

# The Harker School Driving Policy

## Overview

The safety of our students, teachers, and staff is paramount at Harker. This is especially true in the use of company vehicles for the transport of the above constituents. This document describes the guidelines and regulations regarding how employees may be authorized to operate school vehicles. Once approved, this extends to the expectations for continued adherence to Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) statutes, Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for bus drivers, and other standards as established by The Harker School. In addition, this policy covers the transportation of Harker students in private vehicles operated by employees of the school.

Therefore, acknowledgement of and adherence to the elements of this policy are required of anyone wishing to operate a school vehicle, whether in the transport of materials and supplies or the transport of students, teachers, and staff.

## Approval procedure for operating Harker vehicles

- 1) Make request of the assistant head of school for student affairs to become an eligible driver.
- 2) Print and retain a copy of this form, which is posted on the faculty/staff portion of the school website.
- 3) Sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt contained at the end of the form and return to the Office of Student Affairs.
- 4) Complete the Insurance Company Driving Record Authorization which is also posted on the faculty/staff portion of the school website and submit to the Business Office. This will be forwarded to the insurance broker, and a copy of the employee's driving record will be requested from the DMV.
- 5) If the driving record meets referenced standards, the driver will be approved, and after signing a DMV Pull Notice enrollment form for the Office of Student Affairs, they will be enrolled in the program which calls for intermittent forwarding of the employee's driving record to the school by the DMV.
- 6) In order to be able to drive a personal vehicle to transport students and or faculty and staff while on Harker business, personal insurance levels must meet those published in this document. If this is your aim, you must also submit a copy of current insurance information that includes current coverage levels to the Office of Student Affairs as part of the application.

## Maintaining Eligibility

Company vehicles are to be driven by authorized employees only, except in emergencies, or in case of repair testing by a mechanic. Non-employees of The Harker School may not drive company vehicles under any circumstances.

All accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported to the police and to the assistant head of school for student affairs as soon as reasonably possible after the accident. Failing to stop after an accident and/or failure to report an accident may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. Leaving the scene of an accident, especially if an injury has occurred, may result in criminal charges.

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All *moving* violations received during the operation of a company vehicle must be reported within 24 hours to the assistant head of school for student affairs. All fines for these citations are the responsibility of the individual driver, and not the school.

All *parking* violations received during the operation of a company vehicle must be reported within 24 hours to the assistant head of school for student affairs. All fines for these citations are the responsibility of the individual driver, and not the school.

Any enrolled employee whose driver's license is revoked or suspended shall immediately notify the assistant head of school for student affairs. They must be certain not to operate a company vehicle after the date of the suspension or revocation or drive Harker students in a personal vehicle. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action. The employee will need to reapply for reinstatement that will be subject to insurance company approval.

## *Bus Drivers*

All bus drivers must comply with all applicable DOT regulations, including successful completion on medical, drug and alcohol evaluations.

The school is required to also maintain Pull Notice program records for bus drivers per CHP regulations. Records will be provided annually to assess employees' driving records, as well as any time there is an adverse action against the holder. An unfavorable record as defined below will result in a loss of the privilege of driving a company vehicle.

## **Ineligibility for or withdrawal from approved driver's list**

The following performance levels may defer or disqualify an employee from inclusion on Harker's Approved Driver's List, even if previously approved.

## *Disqualifying violations and accidents*

Any violation on the driving record from the bullet points referenced below will prevent an applicant from becoming an approved driver. If one of these occurs after becoming a Harker approved driver it will result in withdrawal of that approval. Depending upon circumstances, these may also result in other employee action, including dismissal.

- Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol (DUI)
- Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle (gross negligence)
- Operating a vehicle during a period of suspension or revocation
- Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
- Aggravated assault with a motor vehicle
- Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority (grand theft)
- Permitting an unlicensed person to drive
- Reckless driving
- Speed contest (racing)
- Hit and run (bodily injury or property damage)

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## *Considerations of lesser violations or accidents*

The following actions in the three years prior to application will also prevent approval:

- Three or more other moving violations of any type not listed above
- Two or more accidents at which you were determined to be at fault
- Any combination of moving violations and accidents totaling four

Failure to report any accident that occurs while driving a school vehicle within 24 hours of the incident, regardless of fault, will likely result in withdrawal of the driver's approval.

