FLEET MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy Statement

The purpose of this Fleet Manual is to provide information governing the administrative policies and procedures for the purchase, operation, maintenance and disposal of university-owned vehicles as mandated by the State of Mississippi, Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and The University of Southern Mississippi (Southern Miss). This document exists to promote the safe, legal, and responsible use of vehicles owned or operated for the benefit of Southern Miss. The protection of life, property, and the good stewardship of public resources is at stake.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

This policy is required for the effective communication of university policies regarding fleet management.

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All members of The University of Southern Mississippi community.

Website Address for this Policy

www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-adma-pur-018

Definitions

Policy/Procedures

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS
A. Application: These policies and procedures apply to any and all vehicles owned by or used for the benefit of Southern Miss that are licensed for travel on public roads. This includes all such vehicles regardless of funding source or method of acquisition.

B. Enforcement/Consequences: The president and all vice presidents have reviewed and endorse the Fleet Management Policies and Procedures, including the Vehicle Use Agreement and Fuelman guidelines. The vice presidents will be responsible for enforcement of these policies and procedures and shall apply appropriate consequences for failure to comply. Such consequences could range from required training to reduced driving capabilities and may go as far as termination of employment. The degree of consequences shall be based upon the potential risk to life and property. Driving a university-owned vehicle is a privilege and the university reserves the right to deny or revoke the driving privileges of any driver in the event that driver does not meet the requirements set forth in this policy.

II. MANAGEMENT

A. Executive: As mandated by IHL, no department shall purchase, rent, lease or acquire any motor vehicle, regardless of the funds from which the motor vehicle is to be purchased, except under authority granted by the President. Authority shall only be granted to purchase, rent, lease or acquire a motor vehicle which is the lowest cost vehicle to carry out its intended use. (This policy excludes the rental of vehicles from the state contract provider covered by the university’s travel policies.)

B. Vice president: Each vice president will be responsible for allocating vehicle resources in the most cost effective and efficient manner. They could choose to create a department motor pool wherein vehicles will be checked out on an as needed basis or they may choose to assign specific vehicles to specific individuals or they may choose a combination of the two. The idea should be that the vice president has the flexibility to assign the vehicles as they see fit while maximizing the use of the available resources.

C. Procurement and Contract Services: Procurement and Contract Services will administer the university’s Fuelman program, maintain a list of all vehicle administrators and provide training as necessary. Procurement and Contract Services will also maintain the Fleet Management Policies and Procedures Manual.

D. Physical Plant: Physical Plant will be responsible for obtaining titles, tags, ensuring that all vehicles are marked appropriately and that all vehicles owned by Southern Miss are added to the university’s fleet liability policy.

E. Department: Individual university departments that have vehicles listed on their inventory are responsible for their assignment and use in compliance with all university policies and procedures. The department carries the fiscal responsibility for the proper maintenance and upkeep for any and all vehicles listed on their inventory. The department will also be responsible for assigning Vehicle Administrators.

   1. For each vehicle owned by Southern Miss, a Vehicle Administrator shall be named. The name and contact information for this individual shall be on file at the department with a copy on file with Procurement and Contract Services. A department may have one Vehicle Administrator responsible for its entire fleet or they may choose to assign each vehicle a different Vehicle Administrator. The basis
for this requirement is that unless someone is named as the responsible party, in most
cases, nobody will be responsible. Procurement and Contract Services will provide
training to Vehicle Administrators.

F. Vehicle Administrator: Because the university does not operate a central motor pool, all
daily vehicle operational functions are the responsibility of the department which
operates a university-owned vehicle. To accomplish this, each department must identify a
specific employee, the Vehicle Administrator, who is responsible for the following
functions:
1. Assures vehicle(s) receives appropriate service and in general, is maintained in a safe
operating condition.
2. Monitors assignments of vehicles, usage and in general assures compliance with this
Fleet Manual.
3. Maintains the department Authorized Driver List and ensures each driver has a
current, signed Vehicle Use Agreement (Appendix A).
4. Maintains records as outlined in this Fleet Manual.
5. Ensures the appropriate appearance of the vehicle(s).

