

# **North Dakota State University State Fleet Motor Vehicle Safety**

## **I. General Policy under State Fleet**

Only state employees and individual approved students are defined as “operators” under the following. Vehicles are defined as all licensed motor vehicles owned and leased by the state subject to registration under Chapters 39-04 and 39-05 NDCC.

By law, every state agency, institution, department, board, bureau, and commission, unless exempted by the director, must use the system. Each agency is responsible for the actions of its authorized drivers and must institute proper disciplinary actions for violating the regulations.

## **II. GENERAL SAFETY - SAFE OPERATION**

**All operators of State Fleet Services vehicles must adhere to the following regulations:**

1. Operators must possess a valid driver’s license to operate state vehicles. The license must be in the possession of the driver at all times when operating a state vehicle, and be of the appropriate class governing the vehicle being operated.
2. Operators must obey and comply with all traffic laws and regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles. Operators under the influence of alcohol or drugs are prohibited from operating state vehicles. Operators convicted of driving a state vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs may not drive a state vehicle during the time they are required to file proof of financial responsibility.
3. Operators must pay, without reimbursement and as soon as possible, all illegal parking fees and traffic fines. State Fleet Services will notify agency directors of traffic violations. The agency must respond in writing to describe the disciplinary action taken to improve the operator’s driving behavior.
4. In the event of an accident, the driver must complete an accident report form (found inside each vehicle packet) and return it immediately to Facilities Management. All accidents involving state vehicles in which extensive property damage, personal injury, or death has occurred must call State fleet Services (701-328-2545) as soon as possible.
  - 4.1 Accident prevention is an agency/institution responsibility. The NDCC Chapter 4-11-01 defines State Risk Management Motor Vehicle Accident Review Board. NDSU has established an accident review process, subject to the State Accident Review Board approval, to determine the preventability of accidents. A preventable accident is defined as “any accident in which the operator failed to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the accident.”
5. Operators must use state vehicles only for conducting state business and not for personal use. Vehicles shall not be taken to personal residences for overnight parking.

6. Operators **may not** transport spouses, children, animals, or hitchhikers in state vehicles. Drivers may permit other than state employees to be passengers in state vehicles only if necessary to conduct state business.
7. All occupants must wear properly fastened safety belts whenever they travel in state vehicles. The operator must verify compliance and remind all passengers of the required seat belt policy.
8. Smoking is prohibited in all State Fleet vehicles.
9. All vehicles assigned on a daily basis from the daily pool must be returned to the parking lot at the end of the day unless other arrangements are made ahead of time.
10. Agencies/institutions with monthly assigned vehicles have the responsibility to maintain their assigned vehicles.
11. State Fleet Services will service all equipment which is original and furnished by the manufacturer in a new vehicle.
12. Operators may not place bumper stickers or unauthorized equipment in or on state vehicles. This includes private equipment and radar-detecting devices.
13. Truck operators must replace wiper blades, light bulbs, lenses, and other miscellaneous items. Other minor repairs and adjustments will also be done by the operator, subject to ability, tools, and knowledge.
14. State Fleet Services will furnish a shovel, an electrical cord, and a scraper for all daily pool vehicles in the winter months.
15. State Fleet cars will be plugged in at all daily motor pools in below-zero temperatures. The user will be responsible for using and retaining the extension cord after picking up the vehicle.
16. All state Fleet vehicle operators (those who drive on at least a monthly basis) are required to complete the four-hour National Safety Council Defensive Driving course (DDC). A refresher course will follow every four years.
17. **State employees shall not engage in text messaging while driving a state government fleet vehicle.** (See below for state law.)

**39-08-23. Use of a wireless communications device prohibited.**

### **III. Procedure**

The book “**North Dakota State Fleet Services Policy Manual**” prepared by the ND Department of Transportation, contains more detailed information regarding the state fleet motor vehicle regulations. It is the standard for NDSU’s Motor Vehicle Safety safe operating procedure. The information provided are the minimum requirements required of all state employees/operators. For assistance or interpretation of the State Fleet Services Regulations, please refer to NDSU’s Motor Pool/Reservations or to the North Dakota State Fleet Services in Bismarck, ND. Copies of the “[North Dakota State Fleet Services Policy Manual](#)” may be obtained from either office and is also available on line .

References:

Risk Management coverage information regarding [State Fleet vehicle use](#) is online.

If vehicle use involves **STUDENT PASSENGERS** or **STUDENT DRIVERS** (with approval and within the scope of NDSU Policy) a Request for Authorized Academic Use of State Fleet Vehicles must be completed and approved.

**Rental Vehicles:** Liability and comprehensive and collision coverage for vehicles rented short-term when traveling on official state business.

- [OMB Fiscal Policy 518](#) provides that agencies must use state contracts that include liability coverage and damage waiver as part of the base rental rate. See [State Cooperative Contract for Rental Vehicles \(2 pages\)](#).
- If a vehicle is not available through a state contract, agencies **must** purchase the additional insurance and damage waiver protection. See [Vehicle Coverage FAQs](#) for more information.