## **Insurance Coverage**

Personal auto insurance is the primary coverage for any accident involving a personal vehicle driven by an enrolled employee. *Required coverage for employees transporting students in their personal vehicle is:*

- \$250,000 per person/\$500,000 per accident for bodily injury liability, or
- \$500,000 per accident combined single limit of liability, and,
- \$100,000 per accident property damage.

The school acts as additional insured for all approved drivers while transporting students on school business, so these levels are required by Harker to limit the school's initial exposure. Questions regarding these levels can be forwarded to the Business Office.

## **What To Do In Case of An Accident**

In an attempt to minimize the results of an accident, the driver must prevent further damages or injuries and obtain all pertinent information and report it accurately. As a Harker-approved driver it is very important that these guidelines be followed.

- 1) Call for medical aid if necessary.
- 2) Secure the accident scene – pull onto shoulder or side of road, redirect traffic, set up road flares/reflectors, etc.
- 3) **Call the police.** All accidents involving school vehicles or student passengers, regardless of severity, must be reported to the police. If the driver cannot get to a phone, he/she should write a note giving the location to a reliable appearing motorist and ask him to notify the police.
- 4) Record names and addresses of driver, witnesses and occupants of the other vehicles and any medical personnel who may arrive at the scene. Other pertinent information to obtain includes:
  - a. license number of other drivers
  - b. insurance company names and policy numbers of other vehicles
  - c. make, year, model of other vehicles
  - d. date and time of accident
  - e. overall road and weather conditions
- 5) Draw a diagram of the accident scene and note the street names and locations of traffic signs, signals, etc. If you have a cell phone with camera take pictures of the scene, vehicles, street signs, etc.
- 6) Do not discuss the accident with anyone at the scene except the police. Do **not** accept any responsibility for the accident while being polite, and don't argue with anyone. This is for the police to sort out.
- 7) **Do** provide the other party with your name, address, phone number, driver's license number, and personal insurance information.

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- 8) As soon as reasonably feasible, and absolutely within 24 hours, report the accident to the assistant head of school for student affairs. Be prepared to provide a copy of the accident record and/or your written description of the accident to the assistant head of school for student affairs at that time.

## Driver Safety Rules

We ask that as a driver of Harker students, staff, or user of a company vehicle that you read and acknowledge the following driver's safety rules as best practices.

- Be aware of and avoid all moving violations as described in the addendum.
- Do not operate a company vehicle when your ability to do so safely has been impaired by illness, fatigue, injury or prescription medication.
- All drivers and passengers operating or riding in company vehicles must wear seat belts at all times.
- No unauthorized personnel (e.g. hitchhikers, family members not specifically approved for inclusion in the activity) are allowed to ride in company vehicles.
- Drivers are responsible for the security of Harker vehicles assigned to them. The vehicle engine must be shut off, ignition keys removed, and vehicle doors locked whenever the vehicle is left unattended. If the vehicle is left with a parking attendant, only the ignition key is to be left.
- It is expected that head lights will be used 1/2 hour after sunset and 1/2 hour before sunrise, during inclement weather, or at any time when a distance of 500 feet ahead of the vehicle cannot be seen clearly.
- It is imperative that you follow all directives for safe driving when on school property and set an example for other drivers as to speed, lane use, stopping, and parking.
- All other state laws, local laws, or DOT Motor Carrier Safety Regulations must be obeyed.

## Defensive and Smart Driving Guidelines

We ask that as a driver of Harker students, staff, or user of a company vehicle that you read and acknowledge the following defensive and "smart driving" guidelines as best practices.

