

## **Student Travel Policy**

When a registered student organization desires to participate in, or sponsors an event that occurs off the campus, and participation requires vehicle use, the University is committed to promoting the safety of all participants. Therefore, the Bowling Green State University student travel policy applies to all registered student organizations as defined by the Bowling Green State University Student Handbook. This policy is in effect whenever members of registered student organizations travel as official or designated representatives of the University, or participate in an organization-sponsored event where the University is officially represented, outside the city limits of Bowling Green.

### **A. Registration of the Event**

The organization must register each trip by submitting a completed travel packet as distributed by the Office of Campus Activities (or designee) for all trip participants.

### **B. Advisor Participation**

Upon review of the registration form, a staff member from the Office of Campus Activities (or designee) will determine if the presence of a travel advisor is required. If a travel advisor is required to travel with the group, the travel costs for the travel advisor will be paid from a special account designated for advisor travel and provided by the Office of Campus Activities. If a travel advisor is not required to attend, the advisor of record, as listed on the student organization registration form must sign off on the trip registration form. One member of the travel group must serve as the trip coordinator, including completion of trip coordinator training as provided by the Office of Campus Activities.

### **C. Transportation Requirements**

Bowling Green State University has established transportation requirements as determined by the Office of Risk Management. All of these related policies can be found on the Risk Management Web page ([www.bgsu.edu/offices/riskmgmt/index.html](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/riskmgmt/index.html)). Additionally, all travel participants are required to follow the transportation requirements summarized below as set forth by the Office of Risk Management. Compliance with these items is required. These transportation requirements apply to travel by car or minivan but do not apply to travel by air or charter bus.

#### **1. Driver Requirements**

a. In addition to having a valid driver's license, all drivers must consent to a motor vehicle record check annually when driving other than personal vehicles to verify the driver meets the accepted criteria in order to drive.

b. All drivers must be at least 18 years of age.

c. Drivers must obey all traffic laws, including seat belt use. If failure to obey traffic laws results in a ticket, the driver is responsible for any fines, including parking tickets.

## 2. Rental Vehicles

Renting vehicles from University-approved rental car vendors is an accepted practice. Drivers must be at least 21 years of age.

## 3. University-owned Vehicles

Only licensed drivers who are at least 18 years of age may drive a University-owned car or minivan.

## 4. Personal Vehicles

The use of personal vehicles is strongly discouraged because the institution lacks control over the condition, maintenance and insurance coverage on personal vehicles. Only licensed drivers who are at least 18 years of age may drive a car or minivan.

## 5. Large Passenger Vans

Because large passenger vans pose a special risk, students are prohibited from driving or riding in a vehicle with seating for more than eight individuals.

## 6. Insurance

When using University-owned or -rented vehicles, the University provides all necessary liability and physical damage coverage. In situations when personal vehicles are used, the University is unable to reimburse the vehicle owner for any accident-related repairs or payment of deductibles. Personal vehicle owners are expected to carry automobile liability insurance in an amount sufficient to cover any property damage or liability loss and be responsible for the payment of their own deductible including the defense of any claim.

## **D. Driving Requirements**

1. Travel routes must be planned in advance.

2. Drivers must have at least two years of licensed driving experience free of any court-imposed restrictions.

3. Two University-approved drivers are required on trips greater than 250 miles one-way.

4. On trips over 250 miles one-way, drivers must rotate every three hours and no one person may drive more than eight hours in a 24-hour period.

5. Drivers are responsible for knowing and following all motor vehicle laws and safety regulations for each state in which travel occurs.

6. The use of a cell phone is prohibited for drivers while driving.

7. The number of passengers may not exceed the number of available seat belts.

8. Transporting minors unless accompanied by a parent or guardian is prohibited except in situations when the minor is a registered BGSU student younger than age 18.

9. If drivers are participating in events and driving on the same day, then drivers should rotate on a more frequent basis to avoid fatigue.

10. Driver fatigue is greater between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m. Drivers must use extreme caution when operating a vehicle during this time. A second person should remain awake and ride in the front passenger seat.

## **E. Inclement Weather**

### *Policies & Procedures*

1. When planning the travel route, check the forecast to see if inclement weather is predicted.

2. During inclement weather, travel safety should follow guidelines set forth by the National Weather Service. Drivers should contact local law enforcement to determine the best course of action based on driving conditions.

3. During inclement weather, drivers are to use extreme caution.

4. When driving in treacherous weather and conditions are deemed dangerous or unsafe, immediately cease all travel and find the nearest shelter or hotel.

5. The University will defray the cost of an overnight stay if unexpected bad weather impedes the safe return to campus.

Permission to seek extended stays due to weather conditions must be approved by the advisor of record.

## **F. Behavioral Expectations**

1. All participants who are defined as BGSU students are accountable to the BGSU Code of Student Conduct throughout the duration of the trip.

2. Being under the influence, or in possession of alcohol or drugs in conjunction with the trip and throughout its duration, is prohibited regardless of the age of the student participant. This applies from the moment of departure from campus until the return to campus, or at the moment the student participant disaffiliates from the approved travel arrangements in accordance with the policies established by the Office of Campus Activities.

3. If the driver becomes aware of alcohol and/or drug consumption and/or possession, the driver should stop the vehicle and request that these substances be removed from the vehicle before the trip is continued. Failure of any passenger(s) to comply will cause immediate cancellation of the trip. Individuals as well as the student organization will be held accountable to the policies set forth in the BGSU Code of Student Conduct.

4. Smoking is prohibited inside any University-owned or -rented vehicle.

5. The transport of hitchhikers or any unauthorized passengers is prohibited.
6. Use of other than a compact-size trailer is prohibited without consent of the Office of Campus Activities (or designee).
7. Students are encouraged to report reckless or irresponsible driving by other student participants so that appropriate safety measures can be taken for future trips.
8. Driving in a foreign country poses extraordinary risks that may necessitate the purchase of special insurance. It is important to consult with the Office of Campus Activities prior to traveling in a vehicle that crosses the border into another country outside the United States.
9. All trip participants are ambassadors of Bowling Green State University and as such must represent the University in a positive light. Alleged violations of the BGSU Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students for investigation and resolution. BGSU students and the sponsoring organization are responsible for the behavior of non-BGSU students participating in the trip.

#### **G. Monetary Guidelines**

Any person or organization using University funds for travel must comply with the expenditure guidelines established by the Bowling Green State University Office of the Treasurer.

#### **H. Exemptions**

Requests for exemptions to any of the aforementioned policies are subject to approval by the Dean of Students (or designee).