

Augusta University

Policy Library

Motor Vehicle Use Policy

Policy Manager: Facilities Services, Vehicle Services

POLICY STATEMENT

Authorized University Drivers are expected to operate vehicles used for official Augusta University (AU) Business with a primary focus on safety and with strict adherence to driving laws and requirements from the State of Georgia, the University System of Georgia, and Augusta University. Operation of University Vehicles for purposes other than Official University Business is prohibited with rare and specifically limited exceptions. This policy provides guidance on locating relevant state and university system requirements and details AU requirements.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- Alumni Faculty Graduate Students Health Professional Students
- Staff Undergraduate Students Vendors/Contractors Visitors
- Other: Volunteers

DEFINITIONS

Assigned Vehicle: A University Vehicle that is primarily assigned to the use of a specific individual.

Authorized Use of University Vehicles: Uses for official University Business (assignments within an employee or Volunteer's scope of responsibilities for Augusta University) as authorized by the Authorized University Driver's department.

Authorized University Driver: Any Augusta University employee or volunteer as defined in this section, who meets the qualification requirements set forth in these procedures for authorization to drive University Vehicles for Official University Business. Independent Contractors cannot be Authorized University Drivers and may not drive University Vehicles under any circumstances. Only employees of the state of Georgia and properly registered volunteers may operate state vehicles. AU Health employees are not state employees.

Disqualified Driver: Any individual who has been an Authorized University Driver as defined by this policy but who no longer meets the eligibility criteria to be an Authorized University Driver and has, therefore been disqualified.

Driver's License: An official and currently valid license issued by a state, district, or territory of the United States of America authorizing the bearer to drive a motor vehicle on public roads.

Motor Vehicle Record: A report from the agency that issues an Authorized University Driver's license, listing accidents and violations that appear on the driver's driving record.

Official University Business: An event, program, act, or function sponsored or approved by an authorized Augusta University official.

Pooled Vehicle: A University Vehicle that is routinely operated by different individuals within the same department or unit or that is routinely shared between units or departments.

University Employee: All individuals employed by AU including faculty, staff, and student workers. Independent contractors are not University Employees. Student workers are University Employees who are enrolled in a program of study at AU.

University Vehicle: Any AU-owned or -controlled vehicles including those rented for AU Business purposes. This frequently pertains to cars, trucks, golf carts, utility vehicles, motorcycles, forklifts, and tractors, but also includes any self-propelled means of conveyance.

Vehicle Services: The University unit authorized to oversee application of these procedures and to determine if persons are authorized to drive University Vehicles.

Volunteer: Persons registered with AU Volunteer Services & Community Engagement to perform work for AU in a volunteer capacity.

BPM – The Business Procedures Manual is part of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia Policy Manual

DOAS – The Georgia Department of Administrative Services

HRAP – The USG Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual

OPB – The Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget

USG – The University System of Georgia

PROCESS & PROCEDURES

Operation and maintenance of AU Vehicles must be done in accordance with [OPB Policy Memorandum 10](#).

1. **Authorized University Drivers:** Only Authorized University Drivers may drive University Vehicles, however infrequently and regardless of location. To be an Authorized University Driver, individuals must meet the applicable eligibility criteria, complete the application process, and receive formal designations as an Authorized University Driver from AU Vehicle Services. Department Heads are responsible for determining which individuals in their departments need to be Authorized University Drivers to complete their work responsibilities. Department Heads should retain a completed Driver Acknowledgement Form for each person in the department approved by AU Vehicle Services to be an Authorized University Driver, and should prepare and retain a Blanket Travel Authorization for those who are expected to routinely use AU Vehicles. Authorized University Drivers must complete the authorization process annually.

AU Vehicle Services shall oversee these procedures. During the onboarding process, AU Human Resources will obtain driving history reports (MVRs) as part of background checks on all new

hire positions that require an Employee to drive as part of their duties. In the event that it is determined that an existing employee needs to obtain eligibility as an Authorized University Driver, HR will obtain a current MVR to determine eligibility.

Authorized University Drivers are responsible for compliance with all requirements of this policy.

- a. **Eligibility:** To be eligible for Authorized University Driver status consideration, individuals must:
 - i. Possess a valid state-issued Driver’s License appropriate for the size vehicle being operated (i.e., Class A, B or C); and
 - ii. Possess a satisfactory motor vehicle record free of the occurrences listed below for the twenty-four (24) months prior to the time of consideration. Persons who do not meet the eligibility criteria may not be considered for Authorized University Driver status unless eligibility is permitted by AU Vehicle Services and Human Resources upon completion of corrective, preventative and/or educational measures specified by AU Vehicle Services:
 - 1) Accumulation of more than 10 points on driving record,
 - 2) Citation (ticket or warning) while driving on Official University Business,
 - 3) Responsible in an “at fault” motor vehicle accident, or
 - 4) Conviction of one of the following offenses:
 - a) DUI (Driving Under the Influence)
 - b) DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) or equivalent,
 - c) Leaving the scene of an accident,
 - d) Refusal to take a breathalyzer or blood test to determine intoxication,
 - e) Vehicular Homicide,
 - f) Exceeding the speed limit by more than 19 miles per hour, or
 - g) Aggressive Driving.
 - iii. Eligibility must be reaffirmed annually.
- b. **Application Process:** Individuals who meet the eligibility criteria set out above must also complete the following application process to be considered for designation as an Authorized University Driver.
 - i. Complete initial and annual training requirements through AU Vehicle Services,
 - ii. Submit a completed annual **Driver Acknowledgement Form** to AU Vehicle Services, and

