



Topic: Utility Cart/Golf Cart Policy		
Policy #: 128.00	Version: 1.0 (New)	Effective Date: 12/1/2007

Golf Cart/Utility Vehicle Operations

1.) Introduction – Purpose & Scope

This policy provides guidelines for the operation of electric or gas-powered carts, golf carts and/or similar type vehicles (carts) on University of Alabama Tuscaloosa campus properties, including traveling to/from campus locations that may be separated by property owned by others or require travel on public roadways to reach the desired campus location. This policy establishes proper safety procedures and practices, which will promote safe operations and provide our students, faculty, staff, alumni and visitors a safe environment.

The purpose of this policy is to define when carts may be used, which includes, but may not be limited to:

- Transportation of persons with physical disabilities
- Transportation of items long distances that are too large/bulky to be carried by hand
- Transportation of University guests or VIPs
- Emergency response
- Provide access to areas where a licensed vehicle may have difficulty navigating
- To avoid damage to sidewalks, landscaping or other property that may occur with traditional licensed road-use vehicles

2.) Policy

All members of the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa community are governed by this policy to include students, staff, faculty and contractor/vendors. All operators of carts must meet the following criteria before operating a cart owned, leased, rented or borrowed by the University of Alabama:

- Possess a valid U.S. driver’s license and be at least 21 years of age. Approved operators shall immediately notify their supervisor if and when their driver’s license is suspended or revoked.
- Have knowledge and comply with the State of Alabama motor vehicle laws.
- The operator must provide authorization for Risk Management to obtain a motor vehicle report (MVR) prior to operating a University vehicle. The University’s insurance company will review the MVR of the individual and accept or reject the driver based on criteria established by the underwriter. Approval to operate a cart is the same as any licensed vehicle
- Successfully complete a Cart Safety Training Program, including signing an acknowledgement to confirm training participation, which is available on the Risk Management section of the University’s website.

Any failure to adhere to this policy, including following all motor vehicle laws and safe driving practices may result in appropriate disciplinary action or suspension/revocation of the cart drivers’ privileges. This

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includes common safe practices and courteous operations knowing the carts will be operated where pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle traffic is common.

For use on public roads, all carts acquired after the effective date of this policy must meet the National Highway Safety and Traffic Administration (NHSTA) Standard 500 (49CFR Part 571.500), which is applicable to low-speed vehicles. The Standard 500 requires the cart be equipped with certain features including, but not limited to:

- Headlights (2)
- Front/rear turn signals
- Rear stoplights/ tail lamps
- Reflectors/reflective tape - 360 degree visibility
- Mirrors - rear view driver side and either a passenger side rear view or interior rear view
- Parking Brake
- Windshield - DOT AS-1 or AS-4 identification
- Vehicle Identification Number – 17 Digit
- Seat Belts – Either Type 1 (lap belt) or Type 2 (lap and shoulder harness)
- Certification Label – To indicate the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) not to exceed 1,361kg. or 3,000 lbs.
- In addition to the items listed above, certain safety equipment such as flashing hazard lights, a strobe/beacon light, doors and steering wheel locks may be specified by the University.

The minimum safety equipment/design specification on all non-Standard 500 carts must include:

- No fewer than four wheels touching the ground/roadway at all times.
- All original equipment must be in good working order.
- The cart must be equipped with a “Slow Moving Vehicle” sign clearly visible from the front and rear.
- The rear must have a reflective triangle, including trailers attached to a cart.
- If operated after dusk and before dawn, headlights, taillights and brake lights (2 of each).
- A yellow or amber flashing light(s) visible from 360 degrees shall operate while the vehicle is in motion.
- A horn with an activation button/switch within reach of the driver.
- The vehicle must have an ignition/on-off key to prevent unauthorized use.
- Parking-brake with adequate strength to hold the cart at least a 15 degree angle.
- An audible (at least 80 decibels at 10 feet) back-up alarm when placed in reverse.

In the event a non-Standard 500 cart does not have the equipment listed above, the equipment shall be installed within 90 days following the effective date of this policy or within 90 day after purchase of any new carts.



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Carts meeting Standard 500 criteria may operate on University roadways and other public roads connecting the campus. The operators must adhere to posted speed limits and operate within established traffic laws. However, the operation of Standard 500 carts is limited to public roads with a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less. All other carts are prohibited from use on the public roadways except when crossing from one side to another or where no sidewalk exists.

During certain special events (e.g., game day) and in preparation for certain events, the use of carts on public roads may become necessary to transport equipment, guests and other items/activities necessary for the event from various points on campus and areas adjoining the campus. In these situations, the carts must make every attempt to operate on streets that have been closed for the event or are restricted to control or reduce the general flow of traffic. If possible, the carts should be operated behind traffic barricades or cones to stay clear of routes of travel used by traditional vehicles. In these situations, extra caution should be used.