III. ACQUIRING UNIVERSITY-OWNED VEHICLES

A. Decision Process: The purchase decision should be carefully considered. These
guidelines are not intended to stop any department from purchasing a required vehicle but
are intended to point out instances where the decision to purchase may not be the best use
of the tax and tuition dollar. The following are general guidelines that should be
considered:
1. In most instances, if an individual is traveling less than 15,000 miles per year (in a
passenger type vehicle) it is possibly more economical for the department to have the
employee drive his/her personal vehicle and have the department reimburse at the
current mileage rate. Another option would be to develop a pool whereby low
mileage users would have access to an appropriate vehicle.
2. In many instances where transportation of dignitaries or other officials is required on
a non-regular basis, it may be better to rent a full-size vehicle or passenger van for
those specific occurrences, rather than purchasing the vehicle and not fully utilizing
its capabilities.
3. A full-size vehicle does not get great gas mileage and has a higher cost when
compared to a mid-size or intermediate-size vehicle; therefore, full-size vehicles
would not be the appropriate vehicle to purchase if the intended use is to transport a
driver only and occasionally three or fewer passengers to and from appointments,
meetings, etc. Requests for full size vehicles must include detailed explanation of the
need for the increased size (carrying capacity, towing responsibility, etc).
4. Utility vehicles do not get good gas mileage and have much higher costs when
compared to other passenger-type vehicles, vans, and pickup trucks; therefore, there
are very few situations where a utility vehicle would be the most appropriate
vehicle. Transportation of passengers and equipment can normally be accomplished
with a passenger van or sedan. Requests for utility vehicles must include a detailed
explanation for the need of this type of vehicle.
5. Large pickup trucks (3/4 ton and 1 ton) have much higher purchase and maintenance costs (fuel, etc.) and are not appropriate when a smaller vehicle will meet the needs of the department. Requests for larger trucks should include adequate explanation of the need for the increased size (carrying capacity, towing responsibility, etc).

B. Purchasing Process: Vehicles may be purchased with departmental funds in accordance with university and state purchasing policies and procedures with the approval from the university’s executive officer. Approved methods of acquisition include purchasing from the state contract vendors, interdepartmental or interagency transfer, state surplus property or purchase from an approved auction.

1. The department or budget unit shall develop a detailed description of the vehicle. Information on state contract vehicles is available on the Office of Purchasing and Travel website: www.dfa.state.ms.us/Purchasing/StateContracts.html, click on Vehicles.

2. A justification of vehicle need shall be developed. The justification must state whether the vehicle is an addition to the current number of vehicles on the departmental inventory or is intended as a replacement. If it is a replacement, the department shall include a description of the vehicle to be disposed of by the university.

3. The description and justification (in memo form – not a requisition) shall be submitted through the appropriate channels from the department or budget unit to the appropriate vice president and on to the president for approval.

4. The approved request should then be forwarded to Procurement and Contract Services, Bond Hall 214, Box 5003 with a requisition. It will be the department’s responsibility to initiate the disposal process of the replaced vehicle, if appropriate.

5. It should be noted that the state contract for vehicles usually takes effect in October of each year. While the contract states that it is for a 12-month period, in actuality the contract is only good for as long as the various manufacturers continue to produce the specific vehicles. Usually in February or March the manufacturers start to "cut off" production. This means that departments should make plans to order vehicles as soon after October 1 as possible. Any vehicle requested after the "cut off" date will need to go out for bids. This usually creates a delay as well as a higher price.

6. Another note to consider is that the state contract is for vehicles that are ordered from the factory, it is not intended to be for vehicles that are currently on the dealer's lot. This means that from the date the purchase order is issued to the date of delivery is often 60, 90 or even 120 days. Again, this should indicate that departments should plan far in advance and order vehicles as soon as possible after the start of the new contract.

C. Receipt of a Newly Acquired University Vehicle: Upon receipt of the newly acquired vehicle, the department should contact the Physical Plant and Property Accounting BEFORE department begins using the vehicle.

1. Physical Plant: Physical Plant is responsible for obtaining the title and license plate for the vehicle as well as ensuring it is marked appropriately and is added to the university’s fleet liability insurance. Physical Plant will also provide and apply The University of Southern Mississippi decals to new vehicles for a nominal charge.
a. As set forth in Section 25-1-87, Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, all state vehicles owned or leased by Southern Miss shall have a permanent decal or be painted on both sides of the vehicle in letters at least three (3) inches in height and on the rear in letters not less than one and one-half (1 \( \frac{1}{2} \)) inches in height stating the name of the university. The marking must be in a color which is in contrast with the color of the vehicle.

2. Property Accounting: Regardless of the method of acquisition, each university-owned vehicle must be assigned an asset number. Property Accounting should be notified when a vehicle is received and the asset number should be assigned before the department begins using the vehicle.

