

**DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE
RISK CONTROL PROGRAM**

GUIDELINES FOR PARISH AND SCHOOL OPERATIONS

II. TRANSPORTATION (Cars, Vans and Buses)

A. AUTOMOBILES OWNED BY THE DIOCESE

In general, automobiles owned by the Diocese may only be driven by Diocesan employees. Employees that drive our vehicles should have a valid drivers license and a clean driving record as evidenced by Department of Motor Vehicles Report and be at least 21 years of age.

Each of our vehicles should be equipped with an Automobile Insurance Identification Card, Automobile Incident Report form and a pencil or pen.

We strongly discourage allowing volunteers to drive Diocesan vehicles. If it is necessary to allow a volunteer to drive our vehicles, they should meet the criteria outlined in Appendix (AP4-7).

All occupants of Diocesan vehicles should wear seat belts at all times.

B. AUTOMOBILES OWNED BY VOLUNTEERS OR EMPLOYEES USED ON PARISH BUSINESS

Volunteers and employees may, from time to time, use their personal vehicles on parish business. They should, of course, provide insurance for accidents involving their own vehicles.

The same guidelines apply to the use of volunteer and employee owned vehicles for parish business.

C. OPERATION OF VEHICLES THAT BELONG TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

We recommend that Diocesan employees and volunteers be instructed not to drive motor vehicles that belong to others in conjunction with Diocesan events. Car washes and valet parking are the obvious examples of operations where motor vehicles belonging to others may be operated. Car washes should be arranged so that patrons drive their own cars. Valet parking should be avoided unless it is operated by contractors who provide evidence of insurance and the required additional endorsements.

D. DO YOUR PART IN PREVENTING AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS

Six types of automobile accidents tend to dominate in terms of number of claims and claims cost. They are:

- ? Hitting another car in an intersection;
- ? "Rear ending" another car;
- ? Hitting parked cars;
- ? Backing into other vehicles or objects;
- ? Sideswipe;
- ? Hitting pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.

These common accidents can be easily avoided by:

- ? Yielding the right of way;
- ? Observing traffic signs and lights;
- ? Maintaining a safe following distance;
- ? Not relying solely on mirrors while backing or during lane changes;
- ? Looking before backing up and backing up slowly;
- ? Maneuvering slowly in parking lots;
- ? Looking out for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as for automobiles;
- ? Not drinking and driving or driving while on medication that may impair driving abilities.

The greatest cause of vehicle accidents is the person behind the steering wheel. It is your responsibility to drive defensively.

E. SCHOOL BUSES

Under this section you will find support material on:

- School Bus Discipline Policy
- Assertive Discipline for Bus Drivers
- School Bus Driving Safety Training
- Diocesan Maintenance Program

School Bus Discipline Policy

Dear Parents:

The following rules and regulations have been adopted by the Diocese of Charlotte. It is hoped that these guidelines will help us to provide safe transportation to and from school for your student. Students should be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time. It is a privilege, not a right, to ride school buses in Diocese of Charlotte.

I. BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY

Students who have the opportunity to ride district school buses may do so as long as they display behavior that is reasonable and safe. Choosing to follow unacceptable behavior will result in loss of bus service. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and discipline of students on the bus. The building principal is available to give assistance to the driver and will determine consequences of misbehavior and the reinstatement of bus service for the offending students should a suspension become necessary. A suspension applies to all buses unless otherwise designated by school officials. The responsibility for student supervision by the District shall begin when the student boards the bus in the morning and is retained until the child leaves the bus at the end of the day; or until released to the parent/guardian in a manner consistent with guidelines on release of students.

II. TRANSPORTING OF SCHOOL RELATED/NON-RELATED ITEMS

Under the Laws and Rules for the Operation of School Buses in the State of North Carolina, it is stated: "Materials, including: guns, loaded or unloaded; gasoline cans, empty or full; animals or any other dangerous or objectionable nature are transported in the school bus when children are being transported."

Band instruments that will be allowed on the bus are those that are small enough to be held in the student's lap. Instruments may not be in the aisle or take the space of a student. Hockey sticks, baseball and softball bats, sleds or any other unacceptable recreational equipment will not be allowed on regular buses. Ice skates that are boxed or have skate guards will be allowed. Tape recorders used for instructional purposes should be appropriately packaged. Damage to personal items is not covered by the bus contractor's/district's insurance coverage.

III. BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES AND CONSEQUENCES - (K-5TH GRADES)

A. Class I Offenses

1. Spitting.
2. Excessive noise.
3. Excessive horseplay.
4. Eating or drinking on bus.
5. Leaving seat/standing while bus is in motion.
6. Squirt guns/liquid containers in any form, except those intended for lunch box use.

7. Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or possession of offensive materials.
8. Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or possession of unacceptable material.
9. Radios, tape recorders, and electronic games are not allowed on the bus.
10. Other offenses as reported by the driver or principal.

B. Class II Offenses

1. Hanging out of windows.
2. Throwing/shooting of any object.
3. Physical aggression against any person.
4. Use of tobacco or any controlled substance.
5. Vandalism to bus (restitution will be made).
6. Lighting of matches, firecrackers, or any flammable object or substance.
7. Holding onto/or attempting to hold onto any portion of the exterior of the bus.
8. Unauthorized entering or leaving bus through emergency door/tampering of the bus equipment.
9. Other offenses as reported by the driver or principal.
10. Any offense committed on any bus outside of regular transportation to and from school (activity, field trip, shuttles, etc.) will carry a minimum penalty of a Class II 1st offense.

C. Consequences

1. Class I

- a) First Offense - Warning or 1 to 5 days suspension.
- b) Second Offense - 5 to 10 days suspension.
- c) Third Offense -
 - 10-day minimum suspension,
 - Possible loss of all bus service,
 - Parent/Principal meeting (optional).
- d) Fourth Offense - Loss of bus service

2. Class II

- a) First Offense - 5 days suspension.
- b) Second Offense - 10 days suspension.
- c) Third Offense -
 - 10-day minimum suspension,
 - Possible loss of all bus service,
 - Parent/Principal meeting (optional).
- d) Fourth Offense - loss of bus service.

NOTE: The bus is an extension of the school day. The bus driver has the authority to assign seats. The sexual/racial/religious harassment policy and the weapons policy of Diocese of Charlotte will be strictly enforced on the school bus as well as at school.