving 10+ passenger vans should be reported to the operator's immediate supervisor, Campus Safety, local law enforcement authority and the Office of Human Resources.

Injuries should be attended to first. If possible, photographs should be taken of the damage caused by the accident, the driver and scene information should be collected.

### **Traffic Violations**

All traffic violations received while operating University owned or leased passenger vans are the sole responsibility of the driver. These violations are inclusive of both moving and non-moving violations. GCU will NOT be responsible for these violations.