D. Record Keeping Requirements: The department shall maintain proper documentation which provides the intended use of the vehicle and the basis for choosing the vehicle. Such documentation shall show the department made diligent efforts to purchase, rent, lease or acquire a vehicle that is the lowest cost vehicle for its intended use. For each vehicle purchased, the department shall establish and maintain a file which shall include all pertinent information concerning the vehicle (purchase documentation, annual mileage records, maintenance documentation, disposal documentation, etc). Such documentation shall be updated as needed when the intended use of the vehicle or any other facts concerning the vehicle are changed. Departments shall maintain the following information on all university-owned vehicles:

1. Asset number.
2. Brand/Make/Model/Year.
3. Tag receipt and bill of sale.
4. Vehicle license plate number.
5. Vehicle Administrator.
6. Purpose for which vehicle is to be used.
7. Location and assignment of vehicles.
8. Identification of individual employee assigned vehicle and/or Authorized Driver List for department.
9. Expense report and vehicle log: Vehicle use log should include names of driver, purpose of use, destination, beginning and ending mileage, dates and times of trip, and fuel purchased. This vehicle use log should be reconciled with the weekly Fuelman transaction reports. Mileage listed on vehicle use logs should be verified with vehicle’s actual mileage and compared to estimated mileage to destination. Miles per gallon can be calculated based on vehicle logs and should be compared to the vehicle standard. (See Appendix B for sample form.)
10. History of repairs and operating expense.
11. Cost per mile (fuel, maintenance).

E. Insurance: The University of Southern Mississippi is self-insured and has coverage under the IHL Tort Claims Plan. This plan provides protection for tort claims against employees of the university subject to terms and limitations established by law.

1. All university-owned vehicles should carry proof of insurance. Insurance cards are distributed by Physical Plant.
2. Southern Miss does not purchase physical damage auto coverage for our fleet of vehicles. Rather, in the unfortunate instance when one of our vehicles is damaged, we examine the magnitude of the loss and the ability (or lack thereof) of the department to cover their own loss. If the department cannot cover the loss, the vice president covers it. If the vice president cannot, the university finds the cash like any other unavoidable expense. The university is considered "self-insured." It has been determined that the cost of insuring the entire fleet would be much greater than the occasional expense associated with repairing our own vehicles.

3. Liability coverage is afforded under the Mississippi Tort Claims Act which is only applicable while the vehicle is used within the scope and course of one’s duties for the university. Within Mississippi the limit is $500,000 per occurrence. Out of state limits on damages will be subject to the law of the state in which the accident occurs.

4. Worker's Compensation will apply as the exclusive remedy to employees injured in a vehicle collision while engaging in the course and scope of one's duties for the university.

5. Everyone should be aware that “within the scope and course of one’s duties for the university” is an extremely important phrase. If a Southern Miss employee went to a grocery store, day care, friend’s house or other non-job related site, on their way to a job site, it would be considered “outside the scope and course of one’s duties” and therefore, in addition to being a violation of Southern Miss policy and state law, the employee may have some personal liability. Employees are advised to consider talking to their personal insurance agent to include a “rider” that will provide additional coverage when driving a Southern Miss vehicle.

6. Additional insurance purchases must be approved by the Office of Risk Management at IHL. Departments must first complete the Request for Insurance Approval form (Appendix C). This form, and all relevant policy information, must be sent to Procurement and Contract Services, Bond Hall 214, Box 5003.

7. Frequently Asked Questions:
   o Q: Our department's Southern Miss vehicle was involved in an accident with another Southern Miss vehicle. Will our automobile liability insurance cover the damage?
     A: No. The two departments may work out an agreeable solution to pay for all repairs.
   o Q: Our Southern Miss vehicle was damaged by falling tree limbs. Will the university’s automobile insurance cover these damages?
     A: No. This type of damage is not covered by liability insurance.
   o Q: Will our automobile liability insurance cover Southern Miss vehicles traveling to Mexico for research purposes?
     A: No. Our current coverage applies to the United States of America, Canada and Puerto Rico. Additional liability coverage must be purchased to insure a vehicle traveling outside these areas.

IV. VEHICLE USE POLICY

A. General Policies and Guidelines: The following are general policies and guidelines that should govern the use of any university-owned vehicle:
1. Southern Miss owned motor vehicles are authorized for use in the performance of all travel or tasks that are within the scope and course of the employee’s duties and are necessary to accomplish official Southern Miss business, provided that the use is within the rated design capability of the vehicle. Official university business is defined as the performance of tasks in furtherance of the mission related services that the department responsible for the vehicle is charged with providing to its customers and the university community. Southern Miss owned vehicles shall be driven only by Southern Miss employees, students, and other authorized individuals, and used for official Southern Miss business only.

2. Drivers of university-owned vehicles are required to abide by all applicable federal, state and local laws, university policies and all procedures outlined in this Fleet Manual.
   a. All traffic and parking laws are to be obeyed. Posted speed limits are not to be exceeded nor is the vehicle to be operated above safe driving speeds for road conditions.
   b. Drivers will be expected to report and pay for any parking violations, moving violations, violations resulting in a threat to life, violations resulting in a collision, etc. University drivers receiving citations for any vehicle related violations are personally responsible for all fines and costs.

