

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM

SECTION: ~~Fiscal~~ Student Affairs

NUMBER: ~~03.E.0805.C.03~~

AREA: ~~Physical Property~~ Programs/Compliance

SUBJECT: Student Travel

1. PURPOSE

This document outlines the policy to minimize risks of liability connected with travel by students of ~~component~~ any universities within the UH-University of Houston System. ~~This policy applies to travel in excess of 25 miles that is undertaken by one or more students presently enrolled in a component university that is organized and sponsored by the component university and that is either~~

- ~~(1) — Travel funded by the institution and using vehicles owned or leased by the institution or~~
- ~~(2) — Travel required by a student organization registered at the institution.~~

1.1. Travel by students on official University business is restricted by state of Texas and federal regulations and by standards of good business practice.

1.2. This policy applies to travel by one or more students presently enrolled at any of the University of Houston System Universities, and where such travel meets the following criteria: travel that is in excess of 25 miles to a University-organized and sponsored activity or event where such activity or event is either:

A. Funded by the University, or

B. Is required by a student organization registered at the University.

1.3. In addition, this policy outlines the requirements for travel by authorized students and University athletic teams traveling in the name of the University, as well as students traveling abroad on a University-sponsored trip.

1.4. Texas Education Code, Section 51.950 requires the regulation of certain types of student travel sponsored, supported or sanctioned by the University.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. Organized and sponsored activity or event: An organized and sponsored activity or event is an activity or event that is a) initiated, planned and arranged by a member of the University of Houston faculty or staff, or by the members of a registered student organization, and b) endorsed by the University either through

providing financial support, or by sending student(s) to participate in it as official representative(s) of the University.

- 2.2. Required by a student organization: An activity or event is required by a student organization when it is mandatory for a member of the student organization to attend or participate in the activity or event in order to maintain their membership status in the student organization.
- 2.3. Authorized entertainment: Entertainment of students during out-of-town travel, such as attending a movie, play, concert, or similar event. Videos or in-room movies rented or purchased at a hotel or motel for individuals are not considered authorized entertainment. However, videos rented or purchased (including in-room movies) for groups of travelers to watch are permitted. Persons in positions of authority traveling with the students will determine which entertainment event or medium, if any, is appropriate. Admission to authorized entertainment events may also be paid for other persons traveling with the students, who are listed on the Travel Roster.
- 2.4. College or division administrator: The person designated as the chief business officer within the college, division, or the Athletics Department.
- 2.5. Departmental trip coordinator: Functional title separate from the official position title designating that individual within the department sponsoring the student/team travel who is responsible for making travel arrangements, requesting any travel advances, disbursing any advance funds, and documenting and clearing any advances. This person may also participate in the travel. These actions of the departmental trip coordinator are subject to the prior approval of the college or division administrator.
- 2.6. Learning/Study Abroad: Travel by University of Houston individual students to destinations outside the United States on a University-sponsored or organized credit or non-credit bearing trip.
- 2.7. Athletic Team: A team of student athletes under the supervision of and coached by the University's Athletic Department.
- 2.8. University of Houston System: The University of Houston System is comprised of four separate universities and their entities: UH, UH-CL, UH-D, and UH-V. Collectively referred to as "the Universities" or "University."

2.3. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 23.1. Organized student travel may require use of various modes of transportation. Each form of transportation requires students to follow common and mode-specific safety precautions. In addition to applicable international, federal and/or state laws and using sound judgment when traveling, students must follow the safety provisions applicable to the specific mode of travel involved and travel conditions. Students representing the Universities may travel on University funds if the trip is for official University business and if applicable University

guidelines are followed. Student travel may not be paid from state-appropriated funds. All travel must be reasonable and necessary for carrying out the programs and activities of the Universities within budget allocations approved by the responsible senior administrative official. Travel not meeting these criteria or undertaken contrary to these guidelines becomes the obligation of the individual(s) making the unauthorized commitment.

