

Suncreek UMC Bus Policy

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Suncreek UMC Bus Policy

The Bus Ministry is operated under the general supervision of Trustees

1 Purpose

To provide transportation for the church family to support the programs and ministries of Suncreek UMC

2 Operating Policy

2.1 Use of the Bus

a) Eligibility:

1. All Suncreek groups have approval and authority to use the bus
2. The bus will not be available to any group not covered by 1 above including groups / individuals that generally rent SUMC facilities for their own usage

b) Distance / Destination:

1. Trips may only occur within the Continental United States
2. Any trip with a roundtrip distance greater than 250 miles is designated as an extended miles trip and requires special waiver from the **Business Administrator** in consultation with the **Trustees Chair**
 - “*In consultation with*” is defined to mean that the **Business Administrator** will advise the **Trustees Chair** prior to any request so as to support ongoing **Trustees** awareness

c) Number of Passengers Requirement:

- The number of passengers and drivers will not exceed the capacity as noted in the bus

d) Scheduling Procedure:

1. A **Trip Request Package “TRP”** will be available from the [Trustees web site](#): -see [3 Supporting Materials](#)
2. Formal approval will not be issued until a completed **TRP** has been received and processed by either the **Office Administrator** or **Business Administrator** in consultation with **Trustees Chair**
3. **Office Administrator** has the authority to schedule and approve a trip request unless elsewhere noted and may defer to the **Business Administrator** for any reason
4. Any **TRP** reservation request is considered “*tentative*” and subject to denial or may be removed from the schedule at any time until “*formal*” approval has been issued
5. Approval will be required of the **Business Administrator** in consultation with **Trustees Chair** when;
 - Request is received with less than 14 days notification
 - For **riders** who are under age 21 and composed of both male and female, the request must be approved by the **Business Administrator** whenever the **accompanying sponsors** will not have at least one male and one female
 - Since it may not be possible to have a detail list of riders at the time of the initial **TRP**, unless the **Trip Description** on the **Trip Log** explicitly indicates that more than 50% will be over 21 years of age, then the request will be deemed to be primarily for those under the age of 21 years, thus requiring approval of the **Business Administrator** in consultation with **Trustees Chair**
 - **TRP** received with less than 48 hour deadline will immediately be brought to the **Business Administrator** in consultation with the **Trustees Chair**, which may result in a notice of withdrawal of bus service
 - Rescheduling within 5 days of trip will be deemed a cancellation and will then require re-approval by the **Business Administrator** in consultation with **Trustees Chair**
6. The **requestor** is responsible for
 1. Securing a **driver** from the approved list -see [2.2.b Approved Drivers](#)
 2. Supplying a copy of the policy to every **accompanying sponsor**

e) Point of Origin:

1. The bus will only leave from and return to the church parking lot
2. The bus will be parked in the far Southwest parking lot