3. All university owned or leased motor vehicles shall be equipped with the occupant restraint devices that were mandated by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards in effect at the time the particular vehicle was manufactured.
   a. All occupant restraint devices installed in a university-owned vehicle shall be maintained in proper working order. If the occupant restraint devices are not completely operational, the vehicle should not be used until proper repairs are made. The Vehicle Administrator shall be responsible for ensuring the occupant restraint devices are in working order before each use of the vehicle.
   b. The number of passengers in a vehicle shall not exceed the number of available seat belts.
   c. Drivers operating university-owned vehicles, and all passengers, are required to wear seat belts at all times while the vehicle is in motion. It is the driver’s responsibility to ensure compliance with this rule while they are in charge of the vehicle.

4. Only authorized passengers are permitted to accompany authorized employees in university-owned vehicles. Non-state individuals such as volunteers, spouses, and children should not be passengers in a Southern Miss vehicle unless they are involved in the conduct of business which is in the scope of employment of the authorized employee operating the university-owned vehicle.

5. Approved motorcycle helmets must be worn by all motorcycle riders. Proper protective clothing should be worn if operating a motorcycle.

6. Drivers should attempt to minimize distractions that can interfere with the driver’s ability and/or focus.

7. Cell phone use should be held to a minimum. Hands free equipment is recommended.

8. PDA/Laptop computer use is not allowed while operating a vehicle.

9. MP3 use should be held to a minimum.

10. Portable two-way radio use should be held to a minimum.

11. Eating/drinking should be held to a minimum.

12. Reading/writing is not allowed while operating a vehicle.
13. Tobacco use is prohibited in all Southern Miss owned vehicles.
14. Firearms are prohibited in university-owned vehicles unless they are required for the performance of the official job duties necessitating the travel.
15. Animals are not allowed in university-owned vehicles unless they are transported in the conduct of official university business or are required by a passenger’s disability.
16. Cargo must be secured to prevent items from moving about in the vehicle or being thrown out onto the roadway.
17. Personal property in university-owned vehicles is not insured for loss or damage by Southern Miss. Coverage for these items may be provided by the employee’s personal insurance. Drivers are encouraged to discuss such issues with their own insurance representative and should consider the addition of a “rider” on their own personal policy.
18. University-owned vehicles affect the university’s image and so does the operation of those vehicles. The public expects safe and courteous drivers in the vehicles provided. Unsafe or aggressive driving can create negative public impressions and result in bodily injury, death or property damage. Failure to comply with the following may lead to a reduction or termination of driving privileges:
   a. Speeding, improper passing, failure to yield right-of-way, tailgating, other violations of law and improper conduct (such as improper gesturing, language and use of horn) are prohibited.
   b. Drivers should always attempt to adjust to road and weather conditions and should always use vehicle’s safety devices such as lights, wipers, turn signals, etc.
19. Drivers are prohibited from the operation of a motor vehicle while mentally or physically impaired.
   a. The use of illegal drugs is prohibited and the use of alcohol is prohibited during the period prior to or during the operation of a vehicle.
   b. The use of prescription and non-prescription medicine should be monitored carefully to ensure that it does not impact the driver’s abilities to safely operate the vehicle.
   c. Medical conditions or illnesses, fatigue, and emotional state should be monitored carefully to ensure that they do not impact the driver’s abilities to safely operate the vehicle.
20. Appropriate actions should be taken to prevent collisions from parking and backing operations. Drivers should consider the use of observers to guide the driver, parking so as to avoid the need to back into traffic, walking around vehicle prior to backing, observing other drivers in crowded parking lots.
21. Vehicles should be locked when not in use and out of sight of Southern Miss employees. Keys should never be left in the ignition when the driver is not present.
22. Commuting: Unless specifically authorized by the appropriate Vice President and/or President, drivers are not permitted to use university-owned vehicles for commuting purposes. Commuting shall mean driving a university-owned vehicle to and from an employee’s work place and residence on a regular basis. Taking a vehicle home one evening to enable an early departure the next day is not considered commuting.
   a. Commuting is only authorized when it is the most cost-effective or practical alternative. Any decision to authorize the use of a Southern Miss vehicle for commuting purposes shall be based upon a determination that the university is the main beneficiary of the arrangement, such as in the case of an individual having a vehicle available for emergency response. Southern Miss vehicles may not be used in
a commuting capacity solely by virtue of an employee’s position. A commute vehicle cannot be part of a compensation or administrative package.

b. If it is determined that a vehicle is needed for commuting purposes, the department shall submit a letter to the Internal Auditor which clearly identifies the vehicle, the employee and the extenuating circumstances which necessitate the authorization for commuting. The letter shall be approved by the appropriate Vice President prior to submitting to the Internal Auditor. It should be noted that the use of a Southern Miss vehicle for commuting purposes should be considered a taxable fringe benefit.

B. Authorized Drivers: Only Southern Miss employees, students and other authorized individuals with a valid driver’s license may drive a university-owned vehicle.