- Turn off the engine when it is expected you will be stopped for more than 2 minutes. This reduces unnecessary pollution.
- Reduce excess weight in vehicles to increase mileage per gallon. Consult with the transportation director for guidelines.
- Maintain a safe following distance at all times. To estimate your following distance, pick a stationary object ahead of you. As the vehicle in front of you passes the object, begin counting 1001, 1002, 1003, etc. until you reach the same object. This counts the number of seconds between you and the vehicle ahead of you.
  - Drivers of passenger vehicles should keep a two-second interval between their vehicle and the vehicle immediately ahead. During slippery road conditions, the following distance should be increased to at least four seconds.
  - Drivers of heavy trucks should keep a minimum of a three-second interval when not carrying cargo; and at least four seconds when fully loaded. Following distance should also be increased when adverse conditions exist.
- Drivers must yield the right of way at all traffic control signals and signs requiring them to do so. Drivers should also be prepared to yield for safety's sake at any time. Pedestrians and bicycles in the roadway always have the right of way.

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- Avoid driving in other driver's blind spots; attempt to maintain eye contact with the other driver, either directly or through mirrors.
- Honor posted speed limits and drive at steady speeds. Avoid rapid acceleration unless necessary in a merging situation or when avoiding danger. In the same vein, don't maintain speeds which require repaid deceleration or heavy braking, either. In adverse driving conditions, reduce speed to a safe operating speed that is consistent with the conditions of the road, weather, lighting, and volume of traffic. Tires can hydroplane on wet pavement at speeds as low as 40 MPH.
- Turn signals are to be used to show where you are heading; while going into traffic and before every turn or lane change.
- When you are passing or changing lanes, view the entire vehicle in your rear view mirror before pulling back into that lane.
- Be alert to the position of other vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists when approaching intersections. Never speed through an intersection on a caution light. Approach a stale green light with your foot poised over the brake to reduce your reaction time should it be necessary to stop. When the traffic light turns green, look both ways for oncoming traffic before proceeding.
- When waiting to make left turns, keep your wheels facing straight ahead. If rear-ended, you will not be pushed into the lane of oncoming traffic.
- When stopping behind another vehicle, leave enough space so you can see the rear wheels of the car in front. This allows room to go around the vehicle if necessary, and may prevent you from being pushed into the car in front of you if you are rear-ended.
- Avoid backing where possible, but when necessary, keep the distance traveled to a minimum and be particularly careful.
  - Check behind your vehicle. Operators of heavy trucks should walk around their vehicle before backing and/or have someone guide you.
  - Do not back around a corner or into an area of no visibility.

## Proper maintenance of vehicles

Proper vehicle maintenance is a basic element of any fleet safety program, not only to ensure a safe, road worthy vehicle, but also to avoid costly repair expenses and unexpected breakdowns. For the record:

- Registration and inspection is the responsibility of the transportation supervisor.
- In addition to inspections required by law for passenger vehicles, routine inspections of critical items, such as brakes, lights, tires, wipers, etc., must also be completed by drivers of passenger vehicles before all travel depending upon circumstances. For instance, if it is raining, or looks like rain, the wipers should be checked before driving the vehicle; if you expect to be driving at night, make certain the headlights are in working order.
- A clean vehicle makes a good impression on those who ride in it, so please leave it as you found it – clean.
- The transportation office regularly ensures that passenger vehicles are cleaned inside and out.

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### Acknowledgement of receipt and acceptance

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the information contained in The Harker School's Driving Policy and I have retained a copy of the policy and driver rules for my reference.

As a driver of a company vehicle, I understand that it is my responsibility to know these rules and guidelines and to maintain a clean driving record to allow me to continue as a Harker-approved driver.

As a driver of a company vehicle, I understand it is my responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage, as well as maintain the cleanliness of the vehicle.

As a driver of a company vehicle, I understand it is my responsibility to immediately inform the appropriate person should I have an accident, commit a moving violation, incur a parking violation while in a Harker vehicle, or if there is a condition of vehicle maintenance that needs repair.

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Reason for Approval

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Employee name (please print)

Date

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Employee signature

Date

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Assistant Head of School, Student Affairs

Date