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- f) **Passenger Conduct:** All users of the church bus are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies Christian principles
1. The **Administer, Trustees** and / or **Trustees Chair** reserve the right to deny use of any bus to any **passenger** or **group** before or during a trip for any purpose
 2. Vandalism or property damage shall be paid for by the **individual/group** responsible for the damage and such damage may constitute due reason to deny use of the bus for future trips
 3. **Accompanying Sponsors** shall have primary responsibility for passenger conduct and are expected to inform all riders of any applicable rules and overall decorum –see [2.1.h Tobacco / Alcohol](#)
- g) **Bus Cleanliness / Care:**
1. Each **group** is responsible for cleaning the bus, including picking up all refuse, cleaning spills and clearing all debris from the seats and floor
 2. If bus requires additional, interior / exterior attention, additional charges will be invoked
 3. **Business Administrator** will review post **TRP** documentation and determine if any action is appropriate, including the denial of future scheduling privileges for a group
- h) **Tobacco / Alcohol Policy:**
1. No tobacco products are allowed on the bus
 2. No alcohol is permitted on the bus
 3. Violation is sufficient for the individual to be exited from the bus –see [2.1.i Passenger Supervision](#)
- i) **Passenger Log / Guidelines:**
1. **Accompanying Sponsor** is responsible for the **Passenger Log “PL”** creation and upkeep
 2. At departure time, if there are any changes, a revised version is to be left with the **Church Office**
 3. The **Passenger Log** will contain a list of all individuals, which includes:
 - **Drivers**
 - **Accompanying Sponsors / Ministers**
 - **Passengers / Riders**
 4. The **PL** must be used to determine who is on each bus prior to its departure
 5. **Accompanying Sponsor** will perform a headcount to confirm attendance after each stop and by one other **adult** and then confirmed with each other prior to each departure
 6. The **accompanying sponsor** is responsible to note all changes on the **PL** throughout the duration of the trip and to keep the **driver** so informed
 7. **Rider** drop-offs or pick-up must be kept to a minimum and meet below criteria
 - Scheduled with the **driver** before departure (preferable before day of trip)
 - Approved by **driver**
 8. The **accompanying sponsor** is to advise the **driver** verbally of any special passenger needs prior to bus departure as well as document the need within the **Trip Request Package**
- j) **Passenger Supervision:**
1. If more than 50% of the **riders** are under 21 years of age, it is recommended to have at least one **accompanying sponsor**, which may need to sit in the back to assist in supervision during operation
 2. Control of passenger actions is the responsibility of every **accompanying sponsor**. However the **lead driver** has final authority if they believe any action endangers the bus or riders for any reason
 3. Should the **driver** require a passenger to be escorted off the bus, the **driver** must immediately attempt to notify the **Business Administrator** or other **pastoral staff**
 - Key consideration will be given for passenger safety
 - **Accompanying Sponsor** may be requested to accompany passenger for alternative trip completion
 - If the passenger is under 21, guardian notification is to be attempted
 - Any expense incurred by an **accompanying sponsor** or **driver** is to be reimbursed by the **group** and/or **guardian** within 14 days of trip completion
- k) **Spokesperson:**
1. The **spokesperson** is to communicate with authorities, insurance representatives, etc
 2. The **drivers** and **accompanying sponsors** will establish who is the **spokesperson**
 3. The **spokesperson** will have their name circled on the **Passenger Log**

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2.2 Drivers

a) **Accommodations:**

1. Accommodations should be made for the **driver(s)** for all meals and private lodging, when available
2. The **drivers** family may stay in the **drivers** room if it will not interfere with the **drivers** rest requirements – see [Regulations 2.2.c](#)
3. Seats are to be made available for **drivers** family members
4. Event cost for the **driver** and family (if possible) should be covered

b) **Approved Drivers:**

1. **Approved Drivers List** may be obtained from the **Business Administrator** or **Office Administrator**
2. **Trustees** shall maintain a list of approved **drivers** for the bus
3. **Trustees** shall review approved **drivers** list on an annual basis

c) **Regulations:**

1. The “on duty” limit is 15 hours out of 24 hours
2. The driving limit is 10 hours out of 24 hours with 8 hours off duty
3. An assumption must be made that drivers have 1 hour of prep time before the start of any trip that counts toward their “on duty” hours
4. Any road trip that may be in excess of 10 consecutive driving hours requires multiple **drivers**. It is recommended that a driver change occur after 8 consecutive hours
5. When multiple **drivers** are used, a 4 hours on, 4 hours off system may be used but seats must be allocated for bunks for the **drivers**

d) **Qualifications:**

1. Must present an active Texas commercial drivers license (CDL) to the **Business Administrator**
2. Must be at least 25 years of age but not older than 70
3. Must have been approved by the Suncreek Senior Minister
4. Will undergo an annual back round check
5. Annually sign a current Bus Policy to indicate they have read and accept the policy
6. Must Not have:
 - Any DUI'S (driving Under the Influence)
 - Any reckless driving citations in the last 5 years
 - More than 2 moving violations in the previous 2 years

e) **Trip Log / Checklist:**

1. At departure, the **lead driver** is responsible for the delivery of a copy to the **Church Office**
2. At trip completion, a final copy returned to the Church Office

f) **Trip Responsibility:** The **driver** will have sole responsibility and authority in matters pertaining to bus operation, maintenance and safety -see [3.3 Trip Log & Checklist](#) form. The **driver** is responsible for:

1. Obeying all traffic laws
2. Closing all windows and lock the bus when passengers depart
3. Return **key, Bus Checklist, Passenger Log** and **Trip Log** to the **Church Office** at completion of trip
4. Return the bus with a full tank
5. The **driver** is not expected to initiate any trip should they deem an item will jeopardize the safe operation of the bus

g) **Training and Responsibility:**

- **Drivers** are responsible for their own training and maintenance of a CDL License or other proficiencies required by the state of Texas or applicable insurance carrier

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2.3 Operations and Maintenance

a) **Budget:**

- An amount shall be allocated in the church budget to cover bus expenses for activities not reimbursed

b) **Trip Charges:**

1. A fee of \$1.00 per mile, as tallied in the final Trip Log or a prearranged operation fee per event/use approved by the **Business Administrator**
2. A further budget transfer may occur for any damage or for cleaning not performed upon bus return
3. No direct charge shall be made for the following groups
 - Worship services or special church wide events
 - Other specific events approved by the **Trustees**

c) **Maintenance Responsibility:**

- The Church is responsible for major items of upkeep such as, tires and major repairs. The **Business Administrator** will also provide for operational maintenance such as registration, oil and filter/lube, exterior wash, minor turn-ups, etc

2.4 Safety

- At all times, the **driver** shall have final responsibility and authority in matters relating to the safety of the bus and its passengers. In this regard, passenger discipline is considered to be related to safety

2.5 Review / Appeal of Bus Policy

- The Trustees shall operate as the sole body to approve appeals or exceptions to this policy

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3 Supporting Materials

- a) The following items comprise the **Trip Request Package**, which is available from the [Trustees web site](#)
 1. 3.1 **SUMC Bus Policy** – Signed, returned as part of initial **TRP** by at least one **accompanying sponsor**
 2. 3.2 **Passenger Log** – Returned as part of the initial **TRP** for submitting a request for *tentative* scheduling
 3. 3.3 **Trip Log & Checklist** – Initial copy to **Church Office** at departure, final copy upon trip completion
- b) **Drivers** may decline the trip if the **TRP** is incomplete at time of scheduled departure

3.1 **SUMC Bus Policy**

- a) The **TRP requestor** must ensure that all **accompanying sponsors** have signed a current **Suncreek UMC Bus Policy** – see [4 Policy Acceptance](#)
- b) **Drivers** will be expected to decline driver duties unless they and the **Church Office** have evidence that each **accompanying sponsor** has signed the **Suncreek UMC Bus Policy**
- c) It is recommended that the Policy be signed by at least by one of the **accompanying sponsor** at the time the initial **TRP** is returned for scheduling

3.2 **Passenger Log form**

- This form documents the individuals that are to be on the bus -see [2.1.i Passenger Log / Guidelines](#)

3.3 **Trip Log & Checklist form**

- The **driver** documents all elements that they are charged to oversee –see [2.2.e Trip Log & Checklist](#)

3.4 **Approved Drivers List**

- The list utilized by the **TRP requestor** to obtain approved **drivers**

3.5 **Accompanying Sponsor / Driver Feedback**

- a) Post trip feedback by the **accompanying sponsor** and/or **driver** is encouraged and welcomed
- b) Although verbal feedback can be expeditious, it will only be considered as informal. Thus, there is no expectation of any further action to be taken from any verbal feedback.
- c) Providing written feedback directly to both the **Business Administrator** Steve.Wagner@suncreekumc.org and **Trustees Chair** trustees@suncreekumc.org is preferred to ensure appropriate documentation

4 Policy Acceptance

- a) A signed copy is one of the qualifications required for a **driver** to be included on the **Approved Drivers List**
- b) **Accompanying Sponsors** are required to confirm their understanding and acceptance
- c) Signing the below is to attest that the individual has read and will abide by the **Suncreek UMC Bus Policy**

Signature / Date _____