



CHURCH *of the* OPEN DOOR

DRIVER/TRANSPORTATION SAFETY POLICY & PROGRAM

[INTERNAL DOCUMENT]

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POLICY STATEMENT

Church of the Open Door & Carroll Christian School (known as *Ministry* in future references) recognizes that its primary responsibility is to provide a safe environment for its staff, its volunteers, members, visitors, and the public. In an effort to meet this responsibility, we are implementing a comprehensive Vehicle Safety Policy. This Policy is designed to deal with all phases of our transportation safety. The cooperation of all staff and volunteers is expected and required.

Ministry vehicles are provided to support Church and School activities and are to be used only by qualified and authorized staff and volunteers. In all cases, these vehicles are to be operated in strict compliance with motor vehicle laws of the jurisdiction in which they are driven and with the utmost regard for their care and cost-efficient use. Ministry vehicles may not be used for activities unaffiliated with Church and School.

The purpose of this program is to minimize vehicle accidents and injuries to staff, volunteers, members, visitors, and the public and to make safe driving practices an important part of our operations. This program will address the following elements, which when followed, will help to limit damage to our people as well as our vehicles:

- Management's Responsibility
- Driver Selection
- Preventive Maintenance
- Vehicle Inspections
- Accident Reporting, Investigation, and Review
- Record Keeping

The Transportation Lead will oversee and is accountable for the policy. His responsibility will be to implement and monitor the program and participate in safety activities, including physical inspections and accident investigations.

Our efforts and the commitment of staff and volunteers will prevent vehicle accidents and reduce personal injury and property loss. This program requires the full cooperation of each driver to operate his/her vehicle safely and to adhere to the responsibilities outlined in this Transportation Safety Program.

Management is responsible for the successful implementation and ongoing execution of this program. Staff and volunteers are responsible for meeting and maintaining the standards set forth in this program.

Driver Selection

Since over 90% of vehicle accidents can be attributed to driver error, the most important aspect of any transportation safety program is the selection of drivers. Our Driver selection policy includes:

- Potential Drivers completing a Driver Commitment Agreement along with a Safe & Secure Background Check Authorization form (as applicable).
- The verification of a current and valid driver's license issued in the state of residence for the class of vehicle being operated.
- Minimum age requirement for vehicle operation is 21, with a minimum of 5 years driving experience.
- Safe driving record for the past 3 years (Motor Vehicle Records [MVR]).
- An MVR will be completed prior to an individual being confirmed as a Driver for the Church and/or School. This includes both personal and ministry vehicles. Leadership reserves the right to use its discretion in determining an unsatisfactory MVR. This can range from counseling to being asked to step down from the Ministry.
- Valid CDL license for drivers of vehicles over 26,001 lbs.
- Valid medical examiner's certificate for drivers of vehicles over 10,001 lbs.
- Driver is knowledgeable about DOT regulations pertaining to the vehicle to be driven.
- Reference checks (as part of Safe & Secure).

Background Checks

Safe & Secure background checks are conducted no less than every three years. The Church and/or School will reach out to Drivers in advance of their Safe & Secure Background expiration to have them complete materials re-authorizing a check to be completed. ***NOTE: Written authorization of consent is obtained prior to conducting any background checks.***

Ineligible Drivers

Staff and volunteers will not be allowed to operate a vehicle for the Church and/or School if any of the following conditions exist:

- Without a valid and appropriate motor vehicle driver's license.
- Under the age of 21.
- Unable to speak and read English well enough to converse, understand highway and traffic signs, and respond to official questions.
- Unable to physically perform all duties of a driver.
- Unable to drive the vehicle safely.
- Unwilling to sign a Driver Commitment Agreement.

Staff and volunteers will not be allowed to operate a vehicle for the Church and/or School if any of the following conditions exist on their MVR within the past 3 years:

- Failure to maintain a valid state of residence operator's license and operating with a license listing a state in which they do not reside.
- Current license has been suspended by the state.
- Conviction of a DWI/DUI.
- Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony.
- Been convicted of reckless endangerment, vehicular homicide, hit and run, or attempting to elude an officer.
- Has had two or more "at fault" accidents.
- Has had any combination of three or more moving violations.
- Has had two preventable accidents in a 12-month period.
- Refusal to allow the review of their driver MVR.

Action Plans

The Church and School will only confirm Drivers as those meeting Acceptable Requirements. Acceptable: employee meets our criteria to operate a ministry and drive on behalf of the ministry - Church and School. Drivers who are identified as high risk or in violation may have their driving privileges suspended or revoked.

Driver Files

A Driver qualification file will be maintained for each driver and will be reviewed as needed and re-evaluated no less than every three years. The information required in driver files varies by the size of vehicle the driver will operate and are as follows:

Drivers of vehicles less than 10,001 lbs.

