



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 77.08, **Student Travel Policy**

AUTHORITY: This policy is required by Section 51.950 of the Texas Education Code.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to help minimize the risks of liability connected with motor vehicle travel by TTUHSC El Paso faculty, staff and students. This HSCEP OP regulates any travel undertaken by one or more students presently enrolled at TTUHSC El Paso to reach an organized activity or event that is located more than 25 miles from TTUHSC El Paso or traveling abroad. This HSCEP OP applies to any pre-approved event or activity which is initiated, organized, sponsored and/or funded by TTUHSC El Paso, is undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by TTUHSC El Paso or is a required event or activity by a TTUHSC El Paso registered student organization. **This HSCEP OP does not create a claim or cause of action against TTUHSC El Paso or its employees, and TTUHSC El Paso retains all defenses to any such action including, but not limited to, sovereign immunity.**

Modes of travel by students to events or activities as defined above include:

1. personally-owned vehicles;
2. commercial vehicles, including but not limited to rental cars, vans, and chartered buses;
3. commercial airlines; and,
4. use of TTUHSC E Paso-owned vehicle

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed by July 1 of each even-numbered year (ENY) by the Assistant Vice President of Student Services and Student Engagement, Managing Director of Payment Services, Assistant Vice President of Facilities Support Services, and the Office of General Counsel, with recommendations for revision forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chief Financial Officer or their designees by August 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. Generally Applicable Definitions:

- a. Student: A Student is anyone currently enrolled in a TTUHSC El Paso educational program.
- b. Department Sponsor: A department sponsor of a student activity is an academic or administrative unit supporting the planning and/or resources for associated student travel.
- c. Student Organization: A student organization is an active registered student organization in good standing with the office of Student Services and Student Engagement (SSSE).
- d. Advisor: An advisor is a faculty or full-time staff member selected by a student organization who agrees to volunteer to assist the group. Advisors participate in required trainings and are listed on the registered student organization's [TTUHSCEP Campus Connect](#) roster.
- e. Authorized Passenger: Any employee, sponsor, student, or prospective student being recruited to participate in a specific TTUHSC El Paso program or activity who is listed on a travel request. In all such cases, reasonable efforts shall be made by the responsible department to ensure that each participant executes a [Student Liability Release Form \(Attachment A\)](#).

- f. University-Related Activities: University-related activities are those activities that are consistent with TTUHSC El Paso's mission and that are approved in writing by the appropriate administrative unit. This includes activities organized or sponsored by TTUHSC El Paso, funded by TTUHSC El Paso, and using vehicles owned or leased by TTUHSC El Paso. All registered student organization events must be submitted and approved in [TTUHSCEP Campus Connect](#) prior to travel.
2. To ensure that student travel related activities are within the scope of TTUHSC El Paso's mission, and that student safety issues are properly addressed, travel participation under this policy must be approved in advance in writing by an appropriate administrator.
- a. Faculty, staff, or registered student organizations requesting authorization for student travel must submit a [Student Travel Request Form](#) at least ten (10) working days in advance of travel or event.
- b. Requirements include;
- (1) A list of participants, local address, phone, and the names and phone number for emergency contacts.
 - (2) Name and phone number of responsible TTUHSC El Paso employee (Advisor or Sponsor) who will be available to student(s) at all times for the term of the approved travel.
 - (3) Copies of drivers licenses for any students operating vehicles.
 - (4) Completed and signed [Student Liability Release Form \(Attachment A\)](#) for each participant.
 - (5) Completed and signed Authorization for [Emergency Medical Treatment \(Attachment B\)](#) form for each participant
- c. Faculty, staff or students leading trips shall carry emergency contact and authorization for medical treatment forms for the term of the travel.
- d. When student services fees are requested, a request should be submitted in [TTUHSCEP Campus Connect](#) sixty (60) days prior to the date of travel for approval by the Campus Activities Committee.
3. **Travel Using University-Owned, Leased, Rented or Loaned Vehicles:**
- a. Only persons who are acting within the course and scope of authorized university-related activities are permitted to use TTUHSC El Paso vehicles, owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to, the system or its components. See [HSCEP OP 63.01, TTUHSC El Paso Vehicle Rental](#) and [HSCEP OP 63.03 Vehicle Fleet Management Program](#) for information about the authorization, procedures and use of TTUHSC El Paso vehicles or contact TTUHSC El Paso Office of Vehicle Fleet Management.
- b. Because of the risks of personal injury, it is required that only those persons whose names appear on the approved driver's list be considered or allowed to use university-owned motor vehicles. To request a driver be considered for approval and addition to the approved drivers list, the following are required:
- (1) Qualifications for drivers of all motor vehicles owned, rented, leased by, or loaned to TTUHSC El Paso are as follows:
 - (a) Must possess a valid Texas driver license or license from another state or District of Columbia appropriate for the class of vehicle being operated;
 - (b) Must have held a valid driver license, as defined in (a) above, for at least two years and have attained 18 years of age. The two-year experience requirement