- iii. Complete the process to obtain an annual Motor Vehicle Report history check and additional checks following any citations received.
- c. **Designation:** Individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and complete the application process set forth herein will be considered by AU Vehicle Services for designation as Authorized University Drivers. If all criteria and application requirements are met, including Motor Vehicle Report history check confirmation of eligibility, AU Vehicle Services will send the individual a designation notice of Authorized University Driver status, copied to the applicable Department Head. All Authorized University Drivers must always maintain their driver's license on their person when operating a University Vehicle.
2. **Disqualification:** An Authorized University Driver who has any of the following occurrences shall automatically become a Disqualified Driver who may not drive University Vehicles while in a Disqualified Driver status:
- Unauthorized Use of a University Vehicle;
 - Failure to comply with the requirements of these procedures or the motor vehicle guidelines;
 - Use of hand-held mobile phone or electronic device while driving;
 - Use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, or vaping products while driving a university vehicle or a personal or rental vehicle for official state business;
 - Failure to properly use seatbelts or vehicle safety restraints while driving a university vehicle or a personal or rental vehicle for official state business;
 - Accumulation of more than 10 points on driving record in all states;
 - A citation (ticket or warning) while driving on Official University Business;
 - Responsibility in an "at fault" motor vehicle accident; or
 - DUI (Driving Under the Influence);
 - DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) or equivalent;
 - Leaving the scene of an accident;
 - Refusal to take a breathalyzer or blood test to determine intoxication;
 - Vehicular Homicide;
 - Exceeding the speed limit by more than 19 miles per hour, or
 - Aggressive Driving.
- a. **Duty to Disclose:** Authorized University Drivers must disclose receipt of citations/charges by submitting a completed Motor Vehicle Use Program Driver Notification Form to both their department head and Vehicle Services (Vehicle_Services@augusta.edu) by no later than one (1) workday following receipt of the citation/charges.

- b. Department Heads and/or Vehicle Services should complete the Supervisor's Accident Follow-Up Checklist and submit to Risk Management within 24 hours of notification of accident or citation. Copies of the form should also be filed in the employee's Human Resources file.
- c. **No Driving:** A Disqualified Driver may not drive a University Vehicle or personal or rental vehicle for official state business until their Motor Vehicle Record has been reviewed by Human Resources and the Disqualified Driver has been reinstated in writing via Supervisor's Accident Follow-up Checklist.
- d. **Reinstatement:** Eligibility for reinstatement will be determined at the discretion of Human Resources and Vehicle Services. Reinstatement may require corrective, preventative, and/or educational measures that the Disqualified Driver may complete to be reinstated to Authorized University Driver status. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, viewing a driver safety video, successfully completing an approved defensive driving course, and/or waiting a specified period prior to resumption of authorized driving status. Notice of reinstatement, if granted, will be communicated in writing to the individual and Department Head. Provided, persons charged with the following offenses are not eligible to be considered for reinstatement to Authorized University Driver status until final disposition of the charges:
 - i. DUI (Driving Under the Influence),
 - ii. DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) or equivalent;
 - iii. Leaving the scene of an accident'
 - iv. Refusal to take a breathalyzer or blood test to determine intoxication;
 - v. Vehicular Homicide
 - vi. Aggressive Driving (if a conviction would result in more than 10 points accumulated on driving record), or
 - vii. Exceeding speed limit by more than 19 mph (if a conviction would result in more than 10 points accumulated on driving record).
- e. **Permanent Disqualification:** Based on the nature of the events leading to Disqualified Driver status, it may be determined that the Disqualified Driver may never again be permitted to drive a University Vehicle, personal vehicle, or rental vehicle for official state business. Prior to making such a determination, AU Vehicle Services will consult with the Disqualified Driver's Department Head to discuss the factors supporting such a determination and the effects such a determination may have on the job status of the Disqualified Driver. The factors set forth below are among those to be considered when determining whether Disqualified Driver status will be permanent:
 - i. The driving conditions under which the relevant events occurred;
 - ii. The extent to which the Disqualified Driver exceeded the maximum speed, level of intoxication, or
 - iii. Other limitations imposed pursuant to applicable law;

