

Chapter 7: Travel Guidelines

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Sport Clubs travel annually more than *250,000* miles for games, tournaments, and other competitions. With such a heavy emphasis placed on safety and managing risks it becomes very obvious travel is an area that will be closely watched and discussed. Realizing this fact, it is important you as student leaders understand the liability associated with travel, as well as the various options that are available for the club's use.

A. Student Travel Guidelines

Texas A&M University instituted a student rule that governs student travel, as well as an accompanying standard administrative procedure that provides guidelines for safe driving practices in large capacity vehicles. It is imperative your organization follows the travel procedures established by the Sport Clubs staff in order to ensure adherence to the suggested guidelines. The following information is meant to provide a general explanation of the student travel policy and how it affects your organization.

13.04.99.M1.01 – Student Travel Procedures & 24.01.01.M0.01 – Van Safety Procedures

The student travel rule governs travel undertaken by students to **an event or activity located more than 25 miles from the University and is:**

- Sponsored by the University,
- Funded by the University,
- Undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the University, or
- Required by a student organization registered at the University

**NO driving between
midnight and 6 am**

The rule specifies trips that meet these criteria must abide by the following guidelines:

Required Documentation

- *Student Travel Notification* – The Sport Clubs staff will notify Student Activities office for the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) with the required information for clubs that submit a Sport Clubs Trip Itinerary within the timeline specified in this guidebook.
- *Waiver and Release Forms* – All student travelers must have a completed Assumption of Risk on file with the Sport Clubs staff. Students under the age of 18 must have a release signed by their parents or legal guardian.

Privately Owned Vehicles

Students driving privately owned vehicles must:

- Have a valid driver's license
- Possess personal automobile insurance coverage as mandated by the State of Texas
- Have a current state inspection and Registration if applicable based on state.

Rental/Commercial Vehicles

If you are utilizing rental/commercial vehicle for the trip, all drivers must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Possess personal automobile insurance coverage as mandated by the State of Texas
- Possess a valid driver's license
- **For 11-passenger vans, drivers must be at least 21 years of age and complete the large capacity van operation instruction provided by the Transportation Service Center. Please see the instructions for idrivesafe.com provided on page 48 to ensure adherence to this requirement.**

B. Trip Planning

The traveling process requires organization, attention to detail and planning on the part of Sport Clubs leaders. **For all travel:** Club leaders should discuss each trip with Sport Clubs staff in their monthly meetings to insure proper planning of trips. ***During this meeting, club leaders should be prepared to discuss:***

- Purpose of the trip
- Travel route
- Itinerary (i.e. lodging, timeline, etc)
- Mode of transportation
- Selection criteria for drivers
- Emergency procedures

In order to compete and travel, a completed SPORT CLUBS TRIP REQUEST FORM ONLINE THROUGH SPORTCLUBS.TAMU.EDU must be submitted at least one week prior to departure. If the trip request is NOT submitted, the club will not travel.

ALL information (FINALIZED rosters, driver agreements, etc) MUST be submitted by 5 pm on Wednesday the week of travel. Failure to do so will result in the club not traveling.

ANY roster changes MUST be notified to the Sport Clubs Office (if you are removing members from the travel roster after Wednesdays at 5 pm). The Sport Clubs Office must have an accurate list of travelers.

If a person is listed on the TRIP REQUEST when the form is submitted, does NOT have an AOR on file, they WILL NOT travel.

This form must include:

- The names of all club members who will be on the trip – *all names listed on the TRIP REQUEST must have a submitted ASSUMPTION OF RISK/STANDARD OF CONDUCT on file with the Sport Clubs Office*
 - *Members with approved AORS who are eligible to travel will be the only ones available to add.*
- *ONLY CLUB MEMBERS COMPETING MAY TRAVEL! Exceptions may be made by the Sport Clubs staff. Set up a meeting to discuss these situations.**
- **ONLY Officers may submit a trip request form**
 - The names of all drivers and a **DRIVER AGREEMENT** for each driver
 - Destination, date(s) of departure, competition, and return, description of travel route
 - Emergency contact number(s) while on the trip

If the information on the Trip Request is not complete, clubs will be unable to utilize Rec Sports funds or obtain reimbursement for expenses incurred as a result of the trip. In addition, clubs could face disciplinary action for failing to abide by the trip planning process.

