

VEHICLE ACQUISITION, OPERATION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

Effective Date: September 12, 2007

Policy Statement

Columbia University places the utmost importance on the safety of drivers and occupants of University vehicles. Those responsible for University owned vehicles, those who rent and lease vehicles for University business use, and those who use privately-owned vehicles on University business are expected to keep their vehicles in safe operating condition, obey traffic laws, and adhere to University policy. This policy sets forth the requirements pertaining to the acquisition, operation, and disposal of any University owned/leased vehicle as well as the operation of privately-owned vehicles used on Columbia business.

Reason for the Policy

Columbia University wishes to protect its faculty, staff, and student body from the legal liabilities associated with the ownership and operation of vehicles through adherence with standardized rules and regulations pertaining to the care and use of University vehicles. Columbia University wishes to provide clear procedures regarding registration, insurance, and accident reporting processes as well as the acquisition, operation, and disposal of University vehicles.

Responsible University Office

Risk Management, Office of the Treasurer

Who is Governed by this Policy

All colleges, schools, institutes, and administrative units within the University, including affiliates and subsidiaries anywhere in the world, that operate a University owned/leased vehicle or individuals who regularly operate their personal vehicles on Columbia University business must adhere to this policy.

Individuals that operate University owned/leased watercraft anywhere in the world are also governed by this policy with regards to registration, reporting, and disposal rules.

Relevant Policies and Web-links from Risk Management

Property Loss/Damage Claim Reporting and Reimbursement Policy

Risk Management homepage: http://finance.columbia.edu/treasury/risk_management/index.html

Risk Management forms posted in the Finance Division Forms Library:
http://finance.columbia.edu/forms/index.html#risk_management

New York State Department of Motor Vehicles: <http://www.nydmv.state.ny.us/>

United States Department of Transportation: <http://www.dot.gov/>

Relevant Policies and Web-links from Purchasing and Accounts Payable

Business Expense Policy

Travel Expense Policy

Short-term motor vehicle rental: http://finance.columbia.edu/procurement/ap/travel-business_expenses/travel/ground_transportation.html

Policy on Disposal, Sale or Trade-In of Furniture and Equipment

Policy

Columbia University will make available, to the best extent possible, vehicles of design and capacity for use by University employees and faculty in support of the University's and individual departments' missions. The University reserves the right to select specific vehicles and/or equipment and its method of ownership/procurement for the required task. The University also reserves the right to deny access to any vehicle at any time if safe and legal operation is in doubt. To the degree practical, Columbia strongly recommends the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles (electric, hydrogen, propane, hybrid, etc) as substitute for conventionally powered ones.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms have special meaning within the content of this policy and are pertinent to fully understanding it. Other terms not specifically defined here carry their ordinary meaning.

Vehicle – any University owned motor vehicle or watercraft. Vehicle also means privately-owned motor vehicles or watercraft solely related to operational aspects. Aircraft are not included in the definition of vehicle.

Motor vehicle – any motorized and self-propelled automobile, pick-up truck, SUV, van, multi-axle truck, trailer, bus, construction equipment (intended to operate on public ways), motorcycle, snowmobile, and other means of conveyance that requires formal registration with a state, provincial, or federal agency for legal operation.

Watercraft – any vessel or personal watercraft <26 ft in length that requires formal registration with a state, provincial or federal agency for legal operation.

Columbia University owned or University owned – any motor vehicle or watercraft titled in the name of Columbia University, including motor vehicles or watercraft leased to Columbia under formal contract for more than 120 consecutive days.

Privately-Owned Vehicle – any motor vehicle or watercraft titled in the name of a person or organization other than Columbia University.

Affiliate/Subsidiary – any individual(s), group, company, or organization recognized to be an auxiliary in Columbia University’s mission(s), including associated schools, institutes, and centers; consultants, contractors, and subcontractors; and temporary educational and/or business partners.

Vehicle Coordinator – Columbia University employee designated by the department/unit head(s) to be responsible for fleet maintenance, driver supervision, and communication with Risk Management related to motor vehicle and watercraft issues, including but not limited to accident reporting, claim resolution, and information gathering.

