

DIOCESE OF DALLAS

Vehicle Safety Policy

## Vehicle Safety Policy

### Definitions

“Entity” means any diocesan entity (*i.e.*, Pastoral Center, parish, parochial school, diocesan high school, seminary, Catholic Charities of Dallas, Inc, St. Joseph’s Residence, Inc., Texas Catholic Publishing, Calvary Hill Cemetery and/or The Dallas Parochial League).

“Entity Vehicle” means any owned, non-owned, rented or leased vehicle being used in furtherance of Entity activities.

“Private Vehicle” means any non-owned privately owned vehicle being used in furtherance of Entity activities.

### Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to standardize vehicle safety and procedures used by Entities throughout the diocese.

**This policy does not include drivers for, or vehicles considered Buses (vehicles capable of carrying 16 or more passengers including the driver). For these types of vehicles, the Bus Transportation Policy applies.**

### Policy

#### Drivers of Entity Vehicles or Private Vehicles

- Drivers must be 21 years of age or older.
- Drivers must possess a current, valid, unrestricted, Texas driver’s license for the type of vehicle they will be operating and no physical or medical condition that would impair his/her ability to operate the vehicle safely..
- No driver will be allowed to operate a vehicle on behalf of any diocesan entity who has had any of the following citations or convictions in the past three years:
  1. Operating a vehicle during a period of license suspension, revocation or forfeiture
  2. Any offense involving alcohol or drugs
  3. Hit and run accident
  4. Failure to report an accident
  5. Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle
  6. Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
  7. Evading a Peace Officer
  8. Speeding more than 20 miles per hour over the posted limit
  9. Negligent, Careless, or Reckless driving
  10. A combined total of three or more accidents and/or moving violations
- Drivers shall fully and unconditionally comply with all applicable State traffic laws, regulations, and ordinances at all times while operating the vehicle.
- All drivers of Entity Vehicles are expected to take the online defensive driving course **Be Smart-Drive Safe**.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted to be used by the driver while operating a motor vehicle.

A **Driver Add Form** must be submitted to the Office of Risk Management prior to any new employee or volunteer operating Entity Vehicles.

### **Driving Records**

Entities must conduct a Driving Record Check by ordering a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) through Accutrak on all employees and volunteers operating Entity Vehicles prior to the individual operating the vehicle. This should be maintained in the employee personnel file. Drivers whose driving record reflects any violations listed above may not operate Entity Vehicles.

### **General**

The use of 11-15 passenger vans for the transportation of individuals is strictly prohibited. This prohibition applies whether the van is an Entity Vehicle or Private Vehicle.

Vehicles must have a valid vehicle inspection sticker and be in safe mechanical condition at all times, e.g., good tires and brakes, windshields free from cracks or breaks, properly functioning turn signals and lights, equipped with seat belts (one operational seat belt per occupant), equipped with child passenger restraints when required.(devices such as approved car seats and approved booster seats)

Each Entity will implement a quarterly vehicle preventive maintenance and inspection program in addition to the manufacturer's operation and maintenance recommendations. Vehicle maintenance logs and vehicle inspections must be maintained for the duration of ownership of diocesan-owned vehicles.

All Entity Vehicles must be equipped with a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and a road safety kit. Vehicles should also have a current Insurance ID Card and Accident Report Form in the glove compartment.

### **Accident Reporting**

If an accident occurs:

1. Obtain medical assistance, if needed, at the scene as soon as possible.
2. Contact local police, sheriff, or highway patrol authorities.
3. Exchange driver, vehicle and insurance information.
4. Report the accident to the Entity immediately.
5. Complete the **Accident Report Form**.

**DO NOT ADMIT FAULT**

### **Use of Private Vehicles by Employees or Volunteers**

All Private Vehicles used on behalf of the Entity must be in safe operating condition and insured. The vehicle must have a valid and current registration, license plates, and proof of insurance card. The insurance company of the owner of the vehicle will be the primary insurance carrier. The minimum liability limits for privately owned vehicles is \$100,000/\$300,000. A **Volunteer Driver Form** must be completed and kept on file at the Entity for each driver / vehicle.