

Hattiesburg Public Schools

Fleet Safety Program

All employees of Hattiesburg Public Schools are expected to operate vehicles safely to prevent accidents that may result in injuries and property loss. It is the policy of Hattiesburg Public Schools to provide and maintain a safe working environment to protect our employees and the citizens of the communities where we conduct business from injury and property loss. Hattiesburg Public Schools considers the use of automobiles as part of the working environment. As such, the Board of Trustees is committed to promoting a heightened level of safety awareness and responsible driving behavior in its employees. The following statements reflect our commitment to safety:

- Safety takes precedence over expedience and shortcuts.
- We will strive to prevent the possibility of an accident.
- We will strive to operate all vehicles in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.
- We pledge to demonstrate defensive driving practices at all times.

Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for the successful implementation and ongoing execution of this program. Supervisors and employees are responsible for meeting and maintaining the standards set forth in this program.

Scope

This policy applies to employees who operate vehicles on company business and will be reviewed annually to ensure implementation and compliance. The following rules are meant to serve as a guideline and do not cover every possible item or situation. Contact your immediate supervisor if you have any questions or concerns.

Statement of Acknowledgement

I have read the Hattiesburg Public School District Drivers Fleet Safety Program guidance and understand the information contained in this document. I acknowledge that I will be held accountable for complying with the rules and policies stated here. Additionally, my compliance with these rules and policies is a part of my job and is a condition of my employment.

Driver Name

Driver Signature

Date

Organization and Responsibilities

- Everyone is responsible for the implementation of the vehicle safety program.
- The superintendent (or designee) will provide the resources necessary to implement and maintain the program.
- All accidents involving motor vehicles will be reported to the immediate superintendent immediately (or as soon as it is safe to do so).
- All accident reports will be forwarded to the superintendent's office and the business office.
- Revisions to the Fleet Safety Program guidance will be forwarded to all employees.

Driver Qualification/ Eligibility

- Driver must possess the required license to operate the vehicle assigned to perform the job (i.e., proper class or CDL if required)
- Driver must maintain an acceptable motor vehicle driving record (MVR)
 - ❖ No drug or alcohol-related violations, such as driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) in the last year resulting in charge of a felony
- No major violations within the last year
 - ❖ Excessive speeding resulting in charge of a felony
 - ❖ Careless/reckless/ imprudent driving
 - ❖ Vehicular homicide, manslaughter or assault resulting from a vehicle-related incident

Note:

- Drivers must immediately report license suspensions, revocations, and other restrictions and cease driving to the personnel office.

Use of Private Vehicles for School Purposes

Hattiesburg Public Schools discourages the use of privately owned vehicles on behalf of the district. Should occasions arise when a privately owned vehicle must be used, the following provisions must be met.

- The school district employee must provide the district with proof of liability insurance to cover all risks associated with driving an automobile.
- Each use of the automobile must be approved in writing by the principal and/or the superintendent or his/her designee. The preferred mode of transportation is HPS-owned vehicles.
- No one shall be permitted to operate the vehicle other than the school district employee.
- Students should not be transported unless authorized by the principal and/or superintendent or his/her designee.
- Possess a valid driver's license in the state of Mississippi to operate the vehicle.
- Operate vehicle in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.
- There shall be a check of the driving record of each school employee permitted to operate a school-owned vehicle or privately owned vehicle on behalf of the school district. No employee shall be allowed to operate a vehicle in order to transport students if their driving record contains, but is not limited to, a DUI or reckless driving charge.
- Under no circumstances will the operator allow more than six (6) elementary school age or four (4) junior high school students to ride in the vehicle at any one time.
- Maintain their own vehicle in a safe operating condition when driving on company business.

- Maintain current state vehicle inspections when required.
- Drivers are required to conduct daily inspections of their vehicle with special emphasis on lights, turn signals, and tires.

Rental Vehicles

- Rental vehicles will be leased from an approved vendor by the district.

Unauthorized Use of Vehicles

- If unauthorized use results in an accident, the responsible employee will be required to make restitution for the damages.

Distracted Driving

No employee or volunteer driver of Hattiesburg Public Schools shall operate any district motor vehicle or operate a personal vehicle in the course of their responsibilities and duties with the district in a manner that allows them to knowingly drive distracted (*See Board Policy ECIA: District Staff use of Electronic Devices While Driving on District Business*)

The primary responsibility of the driver is to operate the motor vehicle safely. The task of driving requires full attention and focus. Drivers should resist engaging in any activity that takes their attention and eyes off the road for more than a couple of seconds. There are three main types of distractions:

- Visual-taking eyes off the road
- Manual- taking hands off the wheel
- Cognitive-taking mind off what you're doing

Examples of Distracted driving include, but are not limited to:

- Utilizing a wireless communication device for writing, sending, and/or receiving a message (s), posting to social media, internet usage, viewing photos, playing games, and other such activities.
- Watching a video
- Eating or drinking
- Engaging with passengers
- Grooming
- Reading
- Retrieving items from the floor, purse, glove box, computer, etc.

When operating a district vehicle, employees are required to:

- Pull over to a safe place to send or receive a call or to complete any task that might distract attention from the road.

Violations

- Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, including denial of use of school vehicles and district cellphones and up to and including termination. Certain violations are punishable by law. Any fines or penalties incurred shall be the responsibility of the employee.

Statement of Acknowledgement

Please read and sign the Statement of Acknowledgment and return it to your supervisor. If you have any questions regarding this Policy ECIA, please contact your supervisor.