1. All employees must be at least 18 years old and have a valid Mississippi driver’s license or a valid driver’s license from a contiguous state (MS Code § 25-9-153). Other authorized drivers must be at least 18 years old and have a valid driver’s license issued in the state or country of residence. An International Driver’s Permit from the country of residence must also be required of drivers possessing a valid license from another country. Likewise, university personnel traveling abroad should obtain an International Driver’s Permit prior to travel.

2. Drivers shall hold the proper license for driving the vehicle they have been assigned. All driver’s licenses must be of the appropriate classification and have any required endorsements needed for operating the vehicle(s) assigned. Classifications and endorsements are listed below:
   a. Class R – Regular License. No person shall drive or operate a motor vehicle other than a motorcycle upon the highways of the State of Mississippi without first securing an operator’s license to drive on the highways of the state.
   b. A motorcycle endorsement may be issued to any person who holds a valid Mississippi driver’s license and meets the other requirements for such endorsement.
   c. A restricted motorcycle operator’s license may be issued to any applicant who fulfills all the requirements necessary to obtain a Mississippi operator’s license that may be applicable to the operation of a motorcycle. Such license shall entitle the holder thereof to operate a motorcycle, and no other motor vehicle, upon the highways of this state.
   d. Class A. Any combination of vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of twenty-six thousand one (26,001) pounds or more, provided the gross vehicle weight rating of the vehicle or vehicles being towed is in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds.
   e. Class B. Any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of twenty-six thousand one (26,001) pounds or more, and any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds.
   f. Class C. Any single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of less than twenty-six thousand one (26,001) pounds or any such vehicle towing a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating not in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds comprising:
      i. Vehicles designed to transport sixteen (16) or more passengers, including the driver; and
ii. Vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials which are required to be placarded under the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, 49 USCS Appx., Section 1801 et seq.
g. Class D. All other vehicles or combination of vehicles which are not included in Class A, Class B, or Class C and for which a commercial license is required to be issued as provided by Section 63-1-43, Mississippi Code of 1972.
h. Commercial driver's licenses may be issued with the following endorsements and restrictions:
   i. "H" authorizes the driver to drive a vehicle transporting hazardous materials;
   ii. "K" restricts the driver to vehicles not equipped with air brakes;
   iii. "T" authorizes driving double and triple trailers;
   iv. "P" authorizes driving vehicles carrying passengers;
   v. "N" authorizes driving tank vehicles;
   vi. "X" represents a combination of hazardous materials and tank vehicle endorsements;
   vii. "S" restricts the driver to school buses being operated for the purpose of transporting pupils to and from school or to school-related functions and/or to all other vehicles not requiring a commercial driver's license; and
   viii. "I" restricts driving which requires a commercial license to intrastate driving only.
3. Drivers must be mentally and physically capable of the safe operation of the vehicle(s) assigned.
4. All drivers will be required on an annual basis to sign a Vehicle Use Agreement. The agreement contains a provision signifying that the driver has been given a copy of the fleet policies and procedures and that he/she understands and agrees to them. The Vehicle Use Agreement also contains space for the driver’s license number. The document will be kept in Procurement and Contract Services, but a copy should be kept in the employee file.
5. Whenever a driver of a university vehicle has his/her driver’s license revoked, restricted or suspended, the driver is required to immediately notify his/her supervisor. Any employee whose driver’s license has been revoked or suspended shall not be allowed to operate any motor vehicle on Southern Miss business while such suspension or revocation is in effect, this includes personal vehicles.
   a. If an employee uses a personal vehicle for university business while their driver’s license is revoked or suspended, the employee assumes all risk associated with the use of the vehicle. The university’s insurance will not apply to an employee operating a vehicle without a valid driver’s license.
6. Departments shall not allow employees to travel, as drivers of a vehicle, who are refused use of a university-owned vehicle due to an unacceptable driving record. If travel, as drivers of a vehicle, is unavoidable, such drivers may use their personal vehicles and be reimbursed at the state approved mileage rate.
7. Operators of emergency vehicles such as patrol cars, ambulances, fire trucks, etc. shall only operate the vehicles after receiving proper training and shall hold the proper license for operation of the specific vehicle, if applicable.
8. Operators of special vehicles such as motorcycles, boom trucks, dump trucks, tow trucks, etc. shall hold the proper license for operation of the specific vehicle, if applicable.

9. All van drivers shall review the IHL Van Safety Recommendations (Appendix D) and shall comply with the requirements set forth. A copy of Appendix D, signed by the driver shall be included in the driver’s file.

10. Documentation of driver qualifications and driving records should be maintained by the department for each driver. Drivers must therefore agree to abide by the university’s policies and procedures and to provide the necessary information or consent to allow the gathering of necessary information. Authorized driver files should contain the following:
   a. Authorized vehicle use agreement, signed by driver and supervisor. See Appendix A.
   b. Copy of current driver’s license.
   c. Copies of driver medical exam results as required (CDL).
   d. Copies of drug and alcohol test records as required (CDL).
   e. Documentation of motor vehicle record (MVR) checks.
   f. Training/testing records.
   g. Documentation of any other form of periodic driver performance evaluation, public feedback, citations, or accident reports.
   h. Any other information related to the driver’s ability or inability to operate a motor vehicle as related to employment.

