

Guidelines for Club Sport Van Drivers

All vans driven for Club Sports purposes, whether owned by the university or leased for the duration of the trip, will be driven only by approved Club Sport participants. Please see the Van Driver Checkout Sheet for qualifications. These vehicles must be operated in full compliance with applicable campus ordinances and state laws.

I. To become an approved van driver for Club Sports:

- A. Drivers must have a valid driver's license, and a photocopy of their license should be on file with the Department of Campus Recreation.
- B. Drivers must also complete a Driver's Information Sheet and submit it to Assistant Director of Intramural and Club Sports, which will be kept in their personnel file.
- C. Drivers must complete the University approved Coaching the Van Driver training.
- D. **Drivers must pass the Driver Training written test.**

II. Safe driving guidelines:

A. Basic Safety:

1. Drive defensively - others do not. Do not assume another driver knows where you are or what you plan to do.
2. Maintain at least a 4 second following distance at all speeds. Increase this distance in poor conditions. In rain and fog, drive at a speed that will allow you to stop within the distance you can see ahead.
3. Do not exceed a safe speed! Excessive speed is the primary cause of most accidents. Always drive more carefully and slowly than you would in your own vehicle. Obey traffic laws. **All tickets or citations are the responsibility of the driver!**
4. If you have consumed any alcohol in the previous 8 hours, do not drive the van. This does not simply mean you must be below the legal blood alcohol limit of .08%. This means any amount of alcohol. The same is also true for any drugs that can affect one's driving ability, especially illicit drugs but also including legal drugs that may cause drowsiness, etc.
5. The van is longer than your car! It is necessary to take turns wider than you would in a car. Because the van is so long, the rear wheels tend to track further inside the turn than the front wheels. This means that on a tight turn to the right, your right rear wheel can drop off the road while your front right wheel stays on the pavement. On a similar turn to the left, your front wheels might still be inside your lane while your back left wheel is on or over the yellow line. Be careful not to sideswipe things on the inside of the turn! Use your mirrors to find out where you are relative to the boundaries of your lane, and how close you are to objects alongside the van.
6. The van is taller than your car! The van's height causes it to sway from side to side more than a car, especially if there is a strong crosswind and/or the van is fully loaded.
7. The van is heavier than your car! It will take more time and distance to stop the van than your car requires. This is especially true when the van is carrying many passengers. To compensate for this extended stopping distance:

- i. Use a light foot on the gas. Accelerate slowly and evenly to your desired speed. Over accelerating will require harder braking to keep your speed under control. This is hard on the van, uncomfortable for passengers, and makes accidents more likely.
 - ii. Use the road to help control your speed. Anticipate that uphill stretches ahead of you will slow the van, so use them if you want to slow down. Uphill freeway off-ramps are a great example: just coast to the top! Because going downhill will add to your speed, let up on the gas before you come over the top and start to descend.
 - iii. Learn to COVER THE BRAKE. Watch the road ahead for problems that will require you to brake. When you see brake lights come on in traffic ahead of you, or cars with turn signals on, or even curves in the road, move your foot from the accelerator and hold it above the brake pedal. The van will begin to slow even before you decide that you really do need to apply the brakes, resulting in your braking distance and time being shortened because you are anticipating the need to stop. Plan ahead, look ahead, and slow down earlier.
- 8. Remember that your brakes are a finite resource. Constant braking can lead to break failure. Instead, use the transmission to help hold your speed down on long or steep downhill slopes. Slow down and downshift to a lower gear before you begin to descend. Downshift to second at or below 45 mph; downshift to first at or below 20 mph. In some cases, simply turning Overdrive off can slow the van enough to eliminate the need for braking.
- 9. Use extreme caution when passing other vehicles:
 - i. Before pulling out to pass, check your mirrors and turn your head and look into the van's blind spot on the left side. Signal your intention well in advance. NC law allows you to honk as you begin to pass. This obligates the other driver to help you pass safely.
 - ii. Stay in the center of your lane. You should not need to go to the extreme left side of your lane while passing - this only puts you at risk of driving off the road into the median.
 - iii. After you have passed the other vehicle, signal early before returning to the right lane. You will know you have given the other vehicle enough room when you can see him clearly in your rear view mirror (not the right side mirror). You may also ask for a visual check by a passenger before pulling back to the right lane. More room will be needed if you are pulling a trailer!
 - iv. Avoid driving in the left lane for extended periods. Faster vehicles will begin to pass you on the right, creating difficulties for you since you cannot see well on that side. Traveling alongside another vehicle reduces your ability to maneuver - you will have nowhere to go if you need to change lanes. Try to avoid passing at all on two lane roads, or any time passing will take you into a lane used by oncoming traffic. If you find yourself behind a very slow moving vehicle (such as farm machinery, etc.), do not try to pass until you are certain you have enough room and sight distance to do so safely. There is no rush.

