



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 77.08, **Student Travel Policy**

AUTHORITY: This policy is required by Section 51.950 of the Texas Education Code.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) is to help minimize the risks of liability connected with motor vehicle travel by TTUHSC El Paso ("University") faculty, staff and students. This HSCEP OP regulates any travel undertaken by one or more students presently enrolled at the University to an organized activity or event that is located more than 25 miles from the University or traveling abroad. This operating policy applies to any approved event or activity which is initiated, organized, sponsored and/or funded by the University, is undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the University or is a required event or activity by a University registered student organization. This HSCEP OP does not create a claim or cause of action against University or its employees, and University retains all defenses to any such action including, but not limited to, sovereign immunity. Modes of travel by students to events or activities as defined above include:

1. personally-owned vehicles
2. commercial vehicles, including but not limited to rental cars, vans, and chartered buses
3. commercial airlines
4. use of University-owned vehicle

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by July 1 of each even-numbered year (ENY) by the Assistant Vice President of Student Services, Director of Payment Services and Managing Director of Facilities & Services, and the Office of General Counsel, with recommendations for revision forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chief Financial Officer or their designees by August 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **Generally Applicable Definitions:**

- a. Student: A Student is anyone currently enrolled in a TTUHSC El Paso educational program.
- b. Department Sponsor: A department sponsor of a student activity is an academic or administrative unit supporting the planning and/or resources for associated student travel.
- c. Student Organization: A student organization is an active registered student organization in good standing with the office of Student Services and Student Engagement (SSSE).
- d. Advisor: An advisor is a faculty or full-time staff member selected by a student organization who agrees to volunteer to assist the group. Advisors participate in required trainings and are listed on the registered student organization's Tech Engage roster.
- e. Authorized Passenger: Any employee, sponsor, student, or prospective student being recruited to participate in specific University program or activity who is listed on travel request. In all such cases, reasonable efforts shall be made by the responsible department to ensure that each participant executes a [release and hold harmless agreement](#).
- f. University-Related Activities: University-related activities are those activities that are consistent with the University's mission and that are approved by the appropriate

administrative unit. This includes activities organized or sponsored by the University, funded by the University, or using vehicles owned or leased by the University. All Registered Student Organization events must be submitted and approved in [Tech Engage](#) prior to travel.

2. To ensure that student travel related activities are within the scope of the University's mission, and that student safety issues are properly addressed, travel participation under this policy must be approved in advance by an appropriate administrator.
 - a. Faculty, staff or registered student organizations requesting authorization for student travel must submit a Student Travel request Authorization Form at least 10 working days in advance of travel or event.
 - b. Requirements include;
 - (1) A list of participants, local address, phone and the names and phone number for emergency contacts.
 - (2) Name and phone number of responsible University employee who will be available to student(s) at all times for the term of the approved travel.
 - (3) Copies of drivers licenses for any students operating vehicles.
 - (4) Completed and signed Travel Release and Indemnification Agreement form for each participant (Attachment A).
 - (5) Completed and signed Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment forms for each participant (Attachment B).
 - c. Faculty, staff or students leading trips should carry emergency contact and authorization for medical treatment forms for the term of the travel.
 - d. When student services fees are requested to fund travel an additional approval may be required by the Student Services Fee Advisory Committee.
3. **Travel Using University-Owned, Leased, Rented or Loaned Vehicles:**
 - a. Only persons who are acting within the course and scope of university-related activities are permitted to use vehicles, owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, the system or its components. See HSCEP OP 63.01, TTUHSC El Paso Vehicle Rental and HSCEP OP 63.03 Vehicle Fleet Management Program for information about the authorization, procedures and use of TTUHSC El Paso vehicles or contact TTUHSC El Paso Office of Vehicle Fleet Management.
 - b. Because of the risks of personal injury, it is required that only those persons whose names appear on the approved driver's list be considered or allowed to use University- owned motor vehicles. To request a driver be considered for approval and addition to the approved drivers list, the following are required:
 - (1) Qualifications for drivers of all motor vehicles owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to University are as follows:
 - (a) Must possess a valid Texas driver license or license from another state or District of Columbia appropriate for the class of vehicle being operated;
 - (b) Must have held a valid driver license, as defined in (a) above, for at least two years and have attained 18 years of age. The two-year experience requirement may be satisfied by providing an English translation of the official driving record from the individual's home country, or the equivalent thereof;
 - (c) Must comply with annual driver record information check (or its equivalent);
 - (d) Must achieve an "approved" status using the Driver Rating Evaluation Form;

(e) Must report all driving violations or convictions or any license revocations, suspensions or reinstatements, following revocations or suspensions to their immediate supervisor within five business days of the occurrence. This includes violations, convictions, suspensions, and revocations that result from driving a privately-owned vehicle. Approval to drive a university vehicle may not be granted for one year following reinstatement of a revoked license, and;