may be satisfied by providing an English translation of the official driving record from the individual's home country, or the equivalent thereof;

- (c) Must comply with annual driver record information check (or its equivalent);
 - (d) Must achieve an "approved" status using the [Driver Rating Evaluation Form](#);
 - (e) Must report all driving violations or convictions or any license revocations, suspensions or reinstatements, following revocations or suspensions to their immediate supervisor within five business days of the occurrence. This includes violations, convictions, suspensions, and revocations that result from driving a privately-owned vehicle. Approval to drive a university-owned vehicle may not be granted for one year following reinstatement of a revoked license, and;
 - (f) Must not have had any convictions for driving while intoxicated, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or reckless driving in the five years immediately preceding the date of the [Driver Approval Request \(Attachment C\)](#);
- (2) Additional qualifications for drivers of vans equipped for 15 passengers or extended cargo:
- (a) Must be at least 20 years of age and held a valid license, as defined in (1)(a) above for at least two years;
 - (b) Must successfully complete a 15-passenger driver training course;
 - (c) Must complete a 15-passenger refresher training annually;
 - (d) Must not have more than one moving violation in the last 18 months;
 - (e) Must successfully pass an annual drug screen; and
 - (f) Must complete the [15-Passenger Van Inspection Checklist \(Attachment D\)](#) for each trip. The inspection checklist shall be kept in the vehicle for the duration of the trip.

4. **Operator Conduct.**

Any operator of a TTUHSC El Paso vehicle must take 15-minute break every 3 hours and may drive no more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period. When the vehicle driven is a van with passengers, a second person must remain awake at all times and must ride in the front passenger seat.

- a. Those that operate a TTUHSC El Paso vehicle represent TTUHSC El Paso to the general public. The image conveyed affects TTUHSC El Paso; therefore, an operator:
 - (1) DO NOT use TTUHSC El Paso vehicles for personal transportation or business;
 - (2) DO NOT allow alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs to be consumed or illegally transported in any TTUHSC El Paso vehicle;
 - (3) DO NOT smoke or allow any passenger to smoke in any TTUHSC El Paso vehicle. TTUHSC El Paso prohibits tobacco use in a state vehicle;
 - (4) DO NOT text message, read or compose emails, or use a handheld cell phone while operating the vehicle. A Bluetooth or other hand-free device is acceptable;
 - (5) DO NOT pick up hitchhikers or transport any other unauthorized passenger(s) unless authorized by the institution;
 - (6) DO NOT allow the vehicle to become unnecessarily dirty and present an unfavorable image to the general public;
 - (7) DO NOT allow the number of passengers to exceed the authorized capacity of the

vehicle (the capacity of a vehicle can typically be determined by counting the number of available seat belts);

- (8) DO NOT operate the vehicle unless all occupants are wearing the appropriate restraints;
- (9) DO NOT modify the vehicle in any form or fashion. Including but not limited to additional lighting, emblems, exterior carrying equipment or devices for additional payload, interior finishes or furnishings;
- (10) DO observe all traffic rules and regulations;
- (11) DO drive carefully, safely, and courteously;
- (12) DO require driver and all passengers to use seat belts and other appropriate occupant restraints at all times the vehicle is being operated.

