SUMMARY:

This policy outlines the authorized driver eligibility, driver education and training, and guidelines for the safe operation of University-owned, -leased, or -rented vehicles for University business including but not limited to automobiles, trucks, vans, golf carts, and utility vehicles.

POLICY:

I. DEFINITIONS:

A. Authorized Driver – A University employee, registered volunteer or student who has met the requirements of this policy and has been verified by the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) to be eligible. Only authorized drivers may operate University vehicles and only for official University business.

B. Fleet Vehicle – A state-owned or University-operated motor vehicle assigned by the University to one of its academic or administrative units for use by Authorized Drivers.

C. Golf Cart/Utility Vehicle Operator – A University employee, registered volunteer or student who has met the requirements of this policy and has successfully completed the Golf Cart and Utility Vehicle training course.

D. Leased Vehicle – A motor vehicle that is operated by an Authorized Driver through a long-term, fixed agreement with a state-contracted vendor that may be assigned to one of its academic or administrative units.

E. Motor Pool Vehicle – A fleet vehicle assigned to the Department of Transportation Services available for short-term rental to Authorized Drivers on University business.

F. Rental Vehicle – A motor vehicle operated by an Authorized Driver through a short-term fixed rental agreement with a state contracted vendor following approval by their supervisor or budget officer for University business.
G. Routine Driver – An Authorized Driver whose position description requires them to drive a fleet, leased, motor pool or rental vehicle on a daily basis, or during every shift.

II. Eligibility to become an Authorized Driver

A. To become an Authorized Driver, one must present a valid, state-issued driver’s license and a three-year Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) driving record. Individuals with violations totaling fewer six (6) points within the prior three (3) years will be considered approved to operate University owned or leased vehicles.

1. Those requesting to become Authorized Drivers who have had a South Carolina driver’s license for at least three years will be required to furnish a South Carolina DMV three-year driving record.

2. Those requesting to become Authorized Drivers who have had a South Carolina driver’s license for fewer than three years will be required to furnish a South Carolina DMV driving record and DMV driving record(s) from the states where they previously held a driver’s license for the three previous years.

3. Those requesting to become Authorized Drivers who do not have a South Carolina driver’s license will be required to furnish a DMV three-year driving record from the state or states where they currently hold a driver’s license for the three previous years. Those who have a permanent out-of-state residence must sign and submit a statement that affirms this and, therefore, they will not be able to obtain a valid S.C. driver’s license.

III. Loss of Eligibility to be an Authorized Driver

A. As required by South Carolina State Vehicle Safety Policy, the University annually conducts DMV driver record eligibility screenings of Authorized Drivers.

1. Authorized Drivers possessing an out-of-state license (see: I.A.3.) will be responsible for providing their DMV driving record from their issuing state to the Department of Transportation Services within ninety (90) days of employment and then annually by September 1st.

2. Employees operating a University-owned, -leased, or rental vehicle while their state license is suspended or when they do not meet the eligibility criteria to be an Authorized Driver may be subject to disciplinary action. Anyone whose state-issued driver’s license has been suspended or does not meet the eligibility criteria to be an Authorized Driver as per this policy, must notify their department head and the University’s Department of Transportation Services as soon as practicable. Such an individual is no longer permitted to operate a University owned, leased, or rental vehicle.

3. Anyone whose state-issued driver’s license has been suspended or does not meet the eligibility criteria to be an Authorized Driver may request reinstatement as an Authorized Driver when they once again meet the eligibility criteria to be an Authorized Driver as per this policy.

   a. Anyone requesting to be reinstated as an Authorized Driver must submit an updated three-year DMV driving record to the Department of Transportation Services.
Services for review. If the driver once again meets the eligibility criteria as per this policy, their request to be reinstated will be forwarded to their reporting line member of Executive Council. The member of Executive Council will consult with University Counsel and Risk Management to review the circumstances of the suspension and insurance underwriting coverage. Each request for reinstatement will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Upon the approval of the member of Executive Council, the employee’s driving privileges may be reinstated, but only after the employee has completed a Driver Improvement Training class offered by the Department of Transportation Services.

