

New Hope Baptist Church

Vehicle Policy

The Vehicle Ministry of New Hope Baptist Church shall be operated under the general supervision of the Deacon Board. The Transportation Committee is responsible for developing a written policy that clearly establishes standards for all drivers and vehicles. The policy, approved by the Deacon Board, meets this requirement.

These standards are critically important because accidents are typically the result of basic driver safety violations, lack of safety precautions and/or poor vehicle maintenance. The Administrator of this Vehicle Policy shall be appointed by the Transportation Committee (and may be a member of the Committee).

Purpose

The Vehicle Ministry will provide safe, dependable group transportation for the church family to enhance the programs and ministries of the church.

Operating Policy

A. Use of Church Vehicles

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Any NHBC group has approval and authority to use church vehicles. Groups sponsored by or connected to New Hope Baptist Church shall be allowed to use vehicles upon special request made to the Administrator and subject to approval. Vehicles will not be available to individuals nor to outside groups or organizations. Trips out of state must be cleared in advance through the Administrator.
2. **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS REQUIREMENT:** The maximum number of passengers MAY NOT exceed the capacity of vehicle design, including the driver. The minimum number of passengers for an out-of-county trip is to be eight (including the driver for 15-Capacity vehicles. No minimum number is required for pick-up for church services. Cargo may be hauled only with prior approval. This does not apply to luggage.
3. **SCHEDULING PROCEDURE:** All proposed uses of vehicles will be requested through the Church Secretary. Availability is first-come, first-serve basis. Priority is given to church services pick-up. The organization or group using vehicles is responsible for securing a driver from the approved list and completing the Reservation form.
4. **POINT OF ORIGIN:** Vehicles will leave from and return to the church parking lot. Vehicles will be parked in the designated parking areas. Keys, Vehicle Log, and Checklists will be obtained from the church secretary. Be sure to get these items by Friday noon for weekend trips. Prior to departure, a listing of all passengers will be left with the church office.

5. **TRIP SUPERVISION**: It is the responsibility of the group or trip sponsor using vehicles to provide proper adult supervision. An adult assistant will be provided on every trip, so the driver has access to immediate help with any distraction or other adverse situation. Adult/Child rations will be kept according to the church's guidelines.
6. **PASSENGER CONDUCT**: All users of church vehicles are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies Christian principles. The Administrator reserves the right to deny use of vehicles to passengers whose conduct becomes detrimental to the general safety of the group. Vandalism or property damage shall be paid for by the person/group responsible for the damage and constitutes due reason to deny use of vehicles for future trips. Trip sponsors and adult supervisors shall have sole responsibility for passenger conduct.
7. **CLEANLINESS OF VEHICLES**: Each group is responsible for cleaning vehicles, including picking up all refuse, cleaning spills, cleaning/sweeping/vacuuming all debris from the seats, floors, corners and ledges, seat backs and bottoms, and any dirty, sticky areas on floor and footrests. Return seats (pushed together, arm rests up) and seat belts to stowage position (on top of seats). Clean and close all windows. A fee of \$50 will be assessed to any group that does not adequately clean vehicles per standards of the Administrator. The post-trip checklist for cleaning/trip completion will be used on each occasion.
8. **TRIP RECORDS**: The driver is responsible for completing the Trip Log Report, leaving a copy in the church office prior to departure and returning the original with any comments to the church office following the trip. Forms will be filed in the Church Office for at least one year. Maintenance needs will be specifically (orally) mentioned and recorded in writing.
9. **ILLEGAL DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO** is not allowed on vehicles by passengers or driver.
10. **SAFETY EQUIPMENT**: The Administrator shall ensure that a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, and necessary items are maintained in all vehicles. Each driver is responsible for equipment and supplies appropriate for the season and trip planned (i.e., warm blankets, emergency food, water, maps, jumper cables, etc.). Drivers will complete their own pre-trip inspection checklists to ensure that all items are present. For every trip, at least one functioning cell phone must be taken. Record the telephone number on the Vehicle Reservation Form, which stays in the Church Office, and is also available on the Church Website.

