

**Hamilton College**  
**Vehicle Use Policy & Recommendations for Trip Planning**

**General Policies:**

1. As a driver of a Hamilton College vehicle, you are responsible for obeying college policies relating to vehicle and van use, and the laws of jurisdictions in which you are driving. Any citations, fines, or tickets received as a result of a failure to obey the law will be **your personal responsibility to pay.**
2. As the driver, you are responsible for the safety of the passengers in your vehicle. All passengers and the driver must wear a seat belt. Do not overload the vehicle. Ensure that the number of people in the vehicle does not exceed the number of seat belts available.
3. **Hamilton vehicles may be used only for the purpose assigned.** Detours for the purpose of conducting personal business, for the driver or the passengers, are prohibited.
4. If the trip is cancelled for any reason, you must notify Physical Plant at x4500 immediately so that the vehicle can be reassigned to another waiting group. Note the cancellation on the Charge-out Ticket and return the vehicle and keys to Physical Plant. The vehicle is not to be used for any other purpose or by any other group.
5. The driver is the official Hamilton College representative in the vehicle unless accompanied by a faculty or staff member who is in charge of the group. The driver is responsible for the conduct of all passengers and any damage that they may cause, unless the driver identifies the individual(s) who caused the damage. If any passengers refuse to comply with directions regarding the enforcement of these instructions or engage in distracting conduct affecting the safe operation of the vehicle while moving, the driver must refuse to move the vehicle until they desist. If necessary, appropriate authorities should be requested to provide assistance. Passengers who participate in conduct that causes abnormal wear or damage to the vehicle will be subject to disciplinary action. Any damage resulting from such behavior must be reported on the trip ticket.
6. Drivers shall drive to and from the designated destination via the most direct and safe route under prevailing weather conditions.
7. Faculty members or administrators, who authorize student travel, are responsible for the safety and welfare of the students on the trip scheduled – whether they accompany the students or not.
8. Because driver fatigue is a major cause of automobile accidents, the following general rules apply to all trips:

- a. Individual drivers shall limit their driving time to a maximum of 6 hours per day.
  - b. Groups shall not travel more than 14 hours per day, regardless of the number of drivers available for the trip or in the vehicle.
  - c. Trips shall not depart from any location nor should driving take place between the hours 1am and 5am. The jitney is exempted from rule 8.c.
9. When assigned as a driver **you may not authorize or permit anyone else to operate the vehicle unless the other party is also a qualified Hamilton College driver.** If an alternate driver is required for a trip, arrangements should be made in advance and this should be noted on the Charge-out Ticket.
  10. All cargo must be secured properly to prevent damage to seat, upholstery, glass, etc. Seats are to not to be removed by the driver or passengers. If the planned trip requires less seats, request this as part of the vehicle request, and Physical Plant will remove them prior to issuing the van. No cargo shall be secured to the outside of any 12-passenger van. Any problems in accommodating unusual cargo must be referred to Physical Plant for resolution.
  11. Bumper stickers and signs are not permitted. It is the driver's responsibility to see that any items of this nature are removed if anyone places them on the vehicle.
  12. Failure to comply with these instructions or failure to exercise good judgment will result in temporary suspension or permanent revocation of your Hamilton driving privileges.
  13. If a vehicle is not returned at the proper time and another department incurs additional charges, your department will be charged.

**Alcohol and Controlled Substances Policy:**

1. Hamilton employees and students are prohibited from operating any Hamilton vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. This includes drivers when their ability to drive might be impaired by any medication they may be using.
2. The consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of controlled substances by passengers in a Hamilton vehicle is prohibited. It is the responsibility of the senior official present (i.e. team captain, athletic staff member, academic officer, professor, etc.) and/or the driver to enforce this policy.
3. The presence of open containers of alcoholic beverages in Hamilton vehicles is in violation of the law and is strictly prohibited.
4. Evidence of a violation will result in loss of the privilege to operate a Hamilton vehicle.

### **Trip Planning and Driver Rest Recommendations:**

1. If two or more vehicles are traveling to the same destination, every effort should be made to have all vehicles depart together. Drivers should coordinate stops, keep visual contact with other vehicles in that group, and be prepared to provide assistance if anyone has a breakdown or accident.
2. In conjunction with General Policies, paragraph , the following recommendations are considered prudent when planning an extended trip.
  - a. Take a rest break every two hours.
  - b. At least one alternate driver should be available on every trip in the event that one of the designated drivers is unable to drive.
  - c. Departure times should be planned such that drivers have had sufficient rest prior to commencement of the trip.
3. Prior to any travel, advisors and students should arrange a communications plan for routine and emergency communications. The advisor and students should establish pre-set times for these communications.
4. Prior to requesting a van, take the time to plan your trip. Ask questions regarding the length of the trip, number of drivers, overnight accommodations, number of participants, anticipated weather conditions (winter, spring, summer driving) and alternative means of transportation (is it safer to use a different mode of transportation).
5. For long trips (in excess of 100 miles) or trips to an area unfamiliar to the driver, designate a navigator to assist the driver.
6. If inclement weather makes continuation of your trip unsafe, find shelter at the nearest public place - restaurant, hotel, etc. Contact the faculty member or administrator who authorized the trip for help arranging overnight accommodations, if necessary. The College will reimburse reasonable hotel and meal costs in these situations.
7. Any organization scheduling a trip that is further than two hours from the college in which the driver is an active participant in the activity, should consider providing a driver who is not involved in the event.