IV. Rental Vehicles

A. Reservation and use of rental vehicles

1. The University utilizes a short-term fixed rental agreement with a state contracted vendor. Access for Authorized Drivers to procure this rental service is available via web link located on the Department of Transportation Services website. [www.coastal.edu/transportation](http://www.coastal.edu/transportation)

2. Drivers of vehicles rented for University business must be twenty-one (21) years old, possess a valid driver’s license, be listed on the rental vehicle reservation, and be an Authorized Driver. No University driver shall allow another person to operate the rental vehicle unless the additional driver meets the same criteria, and their name and information is included on the reservation. Safe operation of rental vehicles must comply with Section V of this policy.

3. Supervisors or Budget Officers must confirm that drivers of vehicles rented for University purposes and any additional secondary drivers are Authorized Drivers when approving the employee’s travel. The process of checking the driver’s status is outlined on the Department of Transportation Services website. [www.coastal.edu/transportation](http://www.coastal.edu/transportation)

a. All rental and fuel expenses for vehicles rented for University purposes are to be paid on a Travel Card or personal card and documented through the travel authorization process along with other travel expenses.

V. Driver Education

A. The University encourages all University drivers to attend an eight-hour session of the AAA Driver Improvement Program (DIP) training offered by the Department of Transportation Services. Once the eight-hour course has been completed, employees may attend a four-hour refresher course every third year. Note: The State of South Carolina may reduce up to 4 violation points from a South Carolina driver’s record for attending the AAA Driver Improvement Program (DIP) training offered by the Department of Transportation Services.
1. The following categories of Authorized Drivers must attend DIP training as specified:
   a. Routine Drivers whose University positions require them to be a daily driver, or who are permanently assigned a state-owned vehicle, will attend the eight-hour DIP training course within ninety (90) days of the date of becoming a Routine Driver and must attend the four hour session refresher course every third year thereafter.
   b. Routine Drivers who have previously attended an approved driver training course outside of the University within three (3) years may present verification of attendance and not be required to attend the four hour session refresher course until the third anniversary of their driver training course completion.
   c. Authorized Drivers that have contributed to a collision in a state owned or operated vehicle must complete the eight-hour AAA Driver Improvement Program (DIP) course within ninety (90) days of such finding. Failure to do so will result in termination of the driver’s University vehicle driving privileges until the driver education requirement is met.
   d. Authorized Drivers found to have accumulated nine (9) or more traffic violation points or having contributed to two (2) state vehicle accidents on their DMV record must complete the eight-hour DIP training course within ninety (90) days of the discovery of their driving history. Failure to do so will result in termination of the employee’s University vehicle driving privileges until the driver education requirement is met.

VI. Operation of Vehicles for 12-Passengers or Fewer

A. All drivers and passengers must wear a seat belt according to state law. There are to be no more people in a vehicle than the number of seatbelts (i.e. twelve (12) passenger vans with twelve (12) seatbelts can only hold a maximum of twelve (12) people).

B. No children under the age of sixteen (16) will be allowed to travel in motor pool or rental vehicle unless written permission is granted by the Vice President of the department requesting the vehicle.

C. Minimum ages for drivers:
   1. University owned or operated cars, mini-vans, SUVs, trucks – Drivers must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
   2. State owned or operated twelve (12) passenger vans – Drivers must be at least twenty-one (21) years old.
   3. State contracted vendor rentals – Rental companies require that drivers be at least twenty-one (21) years old.
   4. Box Truck (fleet, motor pool, or rental) – Drivers must be at least twenty-five (25) years old.
   5. Upon request, the Department of Transportation Services may offer a driver service for campus groups for an additional fee when a department cannot provide its own Authorized Driver.
D. Pursuant to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issuance of a consumer advisory regarding the increased rollover risk associated with the use of 15-passenger vans, and the adoption of Jacobs Law by the State of South Carolina in July 2006 issuing certain mandatory requirements for the utilization of 15-passenger vans for secondary and primary school activities, the University shall not rent or use 15-Passenger vans within its motor pool or rentals from a state contractor.

VII. Golf Cart and Utility Vehicle Operation

A. Golf Cart/Utility Vehicle Operators are required to follow all of the laws of the road that apply to golf carts and motor vehicles, including stopping at stop signs and at red lights as well as all golf cart procedures on the Department of Transportation website. www.coastal.edu/transportation

B. Golf Cart/Utility Vehicle Operator must maintain and control University golf carts in a safe and responsible manner.

C. Report all maintenance problems to your supervisor and if necessary, submit a work request to Facilities Management Equipment Maintenance for proper repair.