B. Drivers

1. **REQUIREMENTS**: The Church Office shall maintain a list of approved drivers for church vehicles, renewing it annually, with a copy to the church insurance agency and a copy on vehicles on the vehicle clipboard.
 - a) To be approved, a driver must be a member of NHBC, at least 25 years of age and have

- Proof of insurance, and
 - Class D Driver's License for 15-Capacity vehicles
- b) All drivers must provide a copy of their current drivers' license, date of birth, and attest that they have
- No DUI's (Driving Under the Influence) within the past five years
 - No reckless driving in the last five years, and
 - No more than two moving violations in the previous two years
2. **AVAILABILITY**: The Church Office shall maintain an up-to-date list of approved drivers. It shall be the responsibility of the organization requesting use of vehicles to secure its own driver(s) from the approved list. Drivers may be added as they meet the above requirements.
3. **TRIP RESPONSIBILITY**: Drivers of church vehicles will have sole responsibility and authority in matters pertaining to the vehicle operation, maintenance, and safety (see pre-trip check list). The driver is responsible for complying with this policy, obeying all traffic laws, completing maintenance of the vehicle's safety equipment is especially important for the life of the driver and passengers. Prior to and upon return from every trip, check:
- **Brakes** – Check brakes regularly. Be sure fluid levels are correct. Have the mechanic check for wear at each tire rotation.
 - **Tires** – Check wear regularly. All tires should have at least 1/8" tread remaining. Rotate tires with every other oil change. Maintain tire pressure at the recommended 80 psi. Look for trouble if tires wear unevenly.
 - **Lights** – Review all safety lights prior to making each trip. Headlights, taillights, brake lights, and back-up lights are very important. Turn signals and emergency flashers should also function properly.
 - **Windshield and Wipers** – Be sure the front windshield is unobstructed, and no cracks exist in the driver's vision area. Wipers and washers must be always operating correctly. Side window vision should not be obstructed.
 - **Horn** – Test horn before departing.
 - **Mirrors** – Make sure the side and rear-view mirrors function. The driver should adjust the mirrors prior to starting the trip. On larger vehicles, and interior view mirror is also recommended.
 - **Seats** – Drivers should adjust their seat prior to starting out. All passengers should have and use seat belts.
 - **Fluid Levels** – Check all fluid levels regularly, perhaps prior to each trip or at least with every oil/filter change.
4. **CHURCH SPOKESPERSON**: In any accident or emergency situation involving church vehicles, New Hope Baptist Church should be represented at the scene by only one

individual in any ensuing discussion with authorities, insurance representatives, etc. The driver will be the spokesperson on the scene for the church in any situation.

5. **TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITY**: The Transportation Committee shall insure that all drivers are properly trained in the operation of the vehicles and that they are supplied with all pertinent information and instructions. Accordingly, prospective drivers will receive instruction. Accordingly, prospective drivers will receive instruction on those areas listed on the Vehicle Driver Orientation form contained in this policy, and he/she will drive vehicles for a supervised (by the Administrator or Committee Representative) familiarization road test.
 1. Driving buses, vans, and towing trailers present significantly different driving challenges than normal passenger car operation. Also, adverse weather and road conditions, caravanning, and transporting passengers all present hazards the untrained driver may not be prepared to handle.
 2. When transporting passengers, extreme care must be taken during passenger loading and unloading. Pick up and drop off passengers on the same side of the street as their destination. If a child must cross the street, provide an adult escort. Plan transportation routes in advance to ensure this is done.
 3. ***Mechanical breakdown*** – Make sure hazard lights are flashing and flares are available. When using flares, place them 100 and 200 feet to the rear of the vehicle. Always keep passengers in the vehicle unless fire or other dangers pose problems. Call for help (may call 911 in addition to National Bus or Chevrolet) as soon as possible and be prepared to make alternative transportation available to passengers.
 4. ***Accidents*** – Written accident instructions from the Church’s insurance agent are available in a convenient package and will be always carried on vehicles. Information includes when to call police; how to report accidents; obtaining witness contacts; notification of organization and families; and notification of our insurance company. Also, see “Church Spokesperson”, above
 5. Since driver error is the major factor in motor vehicle accidents, the driver becomes the greatest area of influence in a safe motoring experience. Consequently, there are some important, defensive driver skills to use in avoiding the terrible results of a highway accident. The National Highway Traffic Safety Agency (NHTSA) support schools throughout the country on defensive driving. The following defensive techniques are important for a driver to follow:
 - Expect the unexpected and always have a way out.
 - Never tailgate. Stay two seconds behind the driver in front.
 - Look out ahead. Be aware of what is happening several vehicles in front of you.