- ✓ MVR
- ✓ Photo copy of the individual's driver's license
- ✓ Driver Commitment Form

CDL drivers & drivers of vehicles over 10,001 lbs.

See checklist on next page.

Driver Safety Requirements & Responsibilities

Ministry vehicles are returned to Church/School property when no longer in use for Church and/or School activities/purposes.

When vehicles are in use, each driver is responsible for the safety and welfare of the people being transported, the general public, and the vehicle. Therefore, a driver's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hold a valid driver's license from the state of residence.
- Submit to an MVR driving record review and Safe & Secure Background check every three years.
- Notify Church/School Leadership of any suspension of your driver's license as soon as possible after the event, but not later than 24 hours from the occurrence.
- Immediately notify management of any accident, moving violation, revocation, or restriction of license.
- Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local traffic laws, ordinances, and regulations, follow ministry policies and procedures and use defensive driving practices at all times. (Drivers of ministry vehicles will operate the vehicle at speeds appropriate for traffic and weather conditions and posted speed limits. This also means obeying all traffic signs and /or traffic signals, don't tailgate, and yield the right of way.)
- Wear a seat belt and shoulder harness and require all passengers to do the same.
- Note any vehicle defects that have developed and notify your Ministry Leader or Church Facilities of the problems. Do not operate any vehicle that has defects that affect the safety of the vehicle.
- No texting or talking on the phone while driving – no exceptions. Unless using a hands-free device, the vehicle should be pulled off to the side of the road to send or receive calls. All state and local laws shall be followed.
- Do not permit any unauthorized person to drive a ministry vehicle.
- Do not operate a vehicle at any time when your ability to do so is impaired, affected, or influenced by prescribed or over-the-counter medication, illness, fatigue, or injury. Ministry policy states that no driver shall consume any alcoholic beverage at any time.
- Do not pick up any hitchhikers with a ministry vehicle.
- Operate with headlights on whenever windshield wipers are being used.

- Maintain a constant scanning pattern of the front, sides, and rear of your vehicle to spot potential hazards such as changes in road and traffic conditions as well as vehicles, pedestrians, and animals which might pull out or walk/run out in your path of travel. Scanning 1-1/2 blocks ahead in city driving and 1/4 mile ahead for highway driving will allow time to change lanes, reposition your vehicle, and slow or stop to prevent an accident. Also, be aware of vehicles driving in your blind spots or if you are driving in the blind spot of others. If observed, adjust your speed to move out of the blind spot area. If you observe a tailgater behind you, increase your following distance from the vehicle in front of you.
- Turn off the ignition, remove the keys, and lock the vehicle when out of sight of the vehicle, even briefly. When leaving the vehicle, do not leave anything of value in plain sight, including cell phones. Failure to do so entices theft.

Failure to comply with any of these responsibilities could result in a Driver being asked to step down from the Ministry.

Disciplinary Program

The Church/School requires that all guidelines be adhered to at 100% in order to remain a Driver in one of our ministries. If there is an infraction, the response will vary based on the seriousness of the infraction.

Less serious:

- Step 1: Discussion/Counseling
- Step 2: Coaching w/Check-Ins
- Step 3: Request to step down from the Ministry.

For more serious infractions that put the lives of individuals in danger or are in conflict with Church Beliefs, individuals will be asked to step down from the Ministry immediately.

Accident Investigation

Each driver will be held accountable for operating his or her vehicle in a safe and professional manner. Accident investigations are the key in determining the causes of accidents. Each accident will be investigated and reviewed for cause and preventability. Accidents will be determined to be **preventable or non-preventable** on the basis of recognized defensive driving rules.

A **preventable accident** is one in which the driver failed to do everything reasonable to prevent the accident. He or she did not follow the accident prevention formula:

1. Recognize the hazard.
2. Understand the defense.
3. Act correctly in time.

If an accident is determined to be non-preventable, drivers will be cleared. Accidents determined to be preventable may result in driver being coached. For reference purposes, examples of **accidents that are preventable all of the time** using defensive driving techniques are:

- Head-On Collisions - The driver must remain in his or her proper lane. When approaching vehicles veer into the driver's lane, the driver must change lanes, slow down, or stop - when such action can be taken without additional danger.
- Rear-End Collision - The vehicle ahead stopping suddenly is a common road hazard. Drivers must always follow at safe distances and have their vehicles under control at all times.
- Backing Accidents - Drivers should be aware of the conditions and potential hazards before backing.
- Driver failed to yield the right of way to avoid an accident.

- Running a red light or stop sign.
- Pedestrian accidents - Drivers should have their vehicle under control at all times and be ready for any unusual circumstances (children playing or riding in the road, jaywalkers, etc.).
- Driver failed to control speed to avoid a collision.
- Driver misjudged available clearance.