- 23.2. Organized student travel may require use of various modes of transportation. Each form of transportation requires students to follow common and mode-specific safety precautions. In addition to applicable international, federal and/or state laws and using sound judgment when traveling, students must follow the safety provisions applicable to the specific mode of travel involved and travel conditions. When using vehicles owned or leased by any of the universities or their employees for student travel, such travel must be in compliance with SAM 01.C.13. SAM 01.C.13 articulates the System policy for the use of vehicles owned, leased or rented by component universities by establishing standards for granting driving privileges, insurance coverage, and reporting requirements when there are accidents and/or losses.
- 23.3. When using vehicles owned or leased by any of the universities or their employees for student travel, such travel must be in compliance with SAM 01.C.13. This document outlines the System policy for the use of vehicles owned, leased or rented by component universities by establishing standards for granting driving privileges, insurance coverage, and reporting requirements when there are accidents and/or losses. The universities require updated Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) evaluation on anyone authorized to operate a vehicle owned or leased by a component university. MVR evaluations shall be requested for employees and students who operate a vehicle owned or leased by the universities. Each department head will notify the component Risk Management Department when MVR evaluations should be obtained for new drivers. MVRs can be obtained by the universities or may be requested from the System Risk Management Department, using the request form available on the System Risk Management Web site (<http://www.uh.edu/af/riskmanagement/>). The MVR evaluation lasts for one year after the university Risk Management area approves it, and must be renewed annually. No employee, potential employee, student, or volunteer is allowed to operate a university owned or leased vehicle until the authorization has been approved.
- 23.4. The Universities require an updated Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) evaluation on anyone authorized to operate a vehicle owned or leased by the Universities or who drive their personal vehicles for business purposes. MVR evaluations shall be requested for employees and students who operate a vehicle owned or leased by the universities. Each department head will notify the component Risk Management Department when MVR evaluations should be obtained for new drivers. MVRs can be obtained by the universities or may be requested from the System Risk Management Department, using the request form available on the

System Risk Management Web site
(<http://www.uh.edu/af/riskmanagement/pdf/MVR.pdf>). The MVR evaluation lasts for one year after Risk Management area approves it, and must be renewed annually. No employee, potential employee, student, or volunteer is allowed to operate a University-owned or leased vehicle until the authorization has been approved.~~Departments, units and student organizations sponsoring organized travel outside the United States are responsible for assuring compliance with the provisions of any universities policy regarding group travel outside the United States.~~

~~23.5. Departments, units and student organizations sponsoring organized travel outside the United States are responsible for assuring compliance with the provisions of any universities policy regarding group travel outside the United States. Universities must make this policy available to the public by publishing it in the institution's catalog. Universities should consider making available to the public all related policies concerning student travel and should consider other methods of providing public access, such as making student travel-related policies available on web sites.~~

~~3.6. Universities must make this policy available to the public by publishing it in the institution's catalog. Universities should consider making available to the public all related policies concerning student travel and should consider other methods of providing public access, such as making student travel-related policies available on web sites.~~

3.4. GENERAL STUDENT TRAVEL PROVISIONS

4.1. Organized and sponsored student travel may require the use of various modes of transportation. Each form of transportation requires students to follow common and mode-specific safety precautions. In addition to applicable international, federal and/or state laws and using sound judgment while traveling, students must follow the safety provisions applicable to the specific mode of travel involved and travel conditions.

4.2. When using vehicles owned or leased by the Universities or their employees for student travel, such travel must be in compliance with SAM 01.C.13 - Business Use of Vehicles. This SAM articulates the System policy for the use of vehicles owned, leased or rented by component universities by establishing standards for granting driving privileges, insurance coverage and reporting requirements when there are accidents or losses.

4.3. Students traveling by commercial transportation, whether domestic or international, must comply with all laws regulating travel and the rules of the specific carrier.

4.4. University employees occasionally use personal vehicles while transporting students to or from events organized and sponsored by the University. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident,

all persons who use their vehicles while conducting University business should be aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use.