Driver Selection

All drivers are required to complete a **Driver Agreement form through SPORTCLUBS.TAMU.EDU** prior to each trip. In order for an individual to be eligible to drive during sport clubs trips, they must:

- Submit a Driver Agreement form
- Be at least 18 years of age, and have a valid United States issued driver license
- Possess personal automobile insurance coverage as mandated by the State of Texas
- Not have exceeded two at-fault accidents/violations within the last 18 months or have any violation in the last 2 years for drunk driving, driving under the influence of drugs, or reckless driving, or have a reinstated license in effect less than one year after revocation
- Agree to obey all local, state and federal traffic laws, agree not to drive under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug, agree not to possess or transport any alcohol, illegal drugs, firearms or weapons, agree to wear a seatbelt, and agree to avoid horseplay, racing or other distracting or aggressive behavior
- Not permit any unauthorized persons to drive the vehicle

Alertdriving.com Driver Training

Individuals who drive large capacity vehicles must complete training. Texas A&M has established an on-line training tool through www.alertdriving.com. Anyone who will be driving large capacity vehicles during Sport Clubs trips must complete this short training course. The Department of Recreational Sports pays a \$10 fee for each individual being certified, it is strongly recommended your organization determines five or six individuals who will be responsible for driving during the various trips throughout the year. **Sport Clubs will pay for the first 4 people of each club to complete training. Clubs must pay for additional training courses.** The process for being certified to drive large capacity vehicles will be as follows:

1. Clubs will need to submit a list of names and email addresses of those club members who will need the training. **THEY MUST BE 21 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER!** Please submit the list to the Sport Clubs Director. Clubs will then receive a reply email with details on how to complete the training.
2. It is **REQUIRED** you have at least two drivers per vehicle requested (i.e. if you need four vans, eight different drivers should be named)
3. Upon receiving an email with directions, follow the link to alertdriving.com and click on the "Member Login" link
4. When prompted, enter the username and password
 - On your first login, you will be prompted to enter a new password for security purposes
5. The screen will present information through slides, statistics, and a video that will be needed for completion of the quiz
6. Once you feel you thoroughly understand the presented information, click the "Quiz" link
7. To successfully complete the course, you must receive at least an 85% on each sections
8. Certificates of completion must be submitted to - sportclubs.tamu.edu
9. In order to rent a large truck or cargo van, individuals must follow these procedures as well.
10. To get signed up, send names and emails to sport clubs staff. They will send to transportation for set up.

Class Absence Requests

Club members may need to be absent from classes in order to attend scheduled Sport Clubs competitions. Club members can prevent misunderstandings and academic difficulty by obtaining a letter from the Sport Clubs staff verifying the club's plans to travel and compete. Club members are **HIGHLY** encouraged to inform instructors WEEKS in advance of the event prior to giving them a class absence letter.

Class absence letters will be given out before trips, NOT AFTER A TRIP. In order to receive a class absence letter, the club member's name must appear on the Travel Roster on the Trip Request Form.

Sport Clubs travel is not a university excused absence; therefore, class absence letters do not mandate professors excuse the absence.

Club members are responsible for all work missed during their absence and are required to comply with their instructor's demands for rescheduled or make-up exams and assignments.

On Sport Clubs Trip Request form, mark "yes" for class absence letters if needed. Class absence letters will not be distributed until ALL required paperwork for the trip has been submitted.

