



**TITLE:** Piedmont Technical College Student Field Trip of Group Travel Procedure

**PROCEDURE NUMBER:** 3-2-3020.2

**RELATED POLICY AND PROCEDURES:** 3-2-3020 Student Activities and Organizations

**DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY:** Student Affairs and Academic Affairs

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## **I. Definition of Field Trips or Group Travel**

PTC recognizes the benefits of off-campus student/group travel in conjunction with academic, co- curricular, and college-sponsored programs. PTC also acknowledges the need for certain regulations and procedures to promote safety, maximize educational value, manage risk, minimize liability, and enable appropriate response in times of crisis.

For the purpose of this procedure, “field trip” is meant to convey an out-of-the-ordinary and off- campus experience requiring participant travel by vehicle.

It is the responsibility of the authorized Field Trip Sponsor of the organized student/group travel to assure compliance with College policy and procedures.

## **II. Student/Field Trip Sponsor Responsibility**

Field Trip Sponsors must be full-time employees of Piedmont Technical College. The Field Trip Sponsor must advise students of rules and regulations, verbally and in writing, regarding conduct during the trip including, but not limited to, hotel curfew and responsibility for obligations, purchases or damages incurred by the students/group.

It is the responsibility of the student participants to advise the Field Trip Sponsor of any known limitations, disabilities, certified medical conditions, or needs that may require an accommodation.

At all times, students will be subject to enforcement of the PTC Student Code of Conduct and local, state, and federal laws while traveling on an authorized trip. The Field Trip Sponsor must report immediately any disciplinary issue to the Associate Dean of Students and Submit written documentation of the incident upon return from the field trip.

### **III. Required Documentation**

All requests for student/group travel must be initiated by PTC employees authorized in advance. The following documentation, which can be found on PTC Pathway under “Documents and Forms,” is required:

- A **Field Trip Request Form** must be submitted and approved no less than (ten) 10 working days prior to the date of departure. For those departments with PTC Foundation Accounts, the trip should have all required college approvals before approaching the Foundation about payments.
- A **Field Trip Information Form** must be completed and provided to the Sponsor’s chain of command, including a roster of all participating students and faculty/staff, prior to departure. This form must also be filed with the Campus Police department.

In addition to the travel authorization, the following are the minimally required documents that must be obtained *from each participant* prior to trip departure. Participants unwilling or unable to provide required documentation will not be permitted to travel.

- **Travel and Trip Liability Waiver:** In order that students, parents, and/or legal guardians may fully appreciate and assess the risks associated with the off-campus activity and make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in the activity, or limit participation in certain aspects of the field trip, all student/group travelers and/or their parent/guardian must complete a Travel and Trip Liability Waiver form. Sponsors must retain copies of these forms during the trip.
- **Medical Release (Required for Minors):** In the case of an emergency, a medical release is required for any participating minors. This release is included on the Travel and Trip Liability Form.

After a trip is completed, Field Trip Sponsors must submit original signed copies of the Travel and Trip Liability Waiver to the Office of Student Affairs, where the document will be imaged and will become a part of each participating student’s record in BDMS.

### **IV. Modes of Travel/Transportation**

Absent extraordinary circumstances (specifically approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Affairs), no personal vehicles shall be used by any college personnel for transporting students on field trips.

This does not preclude adult students from providing their own transportation to and/or from events or sanctioned travel opportunities, providing the student notifies faculty/staff in advance

of departure and provides all required documentation as outlined in Section III. In such instances, the student assumes all liability as a driver and waives college liability for their actions as a driver.

Field trip transportation offered by Piedmont Technical College shall be conducted by:

- Fully insured, properly licensed professional drivers using either licensed commercial/charter vehicles or vehicles owned and maintained by the State of South Carolina that meet all appropriate safety standards, including but not limited to, use of passenger restraints and occupant protection requirements.
- Faculty members, staff, and/or club sponsors driving college cars or vehicles rented by the College deemed to have met the licensure and safety requirements.

Each mode of transportation requires that common and mode-specific safety precautions (e.g. seatbelts) be used at all times.

#### **Vehicles Owned, Leased, Rented or Borrowed by the College:**

All drivers operating college- owned, rented, leased, or borrowed vehicles as part of organized student/group travel must be a full- or part-time faculty or staff member, and possess a valid South Carolina or other state driver's license.

#### **Commercial Travel:**

Faculty, staff, and students traveling by commercial transportation must comply with all laws regulating travel and the rules of the specific carrier.

#### **Safety Requirements:**

Drivers and passengers must act responsibly and use sound judgment when traveling. Further, drivers must

1. Obey all traffic laws and regulations including posted speed limits.
2. Not drive under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or transport or possess alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unauthorized firearms or other types of weapons as indicated in the Code of Conduct.
3. Wear seat belts at all times. The number of occupants in the vehicle must not exceed the number of seat belts.
4. Not exceed the vehicle manufacturer's recommended load capacity (See owner manuals for specific instructions.)
5. Not exhibit horseplay, racing or other distracting or aggressive behavior.
6. Refrain from cell phone use while driving.
7. Refrain from eating while driving.

## **V. Unapproved Expenses**

Any unapproved travel-related expense incurred by the student, faculty or staff traveler is the responsibility of the respective traveler. Students must be informed that the College assumes no responsibility for providing student/groups with funds in case of unanticipated delays or other incidents that may require additional expenditures. Reimbursement for emergency circumstances may be considered.

## **VI. Trip Contingencies and Emergencies**

### **Trip Contingencies:**

Even with the best planning, events can still not go as planned. Faculty/club advisors and Field Trip Sponsors should try to anticipate complications that could arise and develop contingency plans in advance. Examples of unplanned circumstances include, but are not limited to, the following: student needs to return early because of a personal or family emergency; student violates established conduct rules; weather, transportation delays, cancellations that require overnight housing. Faculty/club advisors and Field Trip Sponsors should seek to understand contract limitations and restrictions, whether they arise from rental vehicle, lodging, or other agreements.

### **Emergencies:**

In the event of an emergency (e.g., car accidents, injuries, hospitalizations or death), faculty and staff will immediately seek professional assistance as required and then immediately notify:

1. the listed emergency contact(s) for the student(s) involved,
2. the Vice President for Student Affairs and Communications
3. the Associate Vice President for Human Resources
4. the respective department manager.

If the participant having the emergency is a college employee, the Human Resource Office should be notified.

## **VII. Special Requirements for Travel Involving Minors**

The following requirements are specific to travel involving minors. These requirements are in addition to other procedures outlined herein.

All participants in overnight travel and events must be rising seventh-grade students or older. Only activities directly related to scheduled events shall be allowed, with absolutely no participation in unscheduled, unauthorized or unnecessarily risky activities. Activities will be outlined, in detail, on the travel itinerary and strictly adhered to.

It is the responsibility of participants and/or parents/guardians to inform the College of any existing certified medical condition that requires medication or accommodation. Further, all participants with said condition(s) must be able to keep, monitor, and administer all required medications without assistance; however, if assistance is required, the College reserves the right to determine what level of assistance is reasonable and does not negatively affect the rights or participation of other students.

For minors to participate, the student-to-chaperone ratio should not exceed 10:1. Chaperones must be full or part time employees of the college. Exceptions may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and must be pre-approved by the Vice President for the division if the trip is scheduled by Student Affairs, or by the division's Dean if the trip is academic in nature.

