

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT OWNED OR RENTED VEHICLES

DM Approval:



Effective Date: January 1, 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Education owns 'Activity Buses' that are used to transport students to and from school-related activities. A number of these Activity Buses are assigned to specific schools for use by that school, and a number are assigned to the department and are available for use by all schools.

In addition, vehicles assigned from Government of Yukon Fleet Vehicle Agency or rented through the Supply Services branch of the Department of Highways and Public Works may be used to transport students to and from school-related activities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and procedures to ensure the safe transportation of students in government owned or rented vehicles.

DEFINITIONS

'Activity Bus' means the passenger buses owned by the Department of Education that meet the relevant CSA Standard for School Children Transportation, are in compliance with G.A.M. Policy 2.11 ('Government Fleet Vehicles'), and are used to transport students to and from school-related activities.

'School Administrator' means any person who is appointed or designated to be the principal or vice-principal of a school.

'Student' means a person enrolled in an educational program provided by the Minister of Education or by a School Board.

'Student Transportation Officer' means the Department of Education employee responsible for coordinating and administering student transportation requirements in order to facilitate the delivery of efficient Yukon-wide transportation services.

POLICY STATEMENT

Government owned or rented vehicles may be used to transport students to and from school-related activities, such as sports events and off-site experiential learning activities.

The use of a government owned or rented vehicle to transport students must be approved by the school administrator.

In all cases where a government owned or rented vehicle is used to transport students to and from school-related activities, the school administrator and the operator of the vehicle must ensure that they are in full compliance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Safe Work Practice – Use of Government Owned or Rented Vehicles to Transport Students*.

A government owned or rented vehicle used to transport students must at all times be operated by a Government of Yukon employee or an authorized volunteer under the *Volunteers in the Schools Policy*.

Only government staff, students, and authorized volunteers may ride in a government owned or rented vehicle used to transport students.

Use of a government owned or rented vehicle by a third party for other than a school-related purpose is not permitted.

Fleet Vehicles Agency may use Activity Buses for rental or loan to other government departments during the summer months when they are not otherwise in use by the schools.

The Department of Education must ensure that records are maintained for the registration, maintenance, and repair of all Activity Buses.

Activity Buses Assigned to Specific Schools

Activity buses may be assigned to specific schools for the purpose of transporting students to and from school-related activities. These vehicles are to be kept on the school property when not in use.

The school administrator or their designate is responsible for:

- ensuring that each person who is authorized to operate an Activity Bus has a valid Class 4 Yukon Driver's License;
- maintaining an Activity Bus in accordance with G.A.M. Policy 2.11 while it is assigned to the school and keeping current maintenance records available for review;

- contacting the Student Transportation Officer to arrange maintenance and/or repair of the Activity Bus when required during the school year and keeping current maintenance record available for review; and
- arranging with the Student Transportation Officer to have the Activity Bus serviced at the end of each school year.

Activity Buses Assigned to the Department of Education

Schools may use Activity Buses assigned to the department by arranging for their use through the Student Transportation Officer, subject to the following requirements:

- the school must confirm with the Student Transportation Officer that any person who will operate the Activity Bus has a valid Class 4 Yukon Driver's license; for
- the Student Transportation Officer must keep a record of the name of the school, the names of all licensed operators, the destination of the trip and the dates and times the vehicle is to be picked up and returned;
- requests to pick up vehicles outside of regular office hours will be accommodated if possible, provided sufficient notice is given;
- the school administrator or their designate must ensure that the Activity Bus is cleaned and refueled following use, and that the Student Transportation Officer is notified if any maintenance is required; and
- if an Activity Bus is returned without being cleaned and/or refueled, the school may be charged for the cleaning/refueling of the vehicle.

Assigned or Rented Vehicles

The school administrator may authorize the transportation of students in a vehicle assigned from Government Fleet Vehicles or rented through the Supply Services branch of the Department of Highways and Public Works.

The school is responsible for the cost of renting the vehicle, and the school administrator is responsible for ensuring that the requirements G. A.M. Policies 2.11 ('Government Fleet Vehicles') and 2.12 ('Vehicle Rentals Policy') are met when they authorize the transportation of students in a vehicle assigned from the Fleet Vehicle Agency or rented through the Supply Services branch of the Department of Highways and Public Works.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of Education is responsible for establishing guidelines and procedures for ensuring the safe transportation of students in government owned or rented vehicles.

Pursuant to G.A.M. Policy 2.11, the Department of Highways and Public Works is responsible for administering the "Government Vehicles in Pool" consisting of passenger carrying vehicles owned or rented by the Government of Yukon. Highways and Public Works may assign vehicles for specific periods of time as requested and as warranted, depending on the availability of vehicles.