3) Cart Registration/Signage/Operator Approval

Purchasing will advise Risk Management when a cart has been received. Risk Management will maintain a list of all carts used on campus. Each department is responsible for furnishing information on the sale or transfer of any cart as it occurs.

All carts used by any employee on campus must be registered with Risk Management to include details on serial numbers, department numbers, and employees trained/authorized to operate the carts, which must be kept current.

Each cart operated will be clearly marked with white (or a color that is visible against the background color) block lettering in a standard format with the department name displayed on the front and rear of the vehicle. The size, style and location(s) to be used will be determined by the available space on the cart.

Each department will be responsible for maintaining a list of persons authorized to operate the cart and other records as required. The authorization/approval process to drive a cart is the same as any other University owned, leased or rented vehicle.

4) Cart Operator Rules

Carts shall be operated with the utmost courtesy, care and consideration for the safety and convenience of pedestrians. Pedestrians shall be afforded the right-of-way at all times. Pedestrians as defined in this document refer to: persons walking, jogging, inline skating, skate boarding, bicycling, or those in wheelchairs or mobility assistance devices.

Carts shall be operated in accordance with the following specific rules:

- Carts shall not be parked within 20 feet of the entrance or exit of any building, except at loading docks.
- All occupants in the vehicle shall keep hands, arms, legs and feet within the confines of the vehicle while it is in motion.

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- Operators shall stop carts at all blind intersections and sound their horns before proceeding.
- Operators should avoid all walkways less than six feet wide. The recommended speed on walkways and congested area is not more than 5 miles per hour. However, the speed should be no faster than pedestrians walking in the same area.
- Special care shall be taken while driving carts through parking lots to observe traffic and vehicles pulling in/out of parking spaces. Carts should be operated at speeds of less than 10 miles per hour in parking lots.
- Carts should operate or park only on hard surfaces unless the vehicle is specifically designed for and used for grounds maintenance.
- Operators may not wear headphones, use cell phones or use/operate any other device that may cause a distraction.
- Carts shall not be modified in any manner that affects the recommended mode of operation, speed or safety of the vehicle.
- Never exceed the maximum load capacity recommended by the manufacturer, either by number of occupants or weight of the passengers and load.
- Employees shall not operate vehicles registered to other departments unless approval has been granted by the supervisor or the department to which the vehicle is owned.
- Operators of vehicles that are not equipped with turn indicators shall use appropriate hand signals.
- All accidents involving golf carts/service vehicles shall be reported immediately to the supervisor of the department to which the vehicle is registered and to Risk Management, regardless of whether property or personal injury occurred. Police reports shall be filed immediately with the University Police at the time of the accident.
- Each operator shall be responsible to provide timely notification of safety and maintenance concerns to the supervisor of the department to which the vehicle is registered who will contact the approved service facility for repairs.
- In the event a cart is decorated for a special event, the decorations must be securely attached in a manner that will not cause damage or obstruct the driver's vision in any direction.
- Carts shall not be driven through covered walkways (breezeway) except under the following circumstances:
 - Emergencies, medical, police or safety operations.
 - In order to provide maintenance service at a location in a specific building to which equipment and supplies, but not people, are being transported to the work site.
 - To provide transportation for individuals with disabilities.
- Carts shall be parked and/or operated in such manner that they do not impede or interfere with normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on roadways, ramps or sidewalks.
- Carts shall be operated within the confines of campus or to reach an area of the campus that may be separated by public roads or property owned by others.



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- The cart batteries should never be used to power other devices or removed for any reason other than to perform maintenance or replacement by a person trained and authorized to perform such work. Never attempt to check or add fluid/electrolyte to a battery.

5) Repairs & Maintenance

Chargers for low speed electric vehicles must be plugged directly into a ground fault interrupter receptacle.

The use of extension cords is forbidden. The cart vehicle may not be used to jump-start other vehicles.

Every cart must be checked prior to use each day to confirm the proper operation of critical equipment including:

- Lighting – headlights, taillights, brake lights, turn signals, flashing strobe light
- Brakes/Parking Brake
- Reflector & Signage
- Steering
- Horn
- Tire Inflation

In the event a cart has critical equipment that is not operational or is not functioning as intended, the cart shall be placed “out-of-service” and the key kept by an authorized individual to prevent the use of the cart until repairs can be completed.

Unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer, the cart should be taken to Fleet Maintenance for a more extensive check and to provide routine preventative maintenance every 6 months. In certain cases, carts used in more extreme operating conditions such as use in temperature extremes, operating in dusty/dirty areas, frequent starting /stopping or hauling loads that are near the manufacturer’s maximum rating may need to be placed on more frequent preventative maintenance routines to monitor wear and assure the cart receives adequate preventative maintenance.