Accident / Incident Reporting Procedures

1. Take immediate action to prevent further damage at the scene of the accident. If possible, move the vehicle to a safe location out of the way of traffic. Turn on your warning flashers and place out warning signals (flares or warning triangles if available).
 - If possible, move the vehicle to a safe location out of the way of traffic. Render assistance and call for medical attention if anyone is hurt.
2. Do not admit or sign anything.
3. Where property damage or injury is involved, call the police.
 - a. If someone is injured, request medical assistance.
 - b. If fire is involved, request fire department aid.
4. If law enforcement does not respond, collect all necessary information from everyone involved in the accident, including any witnesses.
5. Obtain a copy of the ticket if applicable.
6. Be courteous. Answer police questions.
7. Immediately notify the office and report all accidents and injuries.
8. Each driver is required to fill out a detailed accident report on all accidents in which their vehicle is involved. This should include the following information:
 - a. Date and time of accident
 - b. Names, addresses, and phone numbers of drivers and passengers involved as well as witnesses. Also obtain the driver's license number of the other driver(s) involved.
 - c. Description of the other vehicle involved in the accident and its vehicle ID number.
 - d. Location of the accident
 - e. Brief description of the accident; photos if possible
 - f. A copy of the police report, if available
 - g. Description of the property damage, injuries, or fatalities

Accident Reporting Kits

Every ministry vehicle should have an accident report kit in the glove box. This should include an accident report form and a pen or pencil. Drivers shall take photos of any damage to their ministry vehicle and any other vehicle or property involved in the accident.

Use of Personal Vehicles for Church and School Purposes

Anyone that uses his/her personal vehicle for ministry purposes (Church and School) must observe the same policies governing the use of ministry vehicles.

- Regularly inspecting the vehicle to assure road readiness and verify that proper maintenance is being conducted.
- Reviewing and completing appropriate volunteer and driver paperwork.
- Maintaining a copy of the employee's valid driver's license.
- Reviewing the employee's Motor Vehicle Record for acceptable driving performance.
- Recommending that staff, volunteers carry minimum liability limits of \$100,000/\$300,000 or \$300,000 combined single limit on their personal automobile insurance policy.
- Requiring a current Certificate of Insurance or a photocopy of the declarations page of the employee's personal automobile insurance policy for the driver's file.
- Staff and volunteer driver training/safety reinforcement activities.

Personal Use of Ministry Vehicles

Personal use of ministry vehicles is prohibited without prior permission from management. If permission is granted, the employee assigned to the vehicle will be the only driver allowed to operate the vehicle. Use of the ministry vehicle is limited to travel for Church/School related activities and purposes. The vehicle is not to be used for personal and/or entertainment purposes.

Unauthorized Use of Vehicles

Only assigned drivers and authorized staff and volunteers will be allowed to operate a ministry vehicle. No exceptions! If unauthorized use results in an accident, the responsible individual will be required to make restitution for the damages.

Driver License Suspension

Drivers must immediately notify management if their license is suspended or revoked.

Driver Training

Driver training is important and shall be ongoing, addressing the specific needs of the transportation. This will include the following elements:

- Orientation - New Drivers shall be briefed on ministry vehicle policy and procedures and accident procedures.
- Initial training and retraining as needed. This shall include training in safe operations, backing, and changes in Federal, State, and Local Laws. *Training module is online.*

Record Keeping

Good record-keeping is a requirement and commitment to the safe operations of our transportation. Facilities Management must comply with all federal and state regulations on record-keeping requirements. This will include records of vehicle maintenance and inspections, driver performance files, accident reports and investigations, etc.

Vehicle Inspections

Vehicles shall be inspected by Facilities Management. This should include a walk-around inspection of the vehicle and an inside safety check of all gauges, equipment, lighting, emergency devices, etc. In the event a critical defect is identified, the vehicle shall be taken out of service until the deficiency is corrected.

Preventive Maintenance

In order to ensure the safety and integrity of our ministry vehicles, Church/School will provide the necessary resources to ensure our ministry vehicles are properly maintained. Detection and correction of a vehicle defect or deficiency reduces the risk of it contributing to an accident or vehicle breakdown which could result in death, injury, and property damage.

All routine motor vehicle maintenance will be done according to the manufacturer's specifications. Critical components that must always be maintained and promptly repaired are: brakes, tires, suspension, steering, lights, mirrors, windows, and windshield wipers.

Staff and volunteers should conduct post-trip and pre-trip vehicle inspections. Any defects or safety problems should be reported to Facilities Management. They in turn will be responsible for confirming the repairs are completed as needed.