10. Drive with both hands on the wheel. This is especially important in heavy traffic, bad weather or winding roads. Accidents are more likely when the driver is rushing to meet a schedule, or the driver's attention is focused on things other than the road, for example changing the radio station, trying to eat, reading a map, or looking back at the passengers behind him/her. It is a good idea to have the person riding shotgun assist in navigating, adjust the radio, etc. Driving safely takes priority over schedule problems at all times.
 11. Stopping and changing lanes can take a lot of distance. You will need to be constantly aware of traffic and road conditions ahead of and around your vehicle. Check your mirrors frequently to:
 - i. See where other vehicles are. Has an overtaking car moved into your blind spot? Do you know where you can go if you have to change lanes quickly?
 - ii. Shift your forward vision near and far. Know what is going on around you, and look far enough ahead (12 to 15 seconds, or 1/4 mile at 60 mph) to be ready to deal with upcoming road or traffic problems.
 12. The vans are equipped with cruise control. If you are not familiar with cruise controls, read the owner's manual before attempting to use it. It is imperative that you pay full attention to the road when the cruise control is on. This is not autopilot! **DO NOT USE CRUISE CONTROL ON SLIPPERY ROADS, ON WINDING OR UNPAVED ROADS, IN HEAVY TRAFFIC.**
 13. When backing, or maneuvering in any tight spot:
 - i. Do not move until you have walked around the van to examine obstacles and are certain you will not hit something.
 - ii. If there is someone else in the van with you, have them get out acting as a spotter to direct you around posts, cars, or other objects in your path. Be sure to roll down your window and turn off the radio so that you can hear the spotter. Make sure the spotter stays safely away from the vehicle and is clearly visible to you at all times.
 - iii. Use your horn to give a short warning honk before you back up.
 14. Monitor the dashboard gauges while driving. If a warning light comes on, or if a gauge indicates a problem, pull over safely; stop the engine and check to see what the problem is.
 15. When locking the van, be sure to lock the back doors and all side windows, as well as the front and side doors.
- B. Driving with Passengers:
1. The driver is responsible for the safety of all passengers in the vehicle.
 2. All passengers must wear their seat belts. NC STATE LAW! UNCG Campus Police may ticket you as well.
 3. The driver should not allow any horseplay that might lead to an injury or distract the driver.
 4. Smoking and/or consumption of alcohol is prohibited in the van.
 5. You should not drive with the rear door windows open, since exhaust fumes will be drawn into the van.
- C. Driving on long trips, and especially long nights:

1. Safe driving requires concentration and can be tiring. Change drivers every 2 to 3 hours to avoid driver fatigue. If the current driver is having trouble keeping his/her eyes open, or is feeling particularly tired, they should pull over at the first safe spot and change drivers. If all approved drivers in the van are too tired to continue driving, stop and rest. **DON'T DRIVE WHEN YOU SUSPECT YOU MAY BE TOO TIRED TO DO SO SAFELY.**
 2. On trips, the shotgun passenger should stay awake to assist the driver with navigation, dealing with passenger issues, help in passing, and to help keep the driver alert with lively conversation.
- D. Driving in different types of weather:
1. Rain:
 - i. Drive more slowly than usual
 - ii. Use your headlights and windshield wipers
 - iii. Increase stopping distances on slippery pavement by five times
 - iv. Slow down and allow at least twice the normal following distance.
 - v. Drive at least five to ten miles per hour slower
 2. Fog:
 - i. Turn on the low beam headlights
 - ii. Reduce speed and be alert for taillights of the vehicle in front of you
 - iii. Watch for the vehicles behind you.
 - iv. Pull off the road way if you have trouble seeing
 3. Snow and Ice:
 - i. Watch for shady spots, bridges and overpasses since these places are often the first to freeze as the temperature drops.
 - ii. Reduce your speed
 - iii. Use your windshield wipers and turn on the low beam headlights.
 - iv. Be alert of the drivers around you