6) Operator Training

All cart operators must view a Cart Safety Training Program prior to operating a cart. Any person currently authorized to operate a cart as of the effective date of the policy will have 90 days to complete the required training. The training program is available on the Risk Management section of the University’s website.

7) Storage & Battery Charging

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The storage of each cart will be the responsibility of the department to which the unit is registered. Whenever possible, the carts should be stored in an area to allow for battery recharging and to shield the cart from foul weather. Some unauthorized persons may find the cart enticing for a joy ride, and thus, a secured storage area and/or the use a chain and padlock or steering wheel lock should be considered.

Carts that are powered by rechargeable batteries shall have dedicated charging stations with a ground-fault electrical outlet designed and rated for such use. The recharging outlets must be designed to be locked when not in use. Just as with the cart, the keys to the charging should be controlled and only provided to persons authorized to operate a cart.

In some cases, a quick charge station may be necessary to maintain battery power between routine charging. In these situations, the location and installation of the quick charge station shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer and the location may not limit or restrict access to any building, sidewalk, walkway or exit route.

If available, the carts should be ordered with sealed or gel batteries that do not have caps to allow the fluid to be checked. The fluid in a battery is acidic and will result in an injury if it comes in contact with the skin or eyes. Any batteries that can have the fluid check by removing the caps shall only be done by personnel that are familiar with proper procedure to check the fluid and personal protective equipment such as eye/face protection and acid-resistant gloves must be worn.



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Attachment A

Utility Vehicle/Cart Operator Instructions

While driving a golf cart/utility vehicle (carts), the safety of yourself and others shall be your top priority. Responsible driving requires concentration, sound judgment, and common sense on your part. Please review the following safety rules to be followed when operating this potentially dangerous vehicle:

- 1) Only authorized drivers are allowed to operate carts following approval by their supervisor and the University. No one else is authorized to drive the cart. Do not allow anyone to borrow the cart.
- 2) Familiarize yourself with the controls used to start stop, park, accelerate, and backup the cart. If the cart is not operating properly, park in a safe location, remove the key and any valuables, and notify your supervisor immediately.
- 3) Never operate the cart under the influence of drugs or alcohol that may impair your driving ability. If you are taking prescribed pain medication that makes you drowsy or if you are impaired in any way, tell your supervisor and do not drive the cart.
- 4) The key must be removed from the ignition before fueling the cart. Failure to do so may result in personal injury or property damage.
- 5) *Other than certain carts (meeting Standard 500 criteria), operating a cart on public roadways except when crossing from one side of the street to the other is prohibited.* If you are uncertain if the cart you are operating is designed and approved for road use, always assume it is for off-road use only unless advised otherwise by your supervisor. Only cross roadways at designated crosswalks and obey traffic signals, signs and rules when crossing.
- 6) Carts are required to abide by orders/directions from the University Police and the University's Parking/Traffic regulations.
- 7) Blocking entrances to buildings, stairways, fire exits, disability ramps or main thoroughfares is prohibited.
- 8) Pedestrians have the right of way on campus. Carts must yield to pedestrians on sidewalks and in crosswalks.
- 9) The number of occupants may not exceed the recommended level for the cart. One passenger is permitted per seat and all passengers are required to sit in seats. No riding on backs, front, or sides of carts is permitted.
- 10) Keep your arms, legs, and head inside the cart at all times, unless using your left hand and arm to indicate turn and stop signals.
- 11) Warn your passengers of bumps in the road, obstacles, etc. that may cause the cart to bounce, swerve or react in a manner that could cause a passenger to be surprised.
- 12) Secure and properly store all equipment and supplies to prevent objects from falling out or striking people.
- 13) Use caution when driving downhill; reducing speed and avoiding sharp turns.
- 14) Traveling speed should never exceed 5 miles per hour on walkways/sidewalks or 10 miles per hour in other areas, unless operating on public roads in carts approved for on-road use. When traveling in the same direction as pedestrians, travel at the same speed as the pedestrians.
- 15) Obey all traffic regulations - observe all stop signs and traffic signals.
- 16) Allow for extra travel time and stopping distance when roads are wet or slick from the weather.
- 17) When finished with the cart, remove the key and return it to the proper contact person so other employees can use the carts as needed.

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- 18) The use of cell phones, headphones or other devices that could limit hearing or cause a distraction while operating the cart is prohibited.
- 19) Smoking in a cart is not allowed, both when sitting idle or moving.
- 20) Make certain the parking brake is applied and whenever possible, park in a manner that will not allow the cart to move if the parking brake were accidentally released.
- 21) Remove the keys when leaving the cart unattended.
- 22) Report any accidents immediately to the University Police and Risk Management (348.4535).