

POLICY

Effective Date: May 21, 2009

Revised: August 9, 2017

Approved By: President Sabah Randhawa

Authority: WAC [296-800](#); RCW [49.17](#)

Cancels: POL-U5950.20 Using 12 and 15 Passenger Vans

See Also: [POL-U5950.01](#) Health, Safety and Environmental Protection

POL-U5315.26 USING 12 AND 15-PASSENGER VANS

This policy applies to all University departments that may own, rent, borrow or otherwise use 12 and 15-passenger vans, and to all faculty, staff, registered volunteers and students who may drive these vans on behalf of the University.

Definitions:

12-Passenger Van: A full-size van with a maximum seating capacity of 12. It is normally configured with 8 to 12 seats and has a wheelbase of around 135”.

15-Passenger Van: An extended version of the 12-passenger van and **designed to accommodate up to 15 seats**. The wheelbase is around 155”. It is the vehicle that is subject to the rollover warnings by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Be aware that a 15-passenger van may be erroneously described as an 8, 10 or 12-passenger van because of its seating configuration.

If in doubt, University departments are encouraged to contact Motor Pool or Risk Management for advice on what constitutes a 12 or 15-passenger van.

1. Van Drivers Complete Driver Safety Program

All University van drivers must complete the state basic driver safety program, the University’s van safety awareness training and operate the van in compliance with the University’s van safety measures.

2. University Allows the Use of 12-Passenger Vans

The University allows the use of 12-passenger vans. All newly purchased, rented or leased 12-passenger vans will include the optional electronic stability control (ESC) feature, if not already a standard feature. If after-market ESC should become available, installation in currently-owned vans is strongly encouraged.

POLICY

3. University Prohibits the Use of 15-Passenger Vans

In acknowledgement of the safety issues with 15-passenger vans as determined by state and federal agencies, the University prohibits the use of 15-passenger vans.

Exception: The University will allow the use of 15-passenger vans that are physically converted to non-passenger use, such as cargo or maintenance. All seats must be permanently removed, except the driver and front passenger seats. All newly purchased or leased 15-passenger vans used for non-passenger use will include the optional electronic stability control (ESC) feature, if not already a standard feature. If after-market ESC should become available, installation in currently-owned vans is strongly encouraged.

4. University Suggests Vehicle Transportation Options to 15-Passenger Vans

Options for University departments no longer using 15-passenger vans for passenger transportation may include sedans, mini-vans, 12-passenger vans or chartered 12-passenger vans, mini-coaches and buses operated by a professional driver.

The University acknowledges the possible increased use of multiple vehicles, but discourages “caravanning”. Following another vehicle diverts a driver’s attention from traffic conditions and road hazards, and may cause drowsiness at night. Instead, drivers should plan travel routes in advance and equip themselves with adequate maps and directions to their destination. Meeting at predetermined points along the way, such as rest stops, is encouraged.

The state has placed a freeze on the acquisition of four-wheel drive sport utility vehicles under *Governor’s Executive Order (EO) 05-01 – Establishing Sustainability and Efficiency Goals for State Operations*. University departments seeking exemptions from EO 05-01 must obtain written approval by the department’s Vice President before purchase or lease. Short-term rental of these vehicles by departments under the state rental car contract to meet programmatic needs is allowed.

5. Department Heads Will Ensure Compliance

Department heads are responsible for ensuring that faculty, staff and students in their area are informed of this policy. Department heads may adopt internal policies that are more restrictive than those contained in this policy.