Driver – an individual operating a Columbia University owned motor vehicle or watercraft; also an individual operating a privately owned motor vehicle or watercraft on behalf of Columbia University or on University-related business.

DMV – abbreviation for the Department of Motor Vehicles, a state governmental branch which establishes laws pertaining to transportation; unless otherwise specified, for this policy the term specifically refers to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.

Violations & Fines – any penalty associated with operating a vehicle in an unlawful or prohibited manner, including parking a vehicle inappropriately.

Collision Insurance – insurer pays for the loss to the insured’s vehicle for all damages caused by collision in excess of a deductible amount (insurer pays for cost to repair damages or replacement value of vehicle minus the policy’s deductible).

Liability Insurance – coverage for all sums that the insured becomes legally obligated to pay because of negligent acts or omissions resulting in bodily injury and/or property damage to a third party; the insurer shall defend the insured against liability suites for damages caused to the third party, paying various expenses in this connection.

Comprehensive Insurance – insurer pays for loss to an insured’s vehicle for all damages, in excess of a deductible amount, except due to collision; usually applies to losses from theft and fire (if loss is unrelated to collision, insurer pays cost to repair damage or replacement value of vehicle minus the policy’s deductible).

Comprehensive Glass Insurance – coverage on an ALL RISKS basis for glass breakage, excluding war and fire. Thus, if a vandal throws a brick through a window of an insured’s vehicle, the coverage would apply.

ACQUISITION

For uniformity, all vehicles owned or leased by Columbia University must be registered and titled (ie. owned only) in the name: “The Trustees of Columbia University.” All vehicles in North America must be registered to the street address of the Risk Management offices. The original vehicle titles will be held by Risk Management once issued. The responsible department may keep a copy of the title. Risk Management must receive a copy of the registration and be updated on the inspection status of each vehicle, including the inspection sticker number and expiration date. Once issued, the original registration and an insurance card are to be kept in the vehicle at all times.

Individual departments, affiliates, and subsidiaries are responsible for acquiring desired vehicles, in compliance with Columbia's procurement practices, and for submitting the required ownership and registration documentation as well as a completed New Vehicle Registration form (available from the Risk Management website) to Risk Management in a timely manner. The University encourages departments to purchase and lease hybrid vehicles. The department is responsible for executing registration paperwork at the appropriate DMV office in accordance with the law. Laws may differ by locality, county, state, and country.

INSURANCE PREMIUMS AND REGISTRATION RENEWAL FEES

Risk Management will charge insurance premium for each vehicle to the responsible department's account before the close of each quarter. The departmental Vehicle Coordinator will receive an email detailing charges at the time funds are withdrawn; at the second quarter close, this email will include estimated premiums for the coming fiscal year.

Registration renewals for vehicles in the United States will be processed by Risk Management upon receipt of materials from the DMV, and these fees will be charged back to the department at the time of payment. Schedules of registration fees are available from the DMV.

Every vehicle will be registered and fully insured at the department's expense until the Vehicle Coordinator notifies Risk Management using the University's established procedures. Prorated insurance premium will not be refunded to departments who fail to properly notify Risk Management of the vehicle's status. Verification of the appropriateness of all charges is the responsibility of the departmental Vehicle Coordinator.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

University owned vehicles must have full insurance to cover liability and comprehensive damage. All departments with vehicles operating in North America are required to purchase the Columbia University motor vehicle insurance policy with these areas of coverage, which is managed by and billed through Risk Management. Glass coverage has a \$200 deductible. All other claims are subject to the University's current property loss/damage deductible, which will be deducted from any reimbursement made to the responsible department subject to the standard guidelines of the University's Property Loss/Damage Reporting and Reimbursement Policy and procedures.

Collision coverage is available at an additional cost. If purchased, the department's claims for collision damage will be subject to the University's current property loss/damage deductible, which will be deducted from any reimbursement made to the responsible department subject to the standard guidelines of the University's Property Loss/Damage Reporting and Reimbursement Policy and procedures. If there are any questions regarding insurance coverage, please contact Risk Management.

Please note that insurance coverage is not extended to personal property in any vehicle. Drivers and passengers should not store any personal property in vehicles, especially while the vehicle is unattended. Columbia University will not reimburse for personal property that is damaged or lost in a vehicle related incident or event. Departments must not reimburse individuals for personal property that is lost or damaged in a vehicle related incident or event.