- 4.5. University employees may be reimbursed for mileage at the official state rate when a personal vehicle is used for University business in accordance with SAM 01.C.13.
 - 4.6. No employee shall be required to use their vehicle for transporting students to or from activities or events organized and sponsored by the University.
 - 4.7. The University highly discourages students to drive personal vehicles for University facilitated or sponsored activities off campus. However, if it is deemed necessary for a student to drive privately-owned vehicles for student travel organized and sponsored by the University within the US, they must be at least 18 years of age, have a valid Texas or other state driver license, obey all traffic laws and regulations, possess personal automobile insurance coverage, and their vehicles must have a current state inspection and registration. Students driving privately-owned vehicles for student travel organized and sponsored by the University outside of the US must be at least 18 years of age, obey all traffic laws and regulations, and have all appropriate licenses, certificates and insurance as required by the country in which travel occurs.
 - 4.8. It is the responsibility of all individuals taking part in travel that is organized and sponsored by the University to behave in a manner that in no way detracts from the surrounding environmental safety, to act to avoid and prevent safety hazards associated with their travel, and to act in such a manner as to comply with all University standards, policies, and procedures insofar as they may be considered applicable to the circumstances.
- 3.1.4.9. It shall be the responsibility of University staff, employees, and others judged to be in positions of authority under the circumstances of the travel to inform individuals when their behavior or actions jeopardize their personal safety or that of other travelers. Such persons in positions of authority will be held accountable for their actions or inactions with respect to questionable activities of any members.

5. LEARNING/STUDY ABROAD TRAVEL GUIDELINES

- 5.1. Study abroad travel is considered group student travel. Therefore, the trip coordinator must complete a Travel Roster for the students and a Travel Request for themselves and any other employees traveling with the students. Any and all learning abroad travel must be registered with and approved by the appropriate University office of each campus. Students must adhere to their University's code of conduct.
- 5.2. See the individual University websites for up-to-date information about Learning Abroad:

- University of Houston – Main Campus:
<https://www.uh.edu/learningabroad/>
- University of Houston – Downtown:
<https://www.uhd.edu/academics/international/Pages/international-index.aspx>
- University of Houston – Clear Lake:
<https://www.uhcl.edu/academics/study-abroad/>
- University of Houston – Victoria
<https://www.uhv.edu/study-abroad/>

5.3. International Medical and Emergency Insurance Requirement

- 5.3.1. All students participating in a Learning Abroad program are required to have international medical and emergency insurance.
- 5.3.2. All students participating in faculty-led, exchange, student service organization, non-affiliated, and some affiliated programs should purchase their own insurance.

6. SAFETY

Texas Education Code, Section 51.950 requires the regulation of certain types of student travel sponsored, supported or sanctioned by the University.

General information and safe practices for drivers and occupants are listed under Student Travel Guidelines at the Risk Management website.

6.1. Administrative Responsibilities

- 6.1.1. The applicable division’s vice president (or Athletic Director) shall be responsible for overall administration of this policy and shall assign a member of their staff to be responsible for compliance, oversight and necessary record keeping.
- 6.1.2. The applicable division’s vice president shall have the responsibility to verify that the type of vehicle recommended for use in student and athletic team travel is in compliance with this policy.
- 6.1.3. Coaches are responsible for developing their season travel plans, to include recommended vehicle types, and gaining written approval from the appropriate senior associate athletic director in advance of the season or subsequent schedule change.
- 6.1.4. Athletic coaches or applicable administrator will consider the type of travel necessary to comply with the institutional policy relating to issues such as missed classes. Post-season athletic travel shall be handled

according to NCAA guidelines and/or NAIA or applicable association, and approved by the Athletic Director or designee.

6.2. When aircraft are used under this policy, the captain (pilot in command) shall make the final decision whether to fly. However, in no case will the pilot fly if weather conditions do not meet the standards of the pilot's certification. The senior administrator that is present may always overrule the pilot if the senior administrator concludes that it is inappropriate to fly.

6.3. Any administrator, coach or athletic staff member knowingly violating this policy will be suspended with or without pay until the division's vice president (or Athletic Director) or designee investigates the violation. Violations may result in disciplinary action, possibly including termination.