The class absence letters will be typed on Department of Recreational Sports letterhead and signed by the Sport Clubs staff. Copies for each student can be picked up in the club's mailbox not less than 3 business days after submitting the request.

Travel Options

The following options are available for use by Texas A&M Sport Clubs during authorized trips:

1. Commercial Rental

Some commercial rental companies (i.e. Enterprise, etc) have state contracts enabling clubs to receive a lower rental rate. Rental of these vehicles are direct billed to the Department of Rec Sports. If your club is required to pay for the vehicle, an invoice will be placed in your club mailbox.

One-Way vehicle rentals to airports are NOT permitted.

- **Prices above are for local pick up and drop off. Additional charges will be assessed for vehicles rented at airport locations.**
- **Please treat these vehicles as if they were your own. It is a privilege for our Sport Clubs to use these commercial vehicles in lieu of having to use personal vehicles.**

***Sport Clubs will pay for/cover rental charges for: In-State regular season or conference (if applicable) competitions. Conference required competitions that are out of state.

*****Sport Clubs WILL NOT pay for Out of state (non-required) competitions. ALL rentals for National and Post-Season competitions (regardless of if in Texas) MUST be paid by the clubs. If club has Allocation money remaining, it can be used for these situations. Otherwise, payment must be made from SOFC direct to Enterprise. Invoices will be put in club mailboxes.**

Enterprise Rates are as follows:

Vehicle	Daily Rate	Weekly Rate
Full Size Sedan	\$36.75	\$202.13
Small SUV (5 passengers)	\$53.90	\$296.50
Large SUV (7 passengers)	\$88.50	\$485.10
Mini Van (5-6 passengers)	\$49.00	\$269.50
*Full Size Van (11 passengers)	\$96.04	\$528.22
*Cargo Van (2 passengers)	\$56.84	\$312.62
*Truck (for towing)	\$89.00	\$534.00

*** These vehicles DO NOT have unlimited mileage. After 200 miles there is \$.20 per mile charge. Clubs MUST pay for these vehicles out of their SOFC account.**

2. Private Automobiles

Be sure each vehicle has appropriate insurance, current inspection and registration and that individuals traveling in private vehicles understand they do so at their own risk. **Drivers need to be aware that by choosing to drive, they assume responsibility for the safety of those traveling in their vehicle.**

3 Airline Flights

Before ANY flights are purchased ALL flight times MUST be approved by the Sport Clubs Staff to insure travel times adhere to the sport clubs travel policy. When seeking flights, be sure to include travel time to and from the airports. For example if you are looking at 6am flights, this will not work, as there will be travel time that exceeds the midnight to 6am driving restrictions. Flights that depart or arrive close to the times must be approved, and lodging must be secured as well to avoid driving during restricted hours. All measures are in place to heighten the safety of our participants. It is encouraged to utilize the Sport Clubs or SOFC credit cards to make airfare purchases.

4.Charter Bus

Clubs will need to contact bus companies to secure pricing. Payment should be from the SOFC, but there may be cases where part of a club's allocation could be used. Clubs must also provide a hotel room for the driver.

International Travel

When teams have an opportunity to travel outside of the US. There are some additional procedures that must take place to ensure the trip is approved. For International travel, trip requests form must be submitted **ONE MONTH** in advance of travel. Also, ALL club members traveling internationally MUST register their trip and details with **Study Abroad Office** on campus.

ALL trips must be registered at - studyabroad.tamu.edu

Eligibility Checks

****All competing and traveling members MUST meet Sport Clubs Guidelines to be eligible.**

If a member is ineligible, they WILL NOT be available to add onto trip request.

All Sport Clubs must abide by the conference, regional, and state rules and regulations that govern their sport. A club representative should see the appropriate Sport Clubs staff member at least three weeks in advance when required to obtain certificates of eligibility from the University (statements verifying current student status and progress toward a degree). If the Registrar's stamp is required, failure to give adequate time for completion may result in the club not obtaining the necessary paperwork in time.