C. Misuse of Southern Miss owned vehicles: University-owned vehicles shall be driven only by Southern Miss employees, students and other authorized individuals and used for official university business only.

1. Use is not authorized for unofficial travel or tasks, the transport of unauthorized persons or items, or the performance of tasks outside the rated capacity of the vehicle. Some examples of unauthorized use are but are not limited to:
   a. Sightseeing or trips for pleasure unless the trip is part of the official agenda for a business conference.
   b. Transporting family members, dependents or friends to school, daycare, medical appointments, social events or other personal activities.
   c. Conducting other personal business outside the employee’s scope of employment.

2. Operators of university-owned vehicles are charged with an ethical responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional and prudent business manner. This basically means that employees should not engage in any activity that would violate the obligation of trust given with the privilege of operating a university-owned vehicle. Inappropriate activities or misuse include but are not limited to:
   a. Parking any state owned vehicle at a compromising establishment.
   b. Exceeding the posted speed limit.
   c. Failure to take proper care of the vehicle (washing, vacuuming, routine maintenance).
   d. Using the vehicle for personal use.
   e. Tobacco use in university-owned vehicles. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in all university-owned vehicles.
3. University-owned vehicles are highly visible to the public and their use is scrutinized. Thus, poor driving manners and inappropriate use reflect on all Southern Miss employees. Operators should exercise prudence and courtesy. If misuse has occurred it is the responsibility of the employee to immediately bring the misuse issue to the attention of the department head. The department head shall report all such instances to the Internal Auditor. The following information should be provided.
   a. name, address and telephone number of complainant, if known;
   b. summary of complaint;
   c. name and address of driver.
4. The neglect or misuse of any university owned motor vehicle shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action as well as forfeiture of ability to operate a university-owned vehicle.

V. MAINTENANCE AND CARE OF UNIVERSITY-OWNED VEHICLES

A. Maintenance of Southern Miss property is a vital responsibility when considering the best use of the tax and tuition dollar. All departments are urged to establish a written procedure which shall describe the planned maintenance program for its fleet. This policy shall include mechanisms to assure proper, timely preventive maintenance (oil changes, lubrication, etc) as well as mechanisms to track costs to allow management to make proper decisions concerning the continued operation of the vehicle. At a minimum, departments should follow the manufacturer’s recommended maintenance schedule for each vehicle. All maintenance and repairs performed on Southern Miss owned vehicles must be documented and retained for the life of the vehicle. The maintenance and upkeep of fleet vehicles is the responsibility of the Vehicle Administrator to which the vehicle is assigned. Departments are encouraged to develop a specific vehicle maintenance procedure or schedule for each class of vehicles operated. The Vice President shall enforce the procedures and schedules to ensure routine service is completed as scheduled.

B. Vehicle Warranty Tracking: The Vehicle Administrator shall track vehicle and parts warranties to achieve maximum savings on maintenance and repairs. A good warranty tracking system can prevent the university from paying for repairs or parts that are still covered under manufacturer warranties.

C. Vehicle Checks: The Vehicle Administrator is responsible for ensuring periodic checks of the following to ensure safe operation of university-owned vehicles.
   1. Engine fluid levels.
   2. Tire pressure and wear, to include the spare tire
   3. Seat belts
   4. Interior and exterior appearance

D. Each department shall schedule and complete the annual state inspection at a state approved maintenance facility for each vehicle assigned to their department. Annual inspection stickers are available through the Physical Plant.

E. Periodic safety inspections should also be completed on a regular basis as needed. Safety inspections should be completed not less than once every 3000 miles. See Inspection Checklist (Appendix E) for a guide on the areas to consider during the inspection.
F. All departments should use Physical Plant for small repairs, oil changes, oil filter changes and routine services.

G. Emergency Equipment: Vehcles should be equipped with appropriate emergency equipment for use in the event of mechanical failure, crash, or other circumstance that results in a disable vehicle. Items may include but are not limited to: warning triangles, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, water, blankets, and other equipment depending on vehicle type and use.

H. Vehicle modifications such as radio equipment, towing equipment, security devices, navigational devices, etc. shall only be installed by a qualified individual. The items being added or modified should not detract from the performance or safety of the vehicle. The Vehicle Administrator shall ensure that a list of all such modifications, including the date work was completed and the cost of the modification, are included in the vehicle file.