7. TYPES OF VEHICLES USED AND REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATION

7.1. General Requirements

7.1.1. Coaches, assistant coaches, faculty or staff members and students employed by the University may drive vehicles used for student travel if the specific requirements for the vehicle are met.

7.1.2. When using vehicles owned or leased by the University or their employees for student or athletic team travel, such travel must be in compliance with SAM 01.C.13.

7.1.3. Student athletes may not drive other athletes as a part of team travel.

7.1.4. Student drivers not paid by the University must be approved by the appropriate vice president.

7.1.5. Seat belts must be worn by all vehicle occupants.

7.2. Approved Vehicle Types – The following types of vehicles shall be approved for group travel under the conditions noted:

7.2.1. Automobiles/Minivans (Specific Requirements)

7.2.2. Twelve-Passenger Vans (Specific Requirements)

A. For safety reasons, drivers must have completed the "High Profile Vehicle Safety" training course offered by Risk Management.

B. Only vans with a 155-inch wheelbase equipped with "E" rated radial tires, or equivalent, properly inflated will be allowed to transport teams greater than 100 miles from a point of departure. In cases when it is necessary to lease vans from a commercial vendor or when vans are provided as a courtesy, team travel is authorized even if the van does not meet the 155 inch/"E" criteria, but travel will be limited to 100 miles one way.

- C. Twelve-passenger vans shall be loaded with no more than eight passengers and equipment. The manufacturer's recommended weight limits must not be exceeded.

7.2.3. Fifteen-passenger vans are strictly prohibited.

7.2.4. Buses (Specific Requirements)

- A. Buses may be used to transport to away venues, transport to hotels from airports, and transport from hotels to playing venues.
- B. Approved buses for team transport are motor coach common carriers or institution leased, owned or operated over-the-road bus transports.
- C. Drivers of buses must have a valid and approved CDL.

7.2.5. Mini-Buses (defined as 20 to 30-passenger transports) [Specific Requirements]

- A. Acceptable mini-buses shall be institution or commercially-owned.
- B. Driver must have a valid and approved CDL to operate a mini-bus for purposes of this policy.

7.2.6. Air Transportation (Specific Requirements)

- A. Commercial airlines and Charter aircraft are an acceptable means of travel. Tickets must be procured under the travel guidelines established by the state of Texas.
- B. Please see specifics regarding general requirements, proof of insurance, and pilot information which is discussed under Student Travel Guidelines.
- C. Requirements for Maintenance and Operation of the aircraft are listed as well.

7.3. Use of Personal Vehicle by Employees

7.3.1. No individual shall be required to use their vehicle for transporting students to events organized and sponsored by universities.

7.3.2. System employees occasionally use personal vehicles while transporting students to or from events organized and sponsored by universities. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their vehicles while conducting University business should be made aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use.

7.3.3. System employees may be reimbursed for mileage at the official state rate when a personal vehicle is used for universities business whether local or outside the universities' area in accordance with SAM 01.C.13.

7.4. Use of Personal Vehicles by Students

7.4.1. The University of Houston highly discourages the use of personal vehicles by students.

7.4.2. All students who are approved to drive for organized student travel must have their Motor Vehicle Report approved by Risk Management.

7.4.3. Students driving privately-owned vehicles for organized student travel (as defined in the Purpose) within the U. S. must have a valid Texas or other state driver license and possess personal automobile insurance coverage as mandated by the state of Texas, and their vehicles must have a current state inspection and registration.

7.4.4. Students driving privately-owned vehicles for organized student travel taking place outside the U.S. must have all appropriate licenses, certificates and insurance as required by the country in which travel occurs. The operation of motor vehicles abroad is highly discouraged by the University.

8. REIMBURSEMENT OF STUDENT TRAVEL EXPENSES

Each University is responsible for developing policies and procedures for addressing the reimbursement of reasonable student travel expenses.