To obtain a certificate of eligibility, clubs should supply a letter to the [Office of the Registrar](http://registrar.tamu.edu) (registrar.tamu.edu) that specifies:

1. Each student's correctly spelled full name and ID number
2. What is to be verified (i.e. registered, currently enrolled, full-time status, progress toward a degree, good academic standing, GPR, other). It is the club's responsibility to request this information from their governing association. Failure to submit this information will delay the verification process.
3. In order to release certain information (e.g. GPR) the University must have the signed permission of each individual. ***The Information Release Form, which can be found on the Sport Clubs website, must be completed and submitted in order for the University to release and check grades and status.***

C. Expectations During the Trip

As representatives of Texas A&M University and the Department of Recreational Sports, all Sport Clubs members are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner whenever and wherever they may travel. Any reports of activities that negatively reflect upon the University will result in disciplinary actions. All funds will be frozen until the situation is resolved.

Sport Clubs members abide by the following safety guidelines.

- For large capacity vehicles, do not exceed **11 passengers per vehicle**
- Obey all traffic laws and regulations, especially speed limits
- Do not consume, possess, or transport alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unauthorized firearms, or other types of weapons
- **If an accident occurs, or damage to a rental vehicle, a sport clubs staff member MUST be notified.**
- **EVERYONE MUST wear a seat belt at all times.** The number of passengers in the vehicle must not exceed the number of available seat belts at any time.
- Do not exceed the recommended load capacity for the vehicle
- Do not transport luggage or other items on top of large capacity vehicles.
- Avoid horseplay, racing, or other distracting or aggressive behavior
- It is recommended to travel with at least one CPR & First Aid certified member
- **Allocation money will NOT be utilized to pay for parking tickets**
- **If a member suffers a concussion/head injury, the sport clubs staff MUST be notified**

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- Travel with a team emergency contact list & safety officer binder
- Avoid driving when conditions are hazardous (i.e. fog, heavy rain, snow, ice, etc). Be prepared to stop and check in to a hotel when fatigue or travel conditions warrant.
- Plan routes out in advance, carpool and caravan where possible
- Divide the trip into segments, stopping for rest when necessary
- Carry at least one cell phone in each vehicle. Ensure everyone has the appropriate phone numbers and there are designated check-in times.
- On extended trips, have at least one other approved driver in the vehicle. It is recommended drivers rotate every two hours.
- A passenger or second driver should ride in the front passenger seat and remain awake at all times
- Carry a flashlight and approved fire extinguisher in all vehicles
- Avoid taking medication prior to driving, especially if the label warns against operating a vehicle while taking medication
- When in doubt, use common sense when you drive
- If an accident or breakdown occurs, know and follow the emergency procedures below.

DO NOT drive between midnight and 6 am

Emergency Procedures

If you are involved in an accident:

- Stop immediately and notify the local police or call 911
- Refer to the Emergency Contact Card and follow the Emergency Contact Protocol on page 55 – leave messages if necessary
- Fill out a police report (necessary for insurance purposes)
- Obtain the names and addresses of all witnesses
- Do not make any statements as to who is at fault, nor should you make any offers to pay damages. Fault or legal liability will be decided by the appropriate authorities.
- *If you are driving a rental vehicle, contact Enterprise immediately and contact the Sport Clubs staff on the day of the accident to notify of situation*
- *If an accident occurs, club officers MUST inform a Sport Clubs staff member on the day of the accident to acknowledge the information*

If someone is injured in the accident:

- Call 911 immediately and obtain medical attention
- Consult the member's medical release form for any special needs
- Follow the Emergency Contact Protocol listed on page 55

If a breakdown occurs:

- Contact the DPS Non-Emergency Roadside Assistance at **800.525.5555** (also *DPS on many wireless phones)
- If driving a rental vehicle, contact Enterprise at **800.736.8222**