I. Vehicle Appearance: It is the department’s responsibility to ensure the vehicle represents the University appropriately.
   1. Vehicles should be cleaned inside and out as appropriate for the intended use of the vehicle. Passenger vehicles that drive up and down the roads of the university, city and state, obviously would need to be kept cleaner than a truck that is used on a farm in the delta. Common sense should rule. If in doubt, clean it.
   2. It is the department’s responsibility to ensure that scrapes, dents, and other visible damage is properly repaired. Vehicles should not appear to be in disrepair.

J. Decals: No decals, bumper stickers, commercial advertising, or political stickers of any kind may be placed on any university-owned vehicle without prior approval from the appropriate Vice President.

K. Fuel: Fuel for university-owned vehicles can be purchased in two different ways: (1) the Fuelman card and (2) on campus through the Physical Plant.
   It is recommended that departments use the state contract for fuel access card services for the acquisition of fuel. The program offers reduced rates on fuel as well as management reports that provide information to assist the department in better managing its fleet resources. There are a number of Fuelman locations throughout the state.
   1. Fuelman applications can be found on the Procurement Services website at www.usm.edu/procurement/forms.html. The completed application should be sent to Procurement and Contract Services, Bond Hall 214, Box 5003. Procurement and Contract Services will order the card(s) from Fuelman.
   2. All cards will be sent to Procurement and Contract Services then forwarded to the requesting department. The authorized drivers and PIN numbers will be assigned when the card(s) arrives.
   3. Each vehicle should have an individual, unique Fuelman card assigned to it. The use of “spare” cards is discouraged.
   4. Fuelman cards should always be secured inside the assigned vehicle in a locked glove box or kept in a secure, locked location in the department office.
   5. Authorized drivers will be assigned a unique PIN for use with the Fuelman card(s). Individual PINs should be kept private and separate from the Fuelman card(s) to prevent unauthorized use of the Fuelman card(s).
6. Each Fuelman card will be set with the default transaction limits listed below. Higher transaction limits will be considered on a case-by-case basis if need is determined based on intended use of the vehicle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Type</th>
<th>Fuel Type</th>
<th>Tank Limit</th>
<th>Daily Gallons</th>
<th>Weekly Gallons</th>
<th>Weekly Supplies</th>
<th>Weekly Misc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sedan &amp; Small Truck</td>
<td>Regular Only</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van &amp; Truck</td>
<td>Regular Only</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Regular Only</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Weekly invoices should be sent to Accounts Payable along with the original register receipts.
8. Weekly exception reports will be sent via e-mail to department Fleet Managers. An explanation of all Fuelman exceptions must be submitted to Procurement and Contract Services within one week of receipt of notice. Failure to comply may result in the cancellation of the Fuelman card.
9. Only regular unleaded gasoline or diesel should be used. No higher-octane gas is to be purchased unless it is determined that these fuels are not appropriate for a specific vehicle. If any fuel other than regular unleaded or diesel is used there should be documentation from a reliable third party (vehicle manufacturer, independent testing laboratory, etc) indicating the requirement and this documentation should be placed in the vehicle file.
10. Department fleet managers are required to notify when employee is terminated so their PIN number can be cancelled.
11. When a vehicle is disposed of, the department fleet manager is responsible for returning the Fuelman card to Procurement and Contract Services, Bond Hall 214, Box 5003.

L. Accidents: All drivers and Vehicle Administrators should be aware of the correct steps to follow and the proper forms to complete in the case of an accident or other reportable incident.
1. How to Deal with an Automobile Accident: All inventoried vehicles owned by The University of Southern Mississippi carry liability insurance coverage. If a Southern Miss vehicle causes injury or damage to a third party, this policy may pay for damages to the third party. The steps below must be followed when an accident occurs:
   a. Call the police and obtain an accident report.
   b. Write down the name, driver’s license number, vehicle tag number and insurance carrier for all other parties involved in the accident. This information is necessary to complete insurance claim forms and is often marked out of the accident report copies from the police department.
   c. Immediately notify the following university employees of the accident:
      (1) The department head responsible for the vehicle
      (2) Southern Miss Physical Plant, Transportation Services, 601.266.4465
      (3) Physical Plant Accounting, 601.266.4425
   d. Do not make statements except to answer questions asked by law enforcement officials.
e. Send copies of the accident report to Physical Plant Accounting, Box 5058.

2. How to Deal with an Accident NOT Involving an Automobile: The university also carries liability coverage through American Federated General Agency (AMFED) for damages caused by weed eaters, mowers, tractors and other non-automotive equipment. The steps below must be followed when an accident occurs involving this type of equipment:
   a. Immediately notify Human Resources, 601.266.4050, of the accident.

VI. VEHICLE RENTALS

A. Southern Miss uses the state contract vendor for renting vehicles. The state contract vendor information, rental rates and rental procedures are outlined at www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-adma-pur-000-005.

