

The University of Oklahoma
15-PASSENGER VAN POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT AND SCOPE

The safe travel of students, faculty, staff, and guests for University functions, to and from events and activities, at the University of Oklahoma is the goal of this policy. This policy applies to the discontinuance of 15-passenger van use.

Per the Office of Legal Counsel and the Office of Risk Management as of May 2008, the university policy regarding 15-passenger van use includes:

- A. No further purchases of 15-passenger vans,
- B. No 15-passenger van rentals, and
- C. A discontinuance of current 15-passenger vans within a reasonable time frame for departments and organizations which may own such vehicles.

Further, if a van cannot be disposed of, the organization should:

- D. Require drivers to have CDL or specialized training,
- E. Inflate all tires to appropriate pressure,
- F. Use to transport cargo only,
- G. Not load roof or tow trailers,
- H. Limit the number of passengers, when passenger transport is necessary, to 8 passengers,
- I. Require all occupants to wear a seatbelt,
- J. Include safety materials in the vehicle including a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and cell phone, and
- K. Not tow trailers or other equipment.

II. BACKGROUND

Since 1999, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has issued several reports and warnings about the rollover propensity of 15-passenger vans, which are the largest passenger vehicles that can be operated without a commercial driver's license (CDL).

When they overturn, these vans have a much higher fatality rate than other vehicles, and the risk of rolling over increases with each additional occupant, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Fifteen passenger vehicles are three times as likely to roll over when loaded with ten or more passengers as compared to five.

Moreover, a study of fatal rollover crashes showed that three out of every four vans that overturned did not collide with another vehicle. Although the federal government does not require that drivers of these vans hold a CDL, federal agencies and consumer safety groups recommend that drivers of 15-passenger vans obtain extensive training before getting behind the wheel.

III. RECOMMENDED REPLACEMENT VEHICLES

The recommended replacement vehicles include: 8-passenger vans, 10-passenger vans, mini-buses (CDL required), private charter buses (CDL required), and school buses (CDL required).