9. DOCUMENTATION

Universities should establish a system of record keeping for student travel in excess of 25 miles to universities sponsored and organized events where the student travel is organized, arranged, or coordinated by a universities' department, employee or registered student organization sponsor. For such trips, student travelers should complete an official University Release and Indemnification Agreement, verifying that they understand and accept the risks involved in participating in the travel activity and assume responsibility for their behavior. Records should include the identity of travelers, dates of travel, mode of travel, destination, purpose of trip and completed waivers.

~~3. DOCUMENTATION~~

~~Universities should establish a system of record keeping for student travel in excess of 25 miles to universities sponsored and organized events where the student travel is organized, arranged, or coordinated by a universities' department, employee or registered student organization sponsor. For such trips, student travelers should complete an official universities waiver and release form, verifying that they understand and accept the risks involved in participating in the travel activity and assume responsibility for their~~

~~behavior. Records should include the identity of travelers, dates of travel, mode of travel, destination, purpose of trip and completed waivers.~~

~~4. COMMERCIAL TRAVEL~~

~~Students traveling by commercial transportation, whether domestic or international, must comply with all laws regulating travel and the rules of the specific carrier.~~

~~5. USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES BY EMPLOYEES~~

~~5.1. System employees occasionally use personal vehicles while transporting students to or from events organized and sponsored by universities. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their vehicles while conducting university business should be made aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use.~~

~~5.2. System employees may be reimbursed for mileage at the official state rate when a personal vehicle is used for universities business whether local or outside the universities' area in accordance with SAM 01.C.13.~~

~~5.3. No individual shall be required to use his or her vehicle for transporting students to events organized and sponsored by universities.~~

~~6. USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES BY STUDENTS~~

~~Students driving privately owned vehicles for organized student travel (as defined in the Purpose) within the U. S. must have a valid Texas or other state driver license and possess personal automobile insurance coverage as mandated by the state of Texas, and their vehicles must have a current state inspection and registration. Students driving privately owned vehicles for organized student travel taking place outside the U.S. must have all appropriate licenses, certificates and insurance as required by the country in which travel occurs.~~

~~7. HIGH PROFILE VEHICLES~~

~~A. High profile vehicles are vehicles with a high center of gravity, including pick-up trucks, vans and sport utility vehicles. They are a particular safety concern because they are more susceptible to rollover accidents than most vehicles.~~

~~B. All drivers of high profile vehicles must successfully complete the safety course for vehicles available at the universities' safety's web site before driving a high profile vehicle that will transport students. The safety course for high profile vehicles is required for both student and employee drivers of high profile vehicles and whether they are driving a university owned, leased, or rented vehicle or a personal vehicle that will transport students for any university related trip or~~

~~university-sponsored activity. Thereafter, the vehicle safety course must be completed annually by drivers of high profile vehicles who will continue to transport students.~~

~~C. 15-passenger vans are of particular concern as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has been publishing advisories regarding these vans. There have also been a number of multiple fatality accidents attributed to the use of these vans. Therefore, the purchase or use of 15-passenger vans for universities' business is prohibited.~~

~~8. SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR DRIVERS AND OCCUPANTS~~

~~8.1. Drivers and occupants engaged in student travel must act responsibly and use sound judgment when traveling.~~

~~Drivers must:~~

- ~~• Have a valid driver license;~~
- ~~• Obey all traffic laws and regulations, including posted speed limits;~~
- ~~• Not drive under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or transport or possess alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unauthorized firearms or other types of weapons; and~~
- ~~• Ensure that the vehicle in which the group or individual is traveling has appropriate insurance as mandated by the state of Texas, as well as a current state inspection and registration.~~

~~Drivers and occupants must:~~

- ~~• Wear seat belts at all times; the number of occupants in the vehicle must not exceed the number of seat belts;~~
- ~~• Ensure the vehicle manufacturer's recommended load capacity is not exceeded; and~~
- ~~• Avoid horseplay, racing or other distracting or aggressive behavior.~~

~~8.2. Drivers engaged in student travel are encouraged to follow safe driving and traveling practices, including the following:~~