VII. PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

A. Authorization: University officers and employees may be authorized to travel on university business using their private automobile. If going out of state or attending a convention, the driver should receive written approval to use a privately owned vehicle prior to beginning the trip. The departments are responsible for periodic review of use of personal vehicles and ensuring that it provides the most efficient and economic choice when compared to the use of a university-owned vehicle or a rental.

B. Insurance: Owners should have current proof of insurance in accordance with state law. Losses occurring to a third party while conducting official business with prior approval are subject to protections provided by the Mississippi Tort Claims Act § 46-11-1 et. al.

C. Expense: University employees that are authorized to travel on official state business in their private automobile will be reimbursed at the same rate, based on mileage, as federal employees as determined by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration. All other operational and maintenance expenses are the responsibility of the owner.

D. Safety: If authorized for official use, privately owned vehicles will be operated and maintained in accordance with the safety related policies and procedures established for university-owned vehicles.

VIII. REPLACEMENT/DISPOSAL OF UNIVERSITY-OWNED VEHICLES

A. The following guidelines provide minimum replacement suggestions for routine vehicle replacement. It is the department’s responsibility to ensure that the university maximizes the value of its available resources.

1. Attainment of these goals should minimize fleet capital and operating costs. In general, most vehicles should be replaced when they reach 8 years (96 months) of service or 120,000 miles whichever comes first. However, there may be circumstances in which vehicles may be replaced sooner (such as excessive maintenance or repair costs) or retained longer (such as unusually low maintenance costs or low yearly mileage). Agencies may make this determination on a case-by-case basis, using these guidelines as a starting point for their deliberations. Before disposal or sale of any vehicle, the department shall make a determination that the lifetime use
and mileage of the vehicle has been maximized and it would not be feasible for another Southern Miss department to use this vehicle. The following table details the specific replacement goals for types of vehicles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle Type</th>
<th>Replacement Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedans and wagons</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light trucks/sport utility vehicles (SUVs) (8,600 GVWR or below)</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger vans</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cargo vans</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Disposition Vehicles
1. Transfer to Surplus Property: Vehicles may be transferred to Surplus Property for removal from department inventory. Complete a transfer form with approval from department head. Contact Property Accounting for further instructions on removing vehicle from department premises.
2. Sale by Sealed Bid: Vehicles may be sold through sealed bid upon approval from department head. Contact Procurement and Contract Services, Bond Hall 214, Box 5003, or call them at 266-4131 for further instructions. University and other State of Mississippi employees are strictly prohibited from bidding on state-owned equipment (Section 25-4-103(3) (b), Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated).
3. Sale by Auction: Equipment auctions are periodically conducted by Receiving & Property Control. Vehicles may be added to the auctions upon approval from department head. Information is distributed to departments several weeks prior to auction date. Sale of vehicles is allowed at consignment auctions provided conditions are met to satisfy disposition requirements. Contact Procurement and Contract Services for further instructions. University and other State of Mississippi employees are strictly prohibited from bidding on state-owned equipment (Section 25-4-103(3) (b), Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated).
4. Cannibalization of Vehicles: Property should not be cannibalized unless it has no reasonable prospect for sale or use as serviceable property without major repair or alterations, but is has some value in excess of its scrap value. Cannibalized property must be deleted from the university’s master listing when it loses its identity. If the remainder of the property has no recovery value, it may then be discarded. Property to be deleted must be cleared through the University Salvage Committee and the Property Manager before action will be taken to remove it from the master inventory file.
5. Missing/Stolen: The department is required to notify local law enforcement authorities immediately upon the discovery of vehicle theft. The department should also notify Property Accounting. Once a reasonable length of time has been allowed for the investigation, complete a Property Affidavit. In the event that the vehicle is found or recovered, Property Accounting should be notified immediately so that the vehicle can be added back to inventory.
6. Transfer to State-Funded Agency/Local Government Entity: Vehicles can be transferred to a state-funded agency or local government entity (public school, police department, fire department, etc.) at no cost or with a negotiated price agreement with the
agency/entity. Prior approval from unit head and vice president is required. Departments wishing to transfer surplus equipment to a state-funded agency should contact Property Accounting. Transfer of equipment to another state-funded agency without prior approval is strictly prohibited.

**Review**

The Director of Procurement and Contract Services is responsible for the review of this policy every four years (or whenever circumstances require immediate review).

**Forms/Instructions**

N/A

**Appendices**


**Related Information**

N/A

**History**

11/08/10: Updated.
11/01/11: Formatted for Institutional Policies website.
02/20/13: Formatted for template. Minor editing throughout.
**Amendments:** Month, Day, Year – summary of changes
Authorization

FLEET MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES
ADMA-PUR-000-018

As the Responsible Officer, I have reviewed this policy and believe it represents the current policy.

[Signature]
Responsible Officer

15 MAR 2013
Date