Claims may be submitted for departmental property (property purchased by Columbia University for business use) that is lost or damaged while in a vehicle being operated on University business. Risk Management will investigate the claim and may choose to reimburse the department, minus the University's current standard property loss/damage deductible, if the claim is deemed to be allowable as per the Property Loss/Damage Claim Reporting and Reimbursement Policy. Risk Management retains the right to deny reimbursement for damage or loss arising out of or resulting from actions deemed careless and/or negligent on the part of the driver and/or passenger(s) regardless of the party's relationship to Columbia University.

Departments must not pay any portion of insurance premium for personal vehicles—even if operated on University business. For details on Columbia University's policy on this matter, refer to the University's Travel Expense and Business Expense policies.

INSURANCE ID CARDS

Replacement insurance cards for previously registered vehicles are available and can be requested on the Risk Management website. A Vehicle Insurance ID Request does not need to be submitted for a new vehicle; this will be automatically created when the New Vehicle Registration Request is received.

OPERATION

Motor vehicles must be operated in a safe and legal manner, in compliance with the applicable rules and laws for the jurisdiction(s) being operated in at all times. University-owned vehicles may only be used in the fulfillment of University business unless prior authorization has been granted by the department head or by Risk Management. Only those employees, students, and affiliated authorized by the department head and Risk Management are allowed to operate University-owned vehicles.

The driver of any vehicle has ultimate responsibility for verifying that their vehicle is properly registered and permitted for legal operation. The driver of any vehicle also has ultimate responsibility for the safety and health of any passengers and the public in general. A driver has the right to refuse embarking on any travel if, in their opinion, the vehicle or general conditions are unsafe and constitute a hazard to himself/herself, passengers, the general public, or University property, or where operation would otherwise violate the law.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

All maintenance is the sole responsibility of the department and should be monitored by the departmental Vehicle Coordinator. Columbia University requires that appropriate care is taken with University owned vehicles, including routine and preventative maintenance recommended in the manufacturer's published manual. Risk Management may deny reimbursement for claims deemed to be the direct result of inappropriate maintenance.

Departments must not pay for the maintenance or repair of personal vehicles—even if operated on University business. For details on Columbia University’s policy on this matter, refer to the Travel Expense and Business Expense policies.

BUDGETING FOR A VEHICLE

The Purchasing office can provide the most accurate information on the cost of acquiring a vehicle. Upon request, Risk Management can provide estimates of insurance premium for any motor vehicle, boat, or trailer. Please allow up to five business days for an answer regarding projected premium. A proper departmental budget should also include estimated operating costs such as fuel, maintenance, inspection fees, and registration renewal fees as well as potential events such as parking tickets and property loss/damage claim deductibles.

VIOLATIONS AND FINES

Columbia University expects all vehicle operators to take care in avoiding violations and fines. As custodians of University property, the Trustees of Columbia University expect those who operate and manage vehicles to be conscientiousness and employ best practices. Each department must pay for violations associated with University owned vehicles being operated on Columbia University business in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of the department and the Vehicle Coordinator to put in place a system for drivers to immediately report violations and fines to supervisors.

If a fine is incurred while a University owned vehicle is not being operated on explicit University business, the department must not pay for or reimburse employees for the violation. Departments must not pay for or reimburse employees for violations associated with privately owned vehicles, even if the violation occurred while the vehicle was being operated on behalf of Columbia University.

Risk Management will intervene if it finds that a particular vehicle or department is accruing excessive violations and/or fines. Possible outcomes of such intervention include revision of departmental procedures related to vehicle operation, extra training for drivers, and counseling on disciplinary measures.

USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES ON UNIVERSITY BUSINESS

The regular use of non-University owned vehicles is strongly discouraged. Drivers and department Vehicle Coordinators should make every effort to use a Columbia owned vehicle or make arrangements to utilize a rented vehicle or car service whenever possible. Should specific circumstances warrant the use of a privately owned vehicle or when no suitable Columbia owned vehicle is available for use, then a privately-owned vehicle may be used only for the duration and extent necessary to complete the intended task. Columbia University urges departments not to make the use of a personal vehicle a condition of employment.

