Hamilton College – 12-person Travel Van Program
Vehicle Use Policy & Recommendations for Trip Planning

**General Policies:**

1. Drivers of a Hamilton College vehicles are responsible for obeying college policies relating to vehicle and van use, and the laws of applicable jurisdictions. Drivers are personally responsible for any citations, fines, or tickets received as a result of a failure to obey the law.

2. Drivers are responsible for the safety of passengers. All passengers and the driver must wear a seat belt. Do not overload the vehicle. The number of people in the vehicle cannot exceed the number of seat belts.

3. College vehicles may be used only for the assigned purpose. Detours to conduct personal business, for the driver or the passengers, are prohibited.

4. If the trip is cancelled for any reason, immediately notify Physical Plant at 315-859-4500 so that the vehicle can be reassigned to another waiting group. 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 faculty or staff 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 unsafe conduct desists. If necessary, request appropriate authorities for 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.

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 or not they accompany the students.

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 on the trip or in the vehicle.
   c. Trips shall not depart from any location nor should driving take place between the hours 1:00-5:00 AM. The jitney is exempted from rule 8.c.

9. Assigned drivers may not authorize or permit anyone else to operate the vehicle except other drivers assigned on the Trip Ticket. If an alternate driver is required for a trip, arrangements should be made in advance and it will be noted on the Trip Ticket.

10. All cargo must be properly secured to prevent damage to seats, upholstery, glass, etc. Seats are not to be removed by the driver or passengers. If the trip requires a seat row to be removed, note this when submitting the vehicle request, and Physical Plant will remove them prior to departure. No cargo shall be secured to the outside of any 12-person van. Any problems in accommodating unusual cargo must be referred to Physical Plant for resolution.

Revised 1/2018
11. Bumper stickers and signs are not permitted. It is the driver’s responsibility to report these items if found anywhere on/in the vehicle.

12. Failure to comply with any of instructions above, or failure to exercise good judgment will result in temporary suspension or permanent revocation of the driver’s Hamilton College driving privileges.

13. If a vehicle is not returned at the proper time and another department incurs additional costs, those costs will be charged to the organization that failed to return the van as scheduled.

14. The travel van is outfitted with a GPS unit and is monitored by Hamilton College. The purpose of the GPS unit is to assist with the following - determining the exact location of the travel van in order to efficiently assist travelers in need of help; assist in the reconstruction of accident details; calculation of the mileage driven for cost recovery purposes; monitor vehicle speed. Please note that information obtained from the GPS device may also be used to enforce the safe driving expectations outlined in the document. If a student driver is determined to be in violation of any of the safe driving expectations, their driving privileges will be suspended indefinitely pending an investigation.

**Alcohol and Controlled Substances Policy:**

1. Hamilton College employees and students are prohibited from operating any college vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. This includes drivers whose driving ability might be impaired by any medications.

2. The consumption of alcoholic beverages or the use of controlled substances by passengers in a college 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. Open containers of alcoholic beverages in college vehicles is a violation of law and is strictly prohibited.

4. Evidence of a violation will result in loss of the privilege to operate a college 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 8, 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 a designated driver is unable to drive.
   c. Departure times should be planned such that drivers have had sufficient rest prior to departure.

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 time to plan the 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 that may be more safe or appropriate.

5. For long trips in excess of 100 miles or trips to an unfamiliar area, designate a navigator to assist the driver.

6. If inclement weather makes it unsafe to continue driving, 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. If a trip is more than two hours from the college and the driver is an active participant in an activity at the destination, the organization should provide a driver not involved in the event/activity.