

Vehicle Task Force Summary, May 2022

Some task force recommendations were implemented in the most recent [University Travel Policy- Procedure document](#), last amended on February 7, 2022. Use of University-owned vehicles policies start on the bottom of page 7.

The new policies:

1. Allow for university vehicle trips up to 700 miles round trip, and require permission from a divisional administrator for trips farther away. For trips over 700 miles round trip, renting vehicles is an encouraged alternative.
2. The age requirement for student drivers was removed.

Although not printed in the official travel policies, the internal policies and procedures of facilities now allow:

1. One employee to pick up the keys for multiple vehicles that are all used by the same program.
2. On-campus overnight programs to keep vehicles overnight.

Facilities and the university provided assurances that:

1. Assistance will be provided when rental vehicles are needed.
2. Vehicles will be allocated as much as possible to ensure that grant funding is not jeopardized.
3. They are aggressively recruiting shuttle drivers and will do whatever they can to support programs when shuttles are not available.
4. Shuttle buses will be maintained at a high standard.

These task force recommendations were not supported:

1. Covering damage or theft of personal vehicles used for official university business.
2. Giving Deans the ability to override the budget office, so that travel approvals can be processed in a timely manner to help avoid higher travel costs.

The remaining issue is this:

- Schools or Areas that sponsor events that use university fleet vehicles are responsible for the costs of collision damage to those vehicles when the university driver is at fault. These costs can be prohibitive for small programs or for expensive repairs. The state of NJ is self-insured, so there is no deductible; the entire cost of collision damage must be paid by the school or division. University programs cannot purchase commercial vehicle collision insurance for university vehicles.
- Can the university offer any financial protections to programs for expensive vehicle repairs? The alternative is risking School and Area budgets being depleted by collision repair costs leaving them unable to support their operations and the cancellation of programs that lack budgets large enough to pay for expensive repairs.

We would like the Senate's guidance about whether the task force should continue, or whether there are other Senate mechanisms available to address any outstanding issues.