(f) Must not have had any convictions for driving while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or reckless driving in the five years immediately preceding the date of the Driver Approval Request;

(2) Additional qualifications for drivers of vans equipped for 15 passengers or extended cargo:

(a) Must be at least 20 years of age and held a valid license, as defined in (2)(a) above for at least two years;

(b) Must successfully complete a 15-passenger driver training course;

(c) Must complete 15-passenger refresher training annually;

(d) Must not have more than one moving violation in the last 18 months;

(e) Must successfully pass an annual drug screen; and

(f) Must complete the 15-Passenger Van Inspection Checklist for each trip. The inspection checklist should be kept in the vehicle for the duration of the trip.

4. **Operator Conduct.**

Any operator of a University vehicle must take a 15-minute break every 3 hours and may drive no more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period. When the vehicle driven is a van with passengers, a second person must remain awake at all times and must ride in the front passenger seat.

a. Those that operate a University vehicle represent University to the general public. The image conveyed does affect UNIVERSITY; therefore, an operator:

(1) DO NOT use UNIVERSITY vehicles for personal transportation or business;

(2) DO NOT allow alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs to be consumed or illegally transported in any UNIVERSITY vehicle;

(3) DO NOT smoke or allow any passenger to smoke in any UNIVERSITY vehicle. UNIVERSITY prohibits tobacco use in a state vehicle.

(4) DO NOT text message, read or compose emails, or use a handheld cell phone while operating the vehicle. A Bluetooth or other hand-free device is acceptable;

(5) DO NOT pick up hitchhikers or transport family members or any other unauthorized passenger(s);

(6) DO NOT allow the vehicle to become unnecessarily dirty and present an unfavorable image to the general public;

(7) DO NOT allow the number of passengers to exceed the authorized capacity of the vehicle (the capacity of a vehicle can typically be determined by counting the number of available seat belts);

(8) DO NOT operate the vehicle unless all occupants are wearing the appropriate restraints;

(9) DO observe all traffic rules and regulations;

(10) DO drive carefully, safely, and courteously;

(11) DO require driver and all passengers to use seat belts and other appropriate occupant restraints at all times the vehicle is being operated.

b. When a vehicle is damaged through operator misuse or operated by a person under the

influence of alcohol or narcotics, the department head is responsible for obtaining a complete statement of the circumstances and a copy of the police report for the appropriate administrative action. Citations, fines and penalties for all parking and traffic violations will be the personal responsibility of the operator.

c. Operators shall use common sense when driving. For road trips of 100 miles or more, driving should be shared, if possible, and frequent breaks should be taken.

5. **Collision Reporting.**

The following procedures should be followed whenever a University vehicle is involved in a collision, regardless of the extent of damage:

a. Stop immediately and notify local police so that an official report can document the collision;

b. Take necessary steps to prevent another collision;

c. Contact a doctor, ambulance, or emergency medical team, if necessary. Shall remain with the injured person until help arrives;

d. Obtain names, addresses, or telephone numbers of all witnesses;

e. Provide all required information to the law enforcement officer;

f. Notify the department head or supervisor. If the operator is unable to contact or reach the department head or supervisor, the operator shall contact the TTUHSC El Paso Police Department; and

g. Refer to HSCEP OP 63.03 for the completion of required vehicle accident documentation, summarized in the Vehicle Fleet Management Handbook,

6. An operator may be asked to submit to a "for cause" screen in compliance with HSCEP OP Drug-Free Workplace Policy, when there is any accident causing injury to anyone, damage to property of University or others, or when the operator received a traffic citation as a result of an on-the-job motor vehicle accident. If the operator refuses the screen, the individual will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

7. **Travel by Commercial or Charter Aircraft:** All students traveling on official University business or activities will use only those aircraft and aircraft operators that meet the requirements set forth below. The travel regulations contained in the Texas Appropriations Act and other applicable laws will be followed by the University.

TTUHSC El Paso will only use aircraft and aircraft operators that are flight worthy and are certified and operate under Subchapters F & G, Parts 91, 119, 121, 125 or 135 as applicable in Chapter 1, Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 Code of Federal Regulations (the "C.F.R."). In addition all aircraft used pursuant to this provision must be piloted, at a minimum, by pilots that are fully qualified and insured in the aircraft being flown, possessing a commercial pilot certificate with instrument rating. Aircraft piloted by TTUHSC El Paso Personnel on official business must follow [HSCEP OP 79.03](#).

8. **Travel Using Personal Vehicles:** The University recognizes that individuals occasionally use personal vehicles while engaged in University-related activities on campus and in the local area. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their personal vehicles while conducting University business should be made aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use. No University coverage for personal injuries is available to students if they drive their personal vehicles on University-related activities as defined herein above.