V. Emergencies

- A. In case of accident, stay on the scene until police arrive. Do not attempt to assess blame. Write down the names and tag numbers of drivers involved, as well as names of passengers. Try to get good written accounts from witnesses as soon as possible.
- B. In an accident or mishap that involves personal injury:
 - Contact the Intramural and Club Sports Program Director or the Director of Campus Recreation. Phone numbers are located in the travel packet for Club Sports. If you cannot reach either of these people by phone, call the Campus Police. Inform them of the details and ask them to contact the Campus Recreation Director. Do not make statements to the Press, but refer any questions to the Office of University Relations.
 - If a camera is available
- C. In any accident or mishap that involves injury, or that will require repairs to the van: Have a police report done ASAP, and obtain a copy of the report or arrange for one to be sent to Outdoor Adventures for insurance reasons. Take photographs of the scene and vehicles involved if possible. Give the Assistant Director of OA a written report of the accident immediately upon your return to campus.

- D. If the van gets a flat tire, check the van owner's manual if you are not sure of the location of all the components of the jack and where to place them to raise the vehicle. Get well off the road, set the parking brake, and chock the wheels. Do not crawl under the vehicle while the jack supports it. Have the passengers get out of the van while it is on the jack to lighten the load and to avoid sudden shifts of weight.
- E. After changing a flat, stop and re-tighten the lug nuts after 10 minutes of driving.
- F. Do not continue to operate a vehicle that is unsafe.

Many thanks to Sandy Kohn at UNCC Venture for his permission to use the material in the Venture Program's driver training and staff training manuals. Special thanks to Ed Daugherty at Davidson Outdoors for continuing to pass along useful information.

The following information, stating UNCG's van policy, has been taken from the UNCG web page: <http://www.uncg.edu/ppo/hov.html>

As of January 2004, a new University policy on High Occupancy Vans (HOV), approved by the Chancellor's Executive Staff will be implemented. Please take time to read the following information carefully as each driver must have mandatory High Occupancy Van drivers training through the Office of Safety. After the January 2004 implementation of the policy, High Occupancy Vans cannot be rented without proof of designated training.

HIGH OCCUPANCY VANS POLICY

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

(Approved by Chancellor's Executive Staff)

September 8, 2003

Introduction

High publicity crashes and subsequent research by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have raised awareness of the increase risk of fatalities resulting from crashes of 15-passenger vans. In a three-month period starting in December 1999, six fatal accidents involving university athletic teams using 15-passenger vans occurred. The vehicle design as well as how they are loaded and driven are considered risk factors by the U.S. Department of Transportation. In order to mitigate these risks, it is University policy that these vehicles be used only when absolutely necessary for the mission of a department and with trained drivers. It is recommended that departments replace High Occupancy Vans (HOVs) when practicable with smaller vehicles or purchase pick-up trucks to reduce the loading of HOVs.

Definitions

Department Coordinator - University departments that must use HOVs must designate a person to oversee the department's safety responsibilities related to HOVs and drivers.

High Occupancy Vans (HOVs) - Vans originally designed to carry eight or more persons, except vehicles requiring a Commercial Drivers License.

Seatbelt Use - The driver and passengers are required to properly wear seatbelts while the vehicle is being operated.

Load Restrictions

Manufacturer vehicle weight limits must be adhered to. To lower the center of gravity of a loaded vehicle, no loads are allowed on the roof. No loads in the cargo space can exceed the horizontal seat surface height.

Because of the added risks of towing a trailer with and HOV, special driver training is required.

HOV Pre-Trip Safety Checklist

This is to be completed prior to each trip and turned in to the Department Coordinator for approval.

Driver Training

Drivers of HOVs must receive training such as the National Safety Council's Coaching the Van Driver course before being permitted to operate a HOV. Department Coordinators must ensure that the training has been completed. The Office of Safety will offer training at least twice per semester. The training must include information about hazards and warning signs of driver fatigue.

Driver License Checks

Department Coordinators must complete a Motor Vehicle Record check on each HOV driver prior to initial assignment and each year thereafter. In addition, the Department Coordinator must perform a visual inspection of the Driver License of HOV drivers every month.