

POLICY / PROCEDURE NAME: Motor Vehicle Safety
POLICY / PROCEDURE NUMBER: Fleet Manager's Manual, Section 5.1
DATE ISSUED: March 31, 2004
DATE REVISED: Not Applicable

REFERENCE / LEGAL AUTHORITY: ORC Section 125.832

Policy / Procedure: The DAS Office of Fleet Management and DAS Office of Risk Management are committed to motor vehicle safety at all levels of state government. The DAS goal is to promote a proactive approach to motor vehicle safety and to combine various motor vehicle safety practices and procedures into a comprehensive standard. State agencies are encouraged to develop mission specific fleet motor vehicle safety policies and procedures that are determined to be beneficial and necessary in order to promote and manage motor vehicle safety.

State agencies that have questions on specific safety issues are encouraged to contact the DAS Office of Risk Management at (614) 466-6761 or e-mail at Risk.Management@das.state.oh.us.

DAS will periodically amend or establish additional fleet safety guidelines, policies and procedures. Listed below are specific policies and procedures covering various safety issues.

1. Unauthorized Use of Vehicles:

- Travel or tasks which are beyond the vehicles rated capability are prohibited.
- Transport of hazardous materials (i.e. acids, explosives, weapons, ammunition or highly flammable materials) is prohibited, except in very specific situations, or in an emergency situation. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Transportation Department should be considered as a contact point before transporting hazardous materials. The PUCO Transportation Department Enforcement Division can be reached at (614) 466-0369.
- Transport of any item or equipment projecting from the side, front or rear of the vehicle in a way which constitutes an obstruction to safe driving, or a hazard to pedestrians or to other vehicles is prohibited.
- Operating a state vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited.

2. Driver's License and State and Local Traffic Laws:

All drivers and passengers of a state vehicle must comply with all applicable state and local traffic laws, including but not limited to:

- The driver shall possess a valid driver's license or in the case of a suspended or revoked license, special work privileges must be awarded by a court and copies of the order provided to the Office of Risk Management.
- The driver and all passengers shall comply with all applicable state and local traffic laws. The driver shall be personally liable for any traffic or criminal fines or penalties imposed.

3. Seat Belts / Safety Restraints:

All driver's and passengers in state owned or leased vehicles shall wear seat belts or safety restraints as required by Ohio Revised Code Section 4513.264. It is the responsibility of each occupant to ensure compliance with the state's seat belt law. The use of seat belts or other safety restraints may not be appropriate in the use of some passenger carrying vehicles (i.e. busses) or for some types of passengers (i.e. prisoners).

4. Smoking in Vehicles:

Smoking is prohibited in all vehicles owned or leased by the state pursuant to Governors Executive Order 99-03T creating a Smoke Free Workplace. The Executive Order can be viewed at <http://www.gsd.das.state.oh.us/fleet/ExecOrder99-03T.pdf>.

5. Safety Equipment and Supplies:

State motor vehicles should carry appropriate safety items in the event of breakdowns on the road. The Ohio Highway Patrol recommends carrying the listed "safe seven" items in motor vehicles.

- Cellular telephone or CB radio
- Flares, reflectors, or other warning devices
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Reflective tape
- Blanket

Safety tips and safety publications can be viewed at the Ohio Highway Patrol's web site at <http://www.state.oh.us/ohiostatepatrol/publications.htm>.

6. Roadside Breakdowns

All drivers should be made aware of departmental policy and procedures in the event of a roadside breakdown. At a minimum, the following items should be included.

- Pull well off roadway.
- Activate emergency flashers.
- Call for help: Ohio Highway Patrol @ CB Channel 9 or 1-877-7-PATROL or NAC Fleet Rescue @ 1-800-894-6060 and provide the State account number (8503858-000).
- Watching for traffic at all times, warn other traffic (flashers, flares, reflectors, etc.).
- Stay with your motor vehicle and keep your safety belt on.
- Lock your doors but keep your windows cracked.

Safety tips and safety publications can be viewed at the Ohio Highway Patrol's web site at <http://www.state.oh.us/ohiostatepatrol/publications.htm>.

7. Vehicle Inspection:

The driver shall be responsible for checking the state vehicle before operating to ensure that the vehicle lights, turn signals, brake lights and other safety equipment are functional on the state vehicle. If the driver finds any of this equipment is not functioning properly, the driver shall report malfunctions to the proper authority (i.e. dispatcher, supervisor) as soon as possible in order to arrange for repairs.

8. Mobile (Cellular) Telephone Use While Operating a State Vehicle:

Cellular telephone use has expanded quickly and is used commonly during business travel. While the availability of cellular telephones on the roadways has benefited in emergency calls, reporting congestion, etc., driver inattention and distraction can have a significant and determinable negative impact on driver performance and can result in unnecessary accidents. While many distractions exist in vehicles (i.e. passenger activities, use of radios, HVAC

systems, in-vehicle guidance systems, etc.) studies suggest that drivers who use car phones may have an increased risk of accidents. Some political subdivisions of the state have passed local ordinances prohibiting the use of cellular telephones while driving.

To improve the safety and awareness of employees, passengers and the public, driving tips have been developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for the use of cellular telephones in motor vehicles. These guidelines can be viewed at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/research/wireless/c6.htm>.