- iv. The apparent degree of recklessness or disregard for safety on the part of the Disqualified Driver;
 - v. Whether anyone was injured because of the Disqualified Driver's actions; and
 - vi. The amount of time that has passed since the events in question.
- f. **Termination of Employment due to Disqualification:** A Disqualified Driver required to drive a University Vehicle, personal vehicle, or rental vehicle for official state business as a condition of their employment duties may be subject to termination if the employee can no longer perform the essential functions of their position.
- g. **Unauthorized Use:** Unauthorized Use of a University Vehicle or rental vehicle for official state business is prohibited and grounds for discipline by the department of the Authorized University Driver, up to termination, and Disqualification. For students, Unauthorized Use may also result in charges under the Student Code of Conduct. The driver in such instances shall be personally liable for accidents and any related damages stemming from Unauthorized Use of a University Vehicle and may be required to provide their personal insurance information to the University for use in responding to claims made against the University stemming from the Unauthorized Use.
- h. **Responsibility for Citations:** Individuals who receive citations while driving University Vehicles are personally responsible for paying all fines and fees associated with the citation. Individuals may also be held responsible for any damages stemming from accidents that occur when driving University Vehicles for unauthorized purposes. Any time spent in court in connection with a citation must be reported to the University as vacation time. Any and all citations must be reported to both the employee's Department head and Vehicle Services by no later than one (1) workday following receipt of the citation using the Motor Vehicle Use Program Driver Notification form.
- i. **Accidents when Driving on University Business:** Employees should not express opinion as to fault or liability and are not authorized to agree to any settlements or sign any documents other than those required by police authorities, the state's insurance carrier, or applicable law.

Steps to take following an accident:

- Assist injured persons
- Report the accident to the police immediately
- Report the accident to your supervisor immediately
- Regardless of fault, vehicle accidents resulting in serious injury or death must be immediately reported to AU Police Department at 706-721-2911. Describe the matter as "serious" and requiring immediate action.
- Report the accident to Vehicle Services as soon as possible, regardless of fault. In no event should reporting the accident be delayed beyond 24 hours using the Motor Vehicle Use Program Driver Notification form. Vehicle Services is required to report such accidents to DOAS within 48 hours.

- If the accident involves a non-state vehicle being used by a state employee in the performance of their duties, the accident should also be reported to the vehicle owner's personal auto insurance company.
- Agencies participating in the contract maintenance program should call the maintenance contractor as follows:
 - If the accident occurs during regular business hours and a tow truck is needed, call Vehicle Services at 706-667-4042.
 - If it is after business hours and towing is needed, call Holman at 1-800-CAR-CARE.
 - If towing is not needed, there is no need to report anything to the maintenance vendor.

Information to gather:

- Date, time, and location of the accident
 - Brief narrative description of the accident
 - Weather conditions
 - Traffic conditions
 - Diagram and written description
 - Photos of all vehicles and property involved showing any damages, physical surroundings, etc.
 - State agency involved
 - Police authorities investigating and the assigned accident number
 - Description of the state vehicle including license, VIN, and identification numbers
 - Owner and insurance information if non-state vehicle
 - Other driver(s) name, address, phone numbers and insurance information
 - Description of all other vehicles involved including license, VIN, and identification numbers
 - List all injured parties, their apparent injury, address, and phone numbers
 - List all known witnesses and their address and phone numbers
3. **Rental Vehicles:** The State liability policy is only in effect while the employee is using the rented vehicle for official State business. For this reason, personal use of the vehicle, including allowing friends or family members to ride in a State rented vehicle, is prohibited.
 4. **Driving Personal Vehicles for Official AU Business:** Individuals driving personal vehicles for University Business are responsible for ensuring the proper operating condition of the vehicle, maintaining proper automobile collision and liability insurance coverage, practicing safe operation of the vehicle and compliance with all applicable law. When operating a personal vehicle for University Business, the Employee or Volunteer must always have their driver's license on their person when operating the vehicle. It is also recommended that a copy of the State of Georgia

liability coverage card be kept in the vehicle. Under very limited circumstances, there may be coverage for claims resulting from operation of personal vehicles for Official University Business. Liability coverage cards are available at: augusta.edu/facilities/vehicleservices

5. **Students and/or Volunteer Drivers:** In order to be eligible to operate AU vehicles a student must be employed by the University or be designated as a volunteer through Volunteer Services. Student volunteers and student employees are protected from liability. For volunteers, there must be a structured volunteer agreement in place.

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Blanket Travel Authorization
- Driver Acknowledgement Form
- Motor Vehicle Use Program Driver Notification Form
- Supervisor's Accident Follow-up Checklist

RELATED POLICIES

- OPB policies regarding the purchase and use of motor vehicles – opb.georgia.gov/state-policies/administrative-and-human-resources-state-policies/purchase-and-use-motor-vehicles
 - **OPB Vehicle Matrix Policy** – Guidelines on state agency acquisition of vehicles
 - **Motor Vehicle Policy** – Rules, Regulations and Procedures Governing the Use and Assignment of Motor Vehicles, Purchase, Operation and Disposal of Motor Vehicles and Associated Record-keeping – opb.georgia.gov/document/publication/motor-vehicle-policy-2019

APPROVED BY:

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University
Date: 2/14/2023

President, Augusta University

Date: 2/14/2023