



COLTON JOINT
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUCCESS. INNOVATION. TEAMWORK.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION COMPLIANCE GUIDE

DISTRICT-OWNED PASSENGER VEHICLES
AND SB 88 REQUIREMENTS



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SAFE TRANSPORTATION. EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.



Commitment to Equal Opportunity

Student Transportation Compliance Guide

District-Owned Passenger Vehicles and SB 88 Requirements

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance regarding California laws governing the transportation of students in district-owned passenger vehicles for school-sponsored activities. This information is intended to assist administrators and staff in ensuring that all student transportation is conducted safely, legally, and in compliance with California Education Code.

Recent legislative changes through **Senate Bill 88 (SB 88)** established additional requirements related to driver qualifications, vehicle inspections, safety equipment, and operational procedures for school employees transporting students.

While many employees are accustomed to using district passenger vehicles for field trips, athletic events, competitions, and extracurricular activities, California law places important restrictions on the types of vehicles that may be operated and the qualifications required of drivers. Failure to comply with these requirements may expose both the employee and the District to significant liability.

California Senate Bill 88 (SB 88):

[*SB-88 Pupil Transportation: driver qualifications*](#)

Student Transportation Requirements

District employees may transport students only after meeting all applicable requirements established by California Education Code, SB 88, and Colton Joint Unified School District policies and procedures.

Employees are responsible for ensuring they remain qualified before transporting students in any district-owned passenger vehicle.

Approved Passenger Vehicles

District employees may transport students only in approved district-owned passenger vehicles, including:

- Passenger Cars
- Sedans
- Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs)
- Pickup Trucks
- Light-Duty Passenger Vans

These vehicles are limited to a **maximum of eight (8) student passengers**, excluding the driver.

Vehicles exceeding this passenger capacity are subject to additional state licensing requirements.

Driver Eligibility Requirements

Employees transporting students must satisfy all applicable requirements established under SB 88, including:

- Possess a valid California Driver's License
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Successfully complete the District's criminal background clearance process
- Complete a Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Assessment
- Maintain an acceptable driving record
- Successfully complete a medical examination every two years (annually beginning at age 65)
- Participate in the District's required Drug and Alcohol Testing Program
- Complete all Transportation Department safety training and driver orientation requirements

Employees may not transport students until all eligibility requirements have been completed and approved.

School Employee 40-Hour Driving Exemption

California SB 88 provides a limited exemption allowing teachers, coaches, advisors, and other school employees to transport students without meeting certain commercial driver requirements when supervising:

- Field Trips
- Athletic Events
- Extracurricular Activities
- School-Sponsored Educational Programs

To qualify for this exemption, employees must:

- Operate only qualifying passenger vehicles with a seating capacity of **eight (8) or fewer passengers**, excluding the driver.
- Drive **no more than forty (40) total hours during a single school year** while transporting students.

The Transportation Department will monitor annual driving hours to ensure compliance with California law.

It is important to note that this exemption does **not** eliminate all SB 88 requirements and **does not** authorize employees to operate larger passenger vehicles.

12-Passenger Van Restrictions

District employees **may not legally transport students in a 12-passenger van** unless they possess:

- A valid California Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
- A Passenger (P) Endorsement

Although commonly referred to as "12-passenger vans," these vehicles are designed to transport **ten (10) or more persons**, including the driver. Under California law, these vehicles are classified as commercial passenger vehicles and require a properly licensed commercial driver.

The SB 88 school employee exemption **does not apply** to these vehicles.

Accordingly, teachers, coaches, advisors, and other district employees who do not possess the required Commercial Driver's License **may not operate a 12-passenger van while transporting students under any circumstance.**

Vehicle Safety Requirements

Every district-owned passenger vehicle used to transport students must comply with California safety standards.

Required Safety Equipment

Each vehicle must be equipped with:

- First Aid Kit
- Fully Charged Fire Extinguisher (minimum 4B rating)

Drivers should verify the presence and condition of all required safety equipment before each trip.

Annual Vehicle Inspection

District passenger vehicles are required to successfully complete a certified **19-point safety inspection**:

- Every twelve (12) months; or
- Every 50,000 miles, whichever occurs first.

These inspections help ensure all vehicles remain safe and compliant for transporting students.

Daily Pre-Trip Inspection

Prior to each trip, drivers are responsible for performing and documenting a pre-trip vehicle inspection that includes, at a minimum:

- Exterior Lighting
- Brake Operation
- Tire Condition
- Mirrors
- Fluid Leaks
- Windshield and Wipers
- Horn
- Seat Belts
- Overall Vehicle Safety Condition

Any safety concern or mechanical defect must be reported immediately to the Transportation Department. Vehicles determined to be unsafe shall not be operated until repairs have been completed.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees transporting students are expected to:

- Comply with all California laws governing student transportation.
- Operate only approved district vehicles.
- Ensure they remain qualified under SB 88.
- Complete all required inspections before operating a vehicle.
- Immediately report accidents, mechanical issues, or safety concerns.
- Follow all District Transportation Department procedures regarding student transportation.

The safety of our students remains the District's highest priority. Compliance with these requirements helps ensure every student is transported safely while protecting both employees and the District from unnecessary liability.

Questions

Questions regarding driver eligibility, vehicle qualifications, licensing requirements, or student transportation procedures should be directed to the Transportation Department before transporting students.

Thank you for your continued commitment to providing safe and reliable transportation for our students.