- b. When a vehicle is damaged through operator misuse or operated by a person under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, the department head is responsible for obtaining a complete statement of the circumstances and a copy of the police report for the appropriate administrative action. Citations, fines and penalties for all parking and traffic violations will be the personal responsibility of the operator.
- c. Operators shall use common sense when driving. For road trips of 100 miles or more, driving shall be shared, if possible, and frequent breaks shall be taken.

5. **Collision Reporting.**

The following procedures shall be followed whenever a University vehicle is involved in a collision, regardless of the extent of damage:

- a. Stop immediately and notify local police so that an official report can document the collision;
- b. Take necessary steps to prevent another collision;
- c. Contact a doctor, ambulance, or emergency medical team, if necessary. Traveling Parties shall remain with any injured person until help arrives;
- d. Obtain names, addresses, or telephone numbers of all witnesses;
- e. Provide all required information to the law enforcement officer;
- f. Notify the department head or supervisor. If the operator is unable to contact or reach the department head or supervisor, the operator shall contact the Texas Tech El Paso Police Department; and
- g. Refer to [HSCEP OP 63.03, Vehicle Fleet Management Program](#) for the completion of required vehicle accident documentation, summarized in the Vehicle Fleet Management Handbook.

- 6. An operator may be asked to submit to a "for cause" screen in compliance with [HSCEP OP 70.39, Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#), when there is any accident causing injury to anyone, damage to property of TTUHSC El Paso or others, or when the operator received a traffic citation as a result of an on-the-job motor vehicle accident. If the operator refuses the screen, the individual will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- 7. **Travel by Commercial or Charter Aircraft:** All students traveling on official TTUHSC El Paso business or activities will use only those aircraft and aircraft operators that meet the requirements set forth below. The travel regulations contained in the Texas Appropriations Act and other applicable laws will be followed by TTUHSC El Paso.

TTUHSC El Paso will only use aircraft and aircraft operators that are flight worthy and are certified and operate under Subchapters F & G, Parts 91, 119, 121, 125 or 135 as applicable in Chapter 1, Federal Aviation Regulations, 14 Code of Federal Regulations (the "C.F.R."). In addition, all aircraft used pursuant to this provision must be piloted, at a minimum, by pilots that are fully qualified and insured in the aircraft being flown, possessing a commercial pilot certificate with instrument rating.

8. **Travel Using Personal Vehicles:** TTUHSC El Paso recognizes that individuals occasionally use personal vehicles while engaged in TTUHSC El Paso-related activities on campus and in the local area. Because personal automobile insurance will be looked to first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their personal vehicles while conducting university business shall be made aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use. No university coverage for personal injuries is available to students if they drive their personal vehicles on university-related activities as defined herein above.
9. **Expenses and Reimbursement:** Mileage costs related to any significant use of personal vehicles to conduct university-related business unrelated to required academic experiences, (e.g., clinical rotations, clerkships, etc.) may be reimbursed to students upon appropriate approval of the fund manager for the sponsoring department or organization. The travel office shall be contacted for additional information. All other reimbursement of travel expenses must follow [HSCEP OP 79.06](#).
10. **Use of Personal Vehicles Not Required:** No individual shall be required to use a personal vehicle to perform university-related activities, with the exception of travel to and from clinical affiliation sites.
11. **Policy Concerning Student Releases and Medical Authorization:** Each student who travels by any form of transportation to participate in a university-related activity, including but not limited to an academically-related field trip, course, competition, contest, or non-academic activity, must, prior to such activity, execute a copy of the [Student Liability Release Form \(Attachment A\)](#) and the [Emergency Medical Treatment \(Attachment B\)](#) form which are attached to this policy.
12. **International Travel by Students:** Students traveling abroad for any TTUHSC El Paso-related reason (e.g., conferences, research, competition, community service, mission work, etc.) in any status (i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate, graduate, supported by scholarships, assistantships, institutional, etc.) must abide and complete the required forms through the Office of Global Health and Societies (OGHS), [HSCEP OP 10.29, Global Health Programs for Students](#) and [HSCEP OP 79.04, Foreign Travel](#) regarding procedures for Pre-Departure 4.(a), 1; 2 (a-e) and Exit Counseling 5 (1) a-c. Faculty Sponsors and Advisors must abide with and complete the required forms in [HSCEP OP 79.04, Attachment A, Foreign Travel Pre-Approval](#).