- ~~• Begin the trip well rested;~~
- ~~• Notify a designated contact person upon departure and arrival;~~
- ~~• Avoid driving when conditions are hazardous (this includes but is not limited to fog, heavy rain, snow or ice conditions). Be prepared to stop the trip and check into a motel when fatigue or travel conditions warrant;~~

- ~~• Plan routes in advance, and carpool and caravan when possible;~~
- ~~• Divide the trip into segments, stopping for rest as necessary;~~
- ~~• Carry at least one cellular telephone or other two-way communication device in each vehicle for emergency purposes;~~
- ~~• Establish a reasonable departure and arrival time to and from the activity or event;~~
- ~~• Avoid driving between midnight and six a.m.;~~
- ~~• Have at least one other approved universities' driver in the vehicle. It is recommended that drivers rotate every two hours. A passenger or second driver should ride in the front passenger seat and remain awake at all times to help the driver maintain alertness;~~
- ~~• Carry a flashlight and approved fire extinguisher; and~~
- ~~• Avoid taking medication prior to driving that may impede the ability to operate a motor vehicle. Drivers must consult with their physicians concerning the administration of medication and related restrictions.~~

~~9. TRAINING~~

~~Universities are encouraged to make available driver safety training for staff and other individuals who act as drivers for student travelers.~~

~~10. REIMBURSEMENT OF STUDENT TRAVEL EXPENSES~~

~~Each universities is responsible for developing policies and procedures for addressing the reimbursement of student travel expenses.~~

~~110.~~ REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Parties: Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Review: Every ~~two~~ five years on or before March 1

~~1211.~~ APPROVAL

Approved: Richard Walker
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services

Jim McShan
~~Interim-Senior~~ Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

Renu Khator
Chancellor

Date: April 8, 2016

12. REFERENCES

Texas Education Code, Section 51.950

SAM 01.C.13 – Business Use of Vehicles

Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Evaluation Form

Travel Roster

University of Houston – Main Campus
<https://www.uh.edu/learningabroad>

University of Houston – Downtown
<https://www.uhd.edu/academics/international/Pages/international-index.aspx>

University of Houston – Clear Lake
<https://www.uhcl.edu/academics/study-abroad/>

University of Houston – Victoria
<https://www.uhv.edu/study-abroad/>

REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Approval Date	Description of Changes
Interim	01/08/2002	Initial edition written to comply with Senate Bill 263, which requires that the governing board institute policy regarding the safety issues of student travel by 01/01/2002
1	01/14/2003	Applied revised SAM template to meet current documentation standards. SAM 03.E.08 replaces the Interim document of the same name and has been revised to address the safety provisions required by Senate Bill 263
2	09/29/2011	Applied revised SAM template and added new Revision Log. SAM 03.E.08 was submitted for its scheduled review by the Risk Management Department and the Dean of Students' Office. Changed reference from SAM 03.E.06 to SAM 01.C.13 throughout text. Removed reference to MAPP 04.02.04 in Section 2.3. Changed responsible party from AVC for Plant Operations to AVC for Finance; included AVC for Student Development. Changed review period from every two years on or before August 1 st to every two years on or before March 1 st . Added VC for Student Affairs to approval cycle. Removed Section 12, Index terms
3	04/08/2016	Changed title of SAM to "Student Travel." Revised Section I to define component university student travel criteria, and use "Universities" in place of "component university." Added Section 2.3 on motor vehicle record evaluations required for anyone authorized to operate a vehicle owned or leased by a component university, and indicated that the MVR evaluation lasts for one year after the university Risk Management department approves it. Added Section 7.0 on High Profile Vehicles. Updated the title of AVP for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
<u>4</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>Changed number and location of SAM from 03.E.08 to 05.C.03. Changed all content in document, including enhancing the content in Section 1, a list of definitions in Section 2; prohibiting use of all 15-passenger vans (Section 7.2.3), and adding references (Section 12). Changed the review period from every two years to every five years on or before March 1. Changed links and titles as applicable</u>