

**The University of Oklahoma Norman Campus
STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY
for Registered Student Organizations**

I. POLICY STATEMENT AND SCOPE

The safe travel of students to and from events and activities of Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) at the University of Oklahoma is the goal of this policy.

This policy applies to the travel of currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate student members of RSOs where the organization requires its student members attend an activity or event and the activity or event takes place more than 50 miles from the campus.

II. GENERAL TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

- A. RSOs that require student members travel to and from events or activities that are covered by this policy must obtain prior authorization for such travel from their faculty or staff adviser and from the University Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students or his designee.
- B. To obtain authorization, the RSO must submit a completed *Student Travel Authorization Request* to the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (OMU 265) at least five (5) working days prior to travel. That form affirms that the RSO's president and adviser have acquired all of the following documents prior to submitting the *Student Travel Authorization Request*. Do not submit the documents with *Student Travel Authorization Request*. The RSO's president and adviser are responsible for maintaining these documents.
 - 1. List of participants, campus addresses, local phone(s) and emergency contacts
 - 2. Copies of all driver's licenses for all drivers (if applicable)
 - 3. Proof of current liability insurance (if using personal vehicles only)
 - 4. *Medical Information Forms* and *Waiver and Release of Liability* forms for all participants
- C. An OU employee must be on call and available at all times during the travel to serve as an emergency contact.
- D. All trip participants must comply with all laws, regulations and University policies throughout the duration of the trip.

III. MOTOR VEHICLE TRAVEL

A. *Vehicle Requirements*

- 1. Motor vehicles used for travel covered by this policy must have current liability insurance. If private vehicles are used, proof of this insurance must be verified before submitting the *Student Travel Authorization Request*.
- 2. Students traveling by van must comply with the University's *15-Passenger Van Policy*.

B. *Vehicle Operator/Occupant Requirements*

- 1. Any student or non-student operating vehicles while engaged in travel covered by this policy must possess a valid operator's license, as required by law, to drive the vehicle that will be used.
- 2. Operators shall comply with all laws, regulations and posted signs or directions regarding speed and traffic control.
- 3. Operators are prohibited from engaging in text messaging. Text messaging includes reading from or entering data into any handheld or electronic device.
- 4. Operators shall take a mandatory 30-minute rest break every four hours.
- 5. Operators shall drive no more than eight hours in a 24-hour period.
- 6. A navigator shall be assigned for all trips scheduled to take more than two hours. The navigator must be awake and alert while on duty and sit in the front passenger seat.
- 7. Trips requiring more than 16 hours driving time to reach a destination shall require overnight lodging.

8. Each operator and occupant of the vehicle must sign *Waiver and Release of Liability* form and a *Medical Information Form*.

C. *Safety Requirements*

1. **Seat Belts** - All occupants of motor vehicles shall properly use seat belts or other approved safety restraint devices required by law or regulation when the vehicle is in operation.
2. **Capacity** - The total number of passengers in any vehicle at any time it is in operation shall not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity, or the number specified by University policy, or federal or state law or regulations, or the number of working seat belts, whichever is lowest.

D. *Rental Vehicles*

1. **OU Fleet Services Vehicles** – see <http://fleetservices.ou.edu>
 - a. RSOs are not allowed to use University vehicles unless a faculty or staff (student or non-student) member will be driving the vehicle and OU Fleet Services is only allowed to release vehicles to employees of the University who are using the vehicle for a purpose which is within the scope of their employment.
 - b. Students are not allowed to rent or drive vehicles unless it is related to a function of the department in which they are employed.
 - c. The above policy is also applicable to all department owned vehicles.
2. **Third Party Vehicles**

Individual rental car and transportation companies each have their own policies related to insurance requirements and minimum age of drivers. The registered student organization and its faculty or staff adviser are responsible for knowing these requirements before approving and paying for vehicle rental from a third party vendor.

E. *Privately Owned Vehicles*

1. When requesting travel that involves the use of personally-owned vehicles, the University employee responsible for the trip shall verify current liability insurance for any vehicle to be used for the proposed travel.
2. The RSOs adviser shall notify students who drive their privately owned vehicles that their personal liability insurance policy must cover any liability that may result from the use of the vehicle for the proposed travel. It is the driver's insurance that may be used to pay for damages to the vehicle(s) involved in an accident and/or any injuries to a passenger or occupant of another vehicle. This is a potentially large responsibility; if a student is not comfortable with this responsibility, other transportation arrangements should be made.

IV. TRAVEL FOR SPORTS CLUBS

Advisors of sports clubs may encounter requests from their students to provide a written letter requesting permission from faculty to miss class for sports events. Please note these events are not NCAA events or functions of the Athletic Department.

The University stands firm that these events should not interfere with academics. It is not appropriate as an advisor to provide students with letters requesting faculty excuse students from class for club events.

V. ACCIDENTS

In the event of an accident, the OU employee serving as emergency contact should be notified immediately. Any vehicle damage and injuries to participants should be reported to the emergency contact. If necessary, the OU employee serving as emergency contact will notify injured participants' Emergency Contact person listed on the Medical Information Form.

If driving an OU Fleet Services vehicle, follow the instructions listed on paperwork in the vehicle's glove box.

All accidents should be reported to and documented by the local law enforcement agency.