- Keep your eyes moving to the front, sides, and rear.
- Anticipate potential accidents and situations and prepare for a way out.
- Before entering an open intersection, look left, right, and left.
- Do not insist on the right-of-way. Be willing to yield.
- Do not use cell phone while driving. Pass calls to a passenger.
- Never drive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

6. VEHICLE DRIVER CANNOT BE COUNTED AS AN ADULT SUPERVISOR.

C. Operations and Maintenance

1. **BUDGET:** An amount shall be allocated in the church budget to cover annual operating and maintenance expenses, and vehicle expenses for activities not reimbursed.
2. **TRIP CHARGES:** Each group shall pay for fuel consumed during their trip and will return the vehicle with a full tank of gas and all fluids topped off. No charge shall be made for the following groups:
 - a. Riders transported to and from worship services or special church-wide services/events.
 - b. Church groups attending district-wide or conference-wide events when the budget will allow and when specifically pre-approved by the Administrator).
 - c. Other specific events approved by the Administrator.
3. **MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY:** The Trustees are responsible for major items of upkeep such as insurance coverage, tires, and repairs. The Administrator (or facilities manager, when filled) will provide for operational maintenance such as registration, fuel, oil, and filter/lube, exterior wash, tune-ups, and preventive/routine maintenance, etc.

D. Insurance

The Church shall insure the vehicles. Minimum coverage shall include bodily injury and property damage, liability, medical payments, uninsured motorist, fire, theft, comprehensive and collision. The cost of insurance shall be provided for in the annual church budget.

E. Safety

At all times, the driver of church vehicles shall have final responsibility and authority in matters relating to the safety of vehicles and its passengers. In this regard, passenger discipline is related to safety. Keep the church informed of any trip abnormalities.

F. Review of Policies

As authorized by the Deacon Board, this may be reviewed at any time by the Transportation Committee. The Transportation Committee may approve exceptions to this policy on an individual basis.

VEHICLE CHECKLIST - New Hope Baptist Church

ENGINE	
Fuel Leak	
Oil Pressure	
Oil Leak	
Water Leak	
Water Temperature	
Oil Level	
Water Level	
Alternator	
Starter	
TRANSMISSION	
DRIVE LINES	
STEERING	
FRONT AXLE	
Brakes	
Springs	
Wheels/Rims	
Tires	
REAR AXLES	
Parking Brakes	
Springs	
Wheels/Rims	
Tires	

BODY	
Defrost/Heater	
Mirrors	
Glasses	
Lights/Reflectors	
Instruments	
Horn	
Batteries	
Windshield Wipers	
EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT	
Flares	
Fire Extinguisher w/Current Inspection	
SAFETY EQUIPMENT	
Tag Expiration	

Checklist Notes:

I acknowledge that the information provided above is accurate.

Driver's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Vehicle Trip Report Log

(Return Form)

Today's Date _____

- CHECKLIST, KEYS, AND VEHICLE TRIP REPORT LOG *delivered to Church Office*
- INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR CLEAN *and* POST-TRIP INSPECTION COMPLETED – *Back side of this form*
- GAS TANK FULL
- SERVICE OR REPAIR DONE OR NEEDED AS NOTED HERE: _____

Trip Start Date _____ Trip End Date _____ # of Participants _____

Starting Mileage _____ Ending Mileage _____

Signed _____ Signed _____

Church Secretary *Primary Drive*