I am aware of the policy prohibiting distracted driving while operating a district vehicle or a personal vehicle in the course of my responsibilities and duties with the district. I fully understand the terms of this policy and agree to abide by them.

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Fatigue/Illness/Drugs and Alcohol _____ Initials

- Drivers should be well-rested, healthy, and alert before beginning any trip.
- Drivers should plan periodic rest breaks into their schedules to reduce fatigue. Generally, a driver should not drive more than two hours without taking a short break.
- Drivers should be aware of their total time on-the-job and stop driving when they become drowsy or fatigued.
- DOT-regulated drivers must comply with applicable hours-of-service requirements.
- Drivers should stop driving and find a safe place to park if an illness or stressor renders them incapable of driving safely.
- Drivers should be aware of the impact of an over-the-counter drug or prescribed medications on theirr driving and follow the precautions outlined, including not driving. Inform doctors of your driving responsibilities when receiving any new medical recommendations.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance is prohibited while operating a district vehicle or in a personal vehicle on company business.
- Possessing controlled substances or open containers of alcohol in a district vehicle is prohibited.
- All drivers/employees must comply with the district’s drug and alcohol program.
- The driver and all occupants are required to wear safety belts when the vehicle is in operation or while riding in a district vehicle or in a personal vehicle on district business. The driver is responsible for ensuring passengers wear their safety belts. Students/children under four years of age or under 40 pounds in weight must be secured in a DOT-approved child safety seat.

Defensive Driving _____ Initials

Drivers should drive in a defensive manner, including the following:

- Maintain a safe speed, adjusting for traffic, road and weather conditions.
- Maintain a cushion of safety around your vehicle with an emphasis on following the proper distance.
- Scan ahead to identify hazardous conditions or actions of others and be prepared to stop.
- Yield to the right-of-way of others. This includes stopping at intersections and not pulling out in front of others. Anticipate unsafe actions of others, such as: not stopping where required, pulling out in front of you, or driving distracted.
- Be extremely cautious when driving around pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Limit lane changes and passing

Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance _____ Initials

- Drivers are required to conduct a daily inspection of their vehicle with a speak emphasis on lights. Turn, signals, and tires. Periodic inspections are required of all district vehicles.

- Defects should be reported immediately and discussed with the superintendent's designee to determine the vehicle's status for safe operation. Drivers should not operate vehicles deemed unsafe until repairs are completed.
- Drivers should ensure their designated vehicles are maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements.
- In addition, DOT-regulated vehicle drivers are required to:
 - ❖ Complete daily pre-trip and post-trip inspections.
 - ❖ Ensure their vehicle and trailer, if applicable, have valid annual inspection stickers.
 - ❖ Not operate a vehicle that has been placed out-of-service by the DOT until repairs or conditions have been corrected.

Additional Driver Rules and Responsibilities _____ Initials

- Drivers will operate the vehicle in a manner consistent with reasonable practices to avoid abuse, theft, neglect or disrespect of the equipment.
- Seatbelt and shoulder harness use is required for all drivers and passengers.
- Drivers should adhere to local, state and federal traffic laws.
- Drivers are required to pay fines for any violations received.
- Smoking is prohibited in district-owned vehicles.
- Drivers are required to attend all driver safety meetings and review safe driving materials provided by the district.
- Vehicles should be parked in safe locations and keys removed and locked. Valuable cargo should be removed or adequately secured from theft

Road Emergency Stops

Stopping along a roadway is dangerous and should only be done in an emergency, such as a breakdown.

- When possible, get off the roadway as soon as possible using four-way flashers to warn other vehicles of your reduced vehicle speed.
- If you must stop:
 - ❖ Move as far off the roadway as safely possible, being aware of soft or sloped shoulders.
 - ❖ Try not to stop on a curve or other areas where it will be difficult to be seen by other motorists.
- Turn on your emergency flashers and put out reflective safety triangles, if applicable.
- Contact the Business Office or Human Resources for directions on what to do,
- Do not work on the vehicle. After contact either the Business Office or Human Resources, have the vehicle towed to a safer location to complete the repairs.

Employee Accident Reporting Procedures _____ Initials

Drivers are required to report all accidents and vehicle/cargo vandalism or theft immediately. Employees will take the following actions when there are injuries to persons and/or damage to other vehicles or property:

- Report to Hattiesburg Public Schools Human Resource Representative. In the event you cannot reach a Human Resource Representative, please contact a representative from the Business Office.

Follow these at -scene instructions.

- Stop, turn off your engine, set your brake, and turn on you emergency flashers.
- If the accident is minor and there are no serious injuries, move your vehicle to a safe location out of the way of traffic.
- Call 911 to alert police and other emergency personnel.

- Give the police complete and accurate information; do not guess. Do not discuss the specifics of the accident with other drivers or anyone else without the district approval.
- Secure the names and addresses of drivers and occupants of any vehicles involved their operator's license number, insurance company names and policy numbers, as well as the names and addresses of injured persons and witnesses.
- Do not admit fault or accept offers to settle.
- Do not sign anything without district approval.
- Stay at the scene until police or a district representative releases you,

Accident scene photos:

- ❖ Accident photos should be taken of the scene as soon as practical to help substantiate what happened, preferable before vehicles are moved. However, they should only be taken if it is safe to do so, depending on road conditions.
- ❖ Photos document vehicle damage can be taken after vehicles are moved to a safe location.
- Photo Tips:
 - ❖ Get the entire scene and surrounding area
 - ❖ Take photos from all directions
 - ❖ Take photos from all sides of the vehicles to include damaged areas, license plates, company name, DOT #
 - ❖ Skid marks, traffic control devices and signs etc..