

Policy 2005

Physics and Astronomy Vehicle Usage

Purpose

This policy establishes the parameters and procedures for the use of the Physics and Astronomy department vehicles.

Definitions

None.

Applicability

This policy applies to all faculty and students who wish to use the department vehicle.

Policy

State vehicles are available for use by faculty and staff in the execution of their academic and administrative functions. All vehicle users should review and abide by [University Policy #4303](#) (Use of State Vehicles). Authorized students, when approved and following the policies as described here, may also request use of the vehicles to attend university-related functions or conduct university business.

Acceptable Use:

The department vehicles are intended primarily for short trips, on-campus and in town for faculty and staff to attend meetings, visit other office around campus, make purchases at local stores and other errands that further the mission of the department.

With prior approval, the vehicles may also be used for field trips by students and faculty to attend conferences and collaboration meetings. During the week, these trips should normally be limited to day-trips (or shorter). Weekend trips are permitted and should normally be limited to no more than two nights out of town. **Special circumstances that require overnight travel longer than this must be approved by the Department Head at least two weeks before the anticipated travel.**

This vehicle is to be used for local and regional trips only. For travel out of Virginia or the neighboring areas of West Virginia (eg. Green Bank), a university vehicle from the motor pool should be used.

All drivers must meet and agree to the following conditions:

1. Not to carry or consume any type of alcoholic beverages or drugs while the driver is responsible for the vehicles operation. The driver will not drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
2. The driver is responsible for preventing any occupant of the vehicle to carry on, consume or possess any type of alcoholic beverage or drugs.
3. The driver will not lend the vehicle to any other person.
4. Only another authorized student driver or a JMU faculty may drive

this vehicle.

5. The driver of the vehicle has a valid driver's license.
6. The driver must be at least 19 years old.
7. The vehicle will only be used for official university activities.
Personal use is not permitted.

Faculty and Staff Use:

All faculty and staff in the Department of Physics and Astronomy have access to the vehicle. Use by faculty and staff outside the department is allowed only with permission of the Department Head.

Student Use:

Students in the Department of Physics and Astronomy are permitted to drive the vehicle provided certain conditions are met. These conditions are:

- The students must be driving at the direct request of and with the permission of a department faculty or staff member. Students may not take the vehicle without explicit approval for each trip.
- Each student driver must sign a *Student Driver Information Form*, obtained from the Lab Manager, and show a valid driver's license. The form pledges the student to agree to the conditions listed above under *Acceptable Use*. This form is kept on file with the Lab Manager. Authorized students are permitted to drive the vehicle for one year from the date on the form after which a new form must be filled out.

A list of all authorized students will be kept with the vehicle sign-out sheet.

Accidents:

In the event of an accident on campus, the University Campus Police Department should be notified immediately (540-568-6911). Off campus accidents must be reported to the State Police (540-434-8593). An Accident Information Packet, which gives instructions in case of an accident, has been placed in the glove compartment. **An accident report must be filed in person at the Motor Pool Office no later than the second workday following the accident.**

Breakdowns:

Major breakdowns or need for assistance when driving any university vehicle should be reported to the maintenance center garage (telephone number 540-568-6364). Monday through Friday 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM, nights, weekends and holidays, call Campus Police (540-568-6911).

Procedures

Refueling:

When the vehicle is low or out of gas, notify the Laboratory Manager or the Department Head. **Do not simply return an empty vehicle without telling anyone.** Gas is filled at the motor pool and a gas key and pin code are required to refill the vehicle. After regular hours, Campus Police (540-568-6911) should be called to assist in providing gas for the vehicles.

For regional travel where it is expected that the vehicle will need refueling before returning to JMU, an Exxon/Mobile gas card is obtained from the Lab Manager to use for all gas charges.

Vehicle Reservations:

The vehicle may be reserved for specific dates and times by adding it to the [Department Vehicle Calendar](#). **You may not normally reserve the vehicle more than a month in advance.** Reservations may not normally be made for two or more consecutive weekdays for trips in excess of four hours each day.

Reservations must be made by Department of Physics and Astronomy faculty or staff. Reservations cannot be made by students.

A reservation entry on the calendar should include at least the following information:

- List the vehicle to be reserved, and your name in the title, for example: "Ford Fusion - J. Doe".
- Indicate the vehicle out and return times.

In extenuating circumstances, exceptions to the reservation limits may be made by the Department Head. At all times for which there is no reservation, the van is available for use on a first-come/first-served basis.

Vehicle Sign-out:

Keys to vehicles are obtained from the Department Laboratory Manager. One vehicle set is kept with the Physics Lab Manager, and the other with the MAL Lab Manager. A written log of the times the vehicle is used, by whom, for what purpose and the mileage are kept on a clipboard kept with the keys. **This log must be filled out for each trip.**

Responsibilities

All drivers are, in accordance with state law, responsible for parking and traffic tickets incurred.

Passengers and driver are responsible for:

- Wearing seat belts at all times during vehicle operation,
- Not consuming alcoholic beverages or controlled substances during ~~veie~~vehicle operation and
- Obeying all applicable traffic laws.

Sanctions

Sanctions will be commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense and may include termination of employment.

Students who fail to comply with this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

All operators are subject to vehicle operations laws and their sanctions while operating a university vehicle.

Exclusions

The possession or use of alcoholic beverages is not allowed in university and state owned vehicles.

Pets are not allowed in university and state vehicles.

Edited Date: ~~November, 18 2019~~ October, 6 2021