Students are not permitted to travel to a nation that is subject to a Travel Warning issued by the U.S. Department of State. To determine the travel advisory level assigned by the U.S. Department of State visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>.

In the event the U.S. Department of State issues a travel advisory to which a student will be traveling, OGHS will contact the student immediately. If the country has been placed on the Travel Warning list, the student must cancel the trip. Students should also be aware of and comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travel Health Notice of Warning Level 3 (Avoid Nonessential Travel), available at https://ttuhscep.edu/opp/_documents/79/op7904.pdf.

In the event an emergency were to occur while a student is abroad, procedures for Planned Response to Emergencies Abroad will be followed in accordance with [HSCEP OP 10.29, Attachment B](#).

13. **Guidelines Concerning Safe Travel Practices:**
 - a. All student travelers are bound by the TTUHSC El Paso Code of Professional and Academic Conduct.
 - b. Each administrative unit approving university-related travel, especially travel that involves students, shall promulgate guidelines that encourage safe driving and minimize risks of injury during that travel.
 - c. Registered student organizations are free to make such off-campus trips as are deemed worthwhile by the membership and sponsors/advisors of the organization. Participation in

off-campus trips and activities is at the students' own risk. If personal injury or accident should occur to students or other persons during such activities, TTUHSC El Paso will assume no responsibility, financial or otherwise.

- d. Departmental sponsors, faculty/staff advisors, and organization officers shall take all possible precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of all persons participating in off-campus activities.
- e. There are no official excused class absences for students who participate in off-campus trips sponsored by registered student organizations. Students will be responsible for making their own individual arrangements in advance with instructors for course work missed while participating in an off-campus trip. Each school and/or individual instructors may set their own requirements for course work missed under such circumstances; they must grant students an opportunity to makeup all course work missed while participating in an official off-campus trip.

14. Clery Geography and Reporting Requirements:

- a. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) requires TTUHSC El Paso to identify and report publicly on any crimes that occur on all of our reportable geography, which includes qualifying off-campus student activities and travel. Any off-campus activity that meets the following criteria must be reported, regardless if any Clery Act reportable crimes were known to have occurred:
 - (1) TTUHSC El Paso must have control over the space used for the student activity/event and/or travel. Control, as defined by the Clery Act, requires that there is a written agreement (no matter how informal) directly between TTUHSC El Paso and the end provider for use of the space. Some examples of a written agreement include reserving hotel rooms, leasing apartments, leasing or having an agreement for academic space. Even if the agreement is in e-mail form, and there is no charge associated with the agreement, the space may still qualify as Clery reportable.
 - (2) The controlled space must be used in direct support of, or in relation to, the institution's educational purposes and frequented by students, which requires meeting one of the two criteria:
 - (a) Overnight stay; or
 - (b) Repeated use if the same location
- b. The Sponsor/ Advisor group leader acts as a Campus Security Authority (CSA) for the period of time they are supporting the travel. Persons not previously identified as CSAs should receive Clery Act specific training prior to their sponsored trip. Sponsoring departments or organizations are responsible for notifying the Clery Compliance Officer (CCO) of the trip sponsor/group leader. The CCO will then provide any needed training on CSA roles and responsibilities, to include the legal responsibility to report crimes.
- c. Questions related to the Clery Act and if the off-campus activity is reportable should be directed to the Safety Services Office.