Departments will reimburse individuals for mileage accrued while using a personal vehicle on Columbia University’s behalf as per the provisions of the Travel Expense and Business Expense policies. Reimbursement for mileage incurred while traveling on University business is

calculated to include the proportional cost of an individual's motor vehicle insurance; as such, the insurance coverage of the vehicle owner is the primary insurance.

Columbia University's insurance policies cover only the liability of the University and is not extended to drivers of privately-owned vehicles traveling for Columbia University business purposes. In an accident involving a privately owned vehicle where the Columbia driver is not at fault, the University's insurance may cover the damages or injuries to other parties, including passengers, after the limits of the insurance carried by the owner of the vehicle and the at fault party have been exhausted. Neither the University nor the Department will reimburse an individual for any portion of the motor vehicle insurance premium or deductible under any circumstances. Again, the reimbursement provisions of the Travel Expense and Business Expense policies include the cost of an individual's motor vehicle insurance in the compensation rate for mileage accrued while traveling on University business, and this recompense cannot be adjusted or augmented by any department.

SHORT-TERM RENTAL OF VEHICLES

For information on the short-term (< than 30 consecutive days) rental of vehicles, please see Columbia University's Travel Expense and Business Expense Policies. More information on ground transportation and rental cars is posted on the Accounts Payable webpage at: http://finance.columbia.edu/procurement/ap/travel-business_expenses/travel/ground_transportation.html, and at: <http://www.campustravel.com/university/columbia/>.

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS

No one under the age of 18 is permitted to operate a University vehicle, including vehicles rented on the University's behalf. Departments may set more stringent age requirements for drivers authorized to use University vehicles. Columbia University requires that a driver be properly licensed for the size and type/class of vehicle s/he will be operating as per the rules and regulations of all applicable local jurisdictions. The University prefers that all drivers have two years of relevant experience (driving a similar vehicle in an equivalent environment) before operating University owned vehicles or privately owned vehicles on the University's behalf. It is recommended that first and second year undergraduate students not be authorized to drive University owned vehicles or privately owned vehicles on the University business.

ACCIDENTS

All accidents—no matter how minor—must be reported by the driver to his/her supervisor and/or departmental Vehicle Coordinator immediately, including accidents involving privately owned vehicles operated on University business. If possible, obtain a police report at the time of the accident. If an accident occurs in North America, the appropriate reporting must be completed and submitted to Risk Management within 72 hours of the accident. If an accident occurs outside of North America, the incident should be reported to the appropriate supervisors immediately and to Risk Management as soon as possible using the prescribed loss reporting forms.

For complete instructions regarding accident reporting and resolution, please see the Accident Report Procedure on the Risk Management website.

If you are involved in an accident, get immediate medical aid if you are injured. Notify the police. Make no statements concerning guilt or fault, and never agree to make payments for the accident. Record as much information as you can on all other parties to the accident, and report this information to supervisor and/or departmental Vehicle Coordinator. Discuss the accident only with police officers, University officials, and representatives of the University as directed. Refer all questions from lawyers, the other party in the accident, and others to Risk Management and report these requests to the departmental Vehicle Coordinator

Each department is responsible for physical damage to any and all vehicles in their care. Physical damage from an allowable event that is insured by Risk Management will be reimbursed minus the applicable deductible. Repairing physical damage that is not covered by an insurance policy is the obligation of the responsible department.

DISPOSAL

When a vehicle is sold, traded-in, transferred to another department, totaled, or otherwise removed from service, the departmental Vehicle Coordinator must notify Risk Management by submitting supporting documentation (such as a bill of sale) with a completed Vehicle Disposal Report, which is available from the Risk Management website and in the Finance Division Forms Library. Note: Only a properly empowered University employee sign the title of a University owned vehicle. The responsible department must also follow protocol set forth by Columbia University's Purchasing Department's policy on Disposal, Sale or Trade-in of Furniture and Equipment.

Risk Management recommends that vehicles not be sold or otherwise transferred to an individual, but rather that vehicles be sold or transferred to a business with the experience to understand all risks associated with taking possession of a previously owned vehicle.