School administrators and vehicle operators are responsible for ensuring that government owned or rented vehicles used to transport students are operated in accordance with applicable Government of Yukon and Department of Education policies and safe work practices.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all staff of the Department of Education.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

In situations where the individual circumstances of a case are such that the provisions of this policy cannot be applied or to do so would result in an unfair or an unintended result, the decision may be based on the individual merits and justice of the situation. Such a decision will be considered for that specific case only and will not be precedent setting.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective January 1, 2017.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REFERENCES

Education Act ss. 185 (l)
Student Transportation Regulations s. 21
Yukon Education 'Volunteers in the Schools Policy'
G.A.M. Policy 2.11 'Government Fleet Vehicles'
G.A.M. Policy 2.12 'Vehicle Rentals Policy'
G.A.M. Policy 3.48 'Corporate Health and Safety'

HISTORY

Student Transportation By Government Vehicles (Vans) Policy, effective April 29, 2004, amended effective by Transportation of Students in Government Owned or Rented Vehicles Policy, effective September 1, 2014; amended effective January 1, 2017.

Safe Work Practice

Transportation of Students in Government Owned or Rented Vehicles

Purpose

The Safe Work Practice (SWP) will provide employees of the Department of Education with a set of guidelines or “Do’s and Don’ts” that have been developed to mitigate hazards associated with this work task, as identified through the workplace hazard identification process. All Department of Education employees performing this work task are required to be trained, knowledgeable and competent.

Guidelines

Persons who operate a government-owned or rented vehicle to transport students must:

- have a valid Yukon Driver’s license with the appropriate classification for the vehicle being driven (any person operating an Activity Bus must hold a valid Class 4 Yukon Driver’s License);
- perform and document a vehicle inspection prior to the trip and at the conclusion of each trip. Inspection to include, but not limited to: fuel level, oil and fluid levels, condition of tires, lights, mirrors, signal lights, gauges (reference <http://www.healthandsafety.gov.yk.ca/docs/downloads/pm-maintenance-schedule-template.pdf>)
- secure loose cargo items in the vehicle, ensure that vehicle load limits are not exceeded, and ensure that hazardous or flammable items are not carried in the vehicle;
- check road and weather reports and other potential hazards that may be encountered during the trip;
- drive in a safe and controlled manner that is suitable for road and weather conditions, avoiding driving manoeuvres for which they are not trained;
- promptly report any mechanical problems to the Student Transportation Officer or Fleet Vehicles as appropriate;
- promptly report accidents to the police and school administrator and complete a Damage and Loss Report; and
- understand and comply at all times with all traffic laws and regulations.

The number of students who may be transported in a government-owned or rented vehicle cannot exceed the number of seat belts available in the vehicle. All passengers in the vehicle are required to wear seatbelts at all times while the vehicle is in operation.

No student who is under 13 years of age or who weighs less than 85 pounds shall occupy the front seat of a vehicle that is equipped with an airbag.

There must be an appropriate means of communication available in the vehicle when it is being used to transport students (e.g. two-way radio (MDRS unit), a cell phone or a satellite phone).

If the travel will be for more than one day, a second vehicle operator or chaperone is required on the trip.

Vehicle operators may not be on duty for periods of longer than 14 hours in a day. If the total amount of time on duty is greater than 14 hours in a day, a second vehicle operator is required for the trip. A person is considered to be 'on duty' for the period of time they are operating the vehicle plus any hours they have worked or been responsible for the supervision of students on that day. *For example, a person who teaches from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (7 hours) then drives to Skagway with a basketball team from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (2 hours) coaches from 6:30 to 8:30 (2 hours) then drives home from 8:30 to 10:30 (2 hours) is considered to be on duty for 13 hours.*

The vehicle must be equipped with appropriate safety gear (e.g. shovel, jumper cables, tow rope, jack, wheel wrench and spare tire, flashlight, first aid kit etc.) at all times while the vehicle is in use. This should include adequate survival gear for travel occurring during cold weather (e.g. warm clothes, sleeping bags etc.).

Vehicle travel shall not commence if the temperature is or is expected to fall below -35 degrees Celsius. If the temperature unexpectedly falls below -35 degrees Celsius during travel, the vehicle operator must proceed as soon as possible to safe shelter until the temperature rises above -35 degrees Celsius.

Unless authorized in advance by the superintendent who, in consultation with the Offsite Review Committee is satisfied that any safety risks have been effectively mitigated, trailers shall not be towed behind the vehicle at any time while the vehicle is being used to transport students.

Animals may not be transported in a government-owned or rented vehicle used to transport students unless it is an essential part of the school activity and is properly caged at all times while in the vehicle.

Effective Date

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