



ALLEGHENY COLLEGE PUBLIC SAFETY



GATOR LICENSE INTRODUCTION AND INFORMATION

Introduction

Welcome to the Allegheny College Gator License site. The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities and procedures covering the authorized use of College-owned and operated vehicles more specifically, 12-15 Passenger Vans. While the Gator License is required for use of all College-owned vehicles (e.g. sedans, SUVs, and 7 passenger minivans), the risks associated with 12-15 Passenger Vans are much greater and require a more in-depth training program.

The Public Safety Office is responsible for full implementation of the requirements outlined within this policy.

Important Information on the Use of College-owned Vehicles

1. Gator License policy applies to all College-owned or leased vehicles.
2. Refresher training must be completed 3 years after initial training.
3. No one under 18 years of age is permitted to drive a College-owned vehicle.
4. Drivers under the age of 21 are **not** permitted to drive 12-15 Passenger Vans.
5. No animals are allowed in College-owned vehicles, with an exception to service dogs (such as for the visually impaired or hearing impaired).
6. No hazardous chemicals, weapons, hazardous waste, or illegal drugs may be transported in College-owned vehicles.
7. No driver shall transport a load heavier than the vehicle is designed or rated to carry.
8. All occupants must wear seat belts.
9. It is the driver's responsibility to make sure all passengers wear seat belts.
10. The driver should refuse to take any passenger that refuses to wear a seatbelt and may not operate the vehicle if seat belts are not properly fastened by all occupants.
11. Passengers should refuse to ride in a vehicle if the driver is not wearing a seat belt.



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12. Remember, drivers are personally responsible for fines or citations resulting from their actions.

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is the diversion of attention from driving, as a result of the driver focusing on a non-driving object, activity, event, or person. This diversion reduces cognitive awareness, decision-making, or performance leading to increased risk of driver-error, near-crashes, or crashes.

- Drivers who use cell phones are four times more likely to be involved in a crash.
- Cell phone use attributes to an estimated 6 percent of all crashes, which equates to 636,000 crashes.
- No difference exists in cognitive distraction between hand held and hands free devices.
- Research shows that driving while using a cell phone can pose serious cognitive distraction and degrade driver performance.
- 80 percent of crashes are related to driver inattention. The number one source of driver inattention is cell phones.

Facts

- 12-15 Passenger Vans are more likely to be involved in single-vehicle rollover crashes than any other type of vehicle. In response, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued numerous safety advisories on these vehicles.
- The good news is that such consumer alerts and educational efforts are apparently working to help reduce fatalities. Statistics show the number of deaths in 12-15 Passenger Vans rollover crashes has been declining steadily since 2001. Still, these vehicles pose a safety risk to occupants, claiming many lives in accidents.
- Nevertheless, more can be done to alert operators about the vehicles' high center of gravity—particularly when fully loaded—and ways to reduce chances of rollover.



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NHTSA continues to get the word out about this increased rollover risk, as well as what can be done to mitigate it.

NHTSA-Recommended Precautions

- ✓ Keep your passenger load light. NHTSA research indicates that rollover risk increases dramatically as the number of occupants' increases. In fact, risk of rollover increases 9 to 12 percent per added occupant. In single-vehicle crashes, 12-15 Passenger Vans transporting ten or more occupants had a rollover rate nearly three times that of vans carrying fewer than 5.
- ✓ Inspect tires and check pressure before each use. Tires need to be properly inflated and the tread should not be worn down. Fatal rollovers of 12-15 Passenger Vans are most likely to involve tire failure, since excessively worn or improperly inflated tires can lead to loss of vehicle control and ultimately a rollover. A NHTSA study found that 74 percent of all 12-15 Passenger Vans had improperly inflated tires. Improperly inflated tires can change handling characteristics, increasing the prospect of a rollover crash.
- ✓ Require all occupants to use their seat belts or the appropriate child restraint. 12-15 Passenger Vans have bench seats that can accommodate 3-4 people, but often only the outboard seats have lap/shoulder belts. A federal government rule issued in December 2004 requires lap/shoulder belts at all seating positions in new passenger vehicles, including 12-15 Passenger Vans. Passenger restraints should be inspected periodically. The driver and all passengers should be required to wear lap/shoulder belts whenever the vehicle is in motion. Nearly 80 percent of those who have died in 12-15 Passenger Vans were not buckled up. Wearing seat belts dramatically increases the chances of survival during a rollover crash.
- ✓ If at all possible, remove the rear seat. Ensure that passengers and cargo are placed forward of the rear axle. Avoid placing any loads on the roof. By following these guidelines you'll lower the vehicle's center of gravity, improve handling characteristics and reduce chances of a crash.
- ✓ Be mindful of speed and road conditions. The risk of rollover increases significantly at speeds over 50 miles per hour and on curved roads. Drivers should always observe posted speed limits and be extra cautious when driving on unfamiliar roads, especially at night or during bad weather.
- ✓ Only qualified drivers should be behind the wheel. Training and experience are required to safely operate any vehicle. Make sure that all 12-15 Passenger Vans drivers have both. Also make sure that drivers are well rested, fully alert and not under the influence of alcohol, drugs or prescription medication.



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