

## **Vehicle Policy / Procedure**

### **Northeast South Dakota Head Start Program, Inc.**

#### **Overview**

As an authorized driver of a vehicle owned by the NESD Head Start Program, Inc., you have been given certain privileges. You assume the duty of obeying all motor vehicle laws, maintaining the vehicle properly at all times, and, otherwise, following the Policies and Procedures outlined in this document.

**Program Executive Director: Juli Schultz**

**Transportation Director: Renae Rohrbach**

#### **Vehicle Fleet Purpose**

Head Start Program vehicles are provided to support Head Start activities and the vehicles are to be used only by qualified and authorized Head Start employees. These vehicles are to be operated in strict compliance with motor vehicle laws of the State of South Dakota and the vehicles are to be treated with the utmost regard for their care and cost-efficient use. Assignment of Program vehicles is determined by the Executive Director.

#### **Driver Licensing**

Head Start vehicle authorized drivers must have a valid driver's license issued in the State of South Dakota. Obtaining a State of South Dakota driver's license is an employee expense. (The NESD Head Start Program, Inc. will pay for CDL (Commercial Driver License) for Bus Drivers.)

#### **Driver Qualifications**

Driver Qualifications:

- Authorized Employee of the NESD Head Start Program, Inc.,
- Must be at least 18 years of age,
- Must meet licensing requirements,
- Will not qualify for an NESD Head Start Program, Inc. vehicle if, during the last 36 months (3 years), the driver had any of the following experiences:
  - a. Been convicted of a felony
  - b. Been convicted of sale, handling or use of drugs
  - c. Has personal automobile insurance cancelled, declined, or not renewed by a company
  - d. Been convicted of an alcohol or drug-related offense while driving

## **Maintenance**

Authorized drivers are required to properly maintain their Program vehicle at all times. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect which would inhibit safe operation during current and foreseeable weather and lightning conditions. Preventative maintenance such as, but not limited to, include: regular oil changes, lubrication, tire pressure, tire replacement, brake pad and rotor replacement and fluid checks to determine to a large extent whether the driver will have a reliable and safe vehicle to drive and support Head Start work activities.

## **Traffic Violations**

Fines for parking and / or moving violations, towing (if not related to Head Start activities), storage or impoundment are the personal responsibility of the authorized driver. The NESD Head Start Program, Inc. will not condone nor excuse ignorance of any motor vehicle violations which result in court summons being directed to itself as owner of the vehicle.

Each driver is required to report all moving violations to the Transportation Manager within 24 hours. This requirement applies to violations involving the use of the Head Start vehicle while on Program business or personal use. Failure to report violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action from the NESD Head Start Program, Inc., including revoking of driver privileges and possible termination of employment.

(As written previously, motor vehicle violations incurred during non-business hours will also affect your driving status as well as these violations are subject to review.)

## **Cellular / Mobile Telephones**

Cellular / Mobile telephones should not be used while operating a Head Start vehicle. Using a cellular telephone while driving leads to an increased risk of having an accident through a lack of attention to driving. Inattention is the #1 cause of vehicle accidents in America.

- Allow voicemail to handle your telephone calls and you may return them at your SAFE convenience
- If you need to dial or receive a telephone call, pull off the road to a safe location
- Ask a passenger to make or take the telephone call
- Inform regular callers of your driving schedule and when you will be available to talk
- Keep your hands on the steering wheel and your eyes and mind on the road while driving

## **Accidents**

In the event of an accident:

- **Call the Police / Sheriff on all accidents and obtain a copy of the accident report**
- Do not admit negligence or liability
- Do not attempt settlement, regardless of how minor
- Get name, address, and telephone number of injured person and witnesses if possible
- Exchange vehicle identification, insurance company name and policy numbers with the other driver
- Take a photograph of the accident scene if possible
- Complete the accident report
- Turn all information over to Transportation Manager within 24 hours

## **Thefts**

In the event of the theft of a Program vehicle, notify local Police / Sheriff and Transportation Manager immediately.

## **Driver Responsibilities**

Each authorized driver is responsible for the actual possession, care, and use of the Head Start Program vehicle in their possession. Therefore, a driver's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Operation of the vehicle in a manner consistent with reasonable practices which avoid abuse, theft, neglect, or disrespect of the vehicle
- Obey all traffic laws
- The use of seat belts and restraint systems is mandatory for driver and passengers
- Adhering to service, maintenance, and inspection. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect which would prevent safe operation
- Attention to and practice of safe driving techniques and adherence to current safety requirements
- Restricting the use of vehicles to authorized driver
- Reporting the occurrence of traffic / moving violations
- Accurate, comprehensive, and timely reporting of ALL accidents by authorized driver and thefts of a Program vehicle to the Transportation managers
- Using the vehicle for NESD Head Start Program, Inc. business only

Failure to comply with any of these responsibilities will result in disciplinary action by the NESD Head Start Program, Inc. up to, and including possible termination of employment.

## **Preventable Accidents**

A preventable accident is defined as any accident involving a Program vehicle which results in property damage and / or personal injury and in which the driver in question failed to exercise every **reasonable precaution** to prevent the accident.

Safety Guidelines to Prevent Accidents:

- Do not follow too close
- Do not drive too fast for road / weather conditions
- Do not fail to observe clearances
- Do not fail to obey signs
- Do not make improper turns
- Do not fail to observe signals from other drivers
- Do not fail to reduce speed
- Do not park improperly
- Do not pass improperly
- Do not fail to yield
- Do not back up improperly
- Do not fail to obey traffic signals or directions
- Do not exceed the posted speed limit
- Do not drive while intoxicated (DWI) or drive under the influence (DUI) or similar charges
- Do not text while driving

I have read, understand, and will abide by the conditions as stated in this document regarding the operation of a vehicle owned by the Northeast South Dakota Head Start Program, Inc.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vehicle Policy / Procedure**

**Northeast South Dakota Head Start Program, Inc.**

As an authorized driver of a vehicle owned by the NESD Head Start Program, Inc., I understand it is my responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. As an authorized driver, I must have a valid State of South Dakota driver's license for the type of vehicle to be operated and I must keep