9. **Expenses and Reimbursement:** Mileage costs related to any significant use of personal vehicles to conduct University-related business unrelated to required academic experiences, (e.g., clinical rotations, clerkships, etc) may be reimbursed to students upon appropriate approval of the fund manager for the sponsoring department or organization. The travel office should be contacted for additional information. All other reimbursement of travel expenses must follow [HSCEP OP 79.06](#).

10. **Use of Personal Vehicles Not Required:** No individual shall be required to use a personal vehicle to perform University-related activities, with the exception of travel to and from clinical affiliation sites.

11. **Policy Concerning Student Releases and Medical Authorization:** Each student who travels by any form of transportation to participate in a University-related activity, including but not limited to an

academically-related field trip, course, competition, contest, or non-academic activity, must, prior to such activity, execute a copy of the Travel Release and Indemnification Agreement ([Attachment A](#)) and the Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment ([Attachment B](#)) which are attached to this policy.

12. **International Travel by Students:** Students traveling abroad for any University-related reason (e.g., conferences, research, competition, community service, mission work, etc.) in any status (i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate, graduate, supported by scholarships, assistantships, institutional, etc.) must abide and complete the required forms through the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Global Health, [HSCEP OP 10.29](#) regarding procedures for Pre-Departure 4.(a), 1; 2 (a-e) and Exit Counseling 5 (1) a-c.

Students are not permitted to travel to a nation that is subject to a Travel Warning issued by the United States Department of State. To determine if a country is the subject of such a travel advisory, contact the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Health (ODIGH) or the U.S. Department of State Office in Washington, DC at 202-647-4000 or through the web at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>. In the event the Department of State issues a travel advisory to which a student will be traveling, ODIGH will contact the student immediately. If the country has been placed on the Travel Warning list, the student must cancel the trip.

When an emergency occurs, procedures for Response to Emergencies Abroad will be followed ([HSCEP OP 10.29](#), [Attachment B](#)).

13. **Guidelines Concerning Safe Travel Practices:**

- a. All student travelers are bound by the TTUHSC El Paso Code of Professional and Academic Conduct.
- b. Each administrative unit approving University-related travel, especially travel that involves students, is encouraged to promulgate guidelines that encourage safe driving and minimize risks of injury during that travel.
- c. Tech Engage is the primary system for requesting approval for official off-campus trips for Registered Student Organizations. The [Student Services and Student Engagement Travel Request](#) is the process for requesting approval for travel in excess of 25 miles.
- d. Registered student organizations are free to make such off-campus trips as are deemed worthwhile by the membership and sponsors of the organization. Participation in such off-campus trips and activities is at the students' own risk. If personal injury or accident should occur to students or other persons during such activities, TTUHSC El Paso will assume no responsibility, financial or otherwise.
- e. Departmental sponsors, faculty/staff advisors, and organization officers are urged to take all possible precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of all persons participating in off-campus activities.
- f. There are no official excused class absences for students who participate in off-campus trips sponsored by registered student organizations. Students will be responsible for making their own individual arrangements in advance with instructors for course work missed while participating in an off-campus trip. Each school and/or individual instructors may set their own requirements for course work missed under such circumstances; they must grant students an opportunity to makeup all course work missed while participating in an official off-campus trip.

14. **Clery Geography and Reporting Requirements:**

- a. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) requires the University to identify all of our reportable geography, which includes

qualifying off-campus student activities and travel. Any off-campus activity that meets the following criteria must be reported, regardless if any Clery Act reportable crimes were known to have occurred:

- (1) The University must have control over the space used for the student activity/event and/or travel. Control, as defined by the Clery Act, requires that there is a written agreement (no matter how informal) directly between the University and the end provider for use of the space. Some examples of a written agreement include reserving hotel rooms, leasing apartments, leasing or having an agreement for academic space. Even if the agreement is in e-mail form, and there is no charge associated with the agreement, the space may still qualify as Clery reportable.
 - (2) The controlled space must be used in direct support of, or in relation to, the institution's educational purposes and frequented by students, which requires meeting one of the two criteria:
 - (a) More than one night; or
 - (b) Repeated use if the same location
- b. The sponsor/group leader acts as a Campus Security Authority (CSA) for the period of time they are supporting the travel. Persons not previously identified as CSAs should receive Clery Act specific training prior to their sponsored trip. Sponsoring departments or organizations are responsible for notifying the Clery Compliance Officer (CCO) of the trip sponsor/group leader. The CCO will then provide any needed training on CSA roles and responsibilities.
- c. Questions related to the Clery Act and if the off-campus activity is reportable should be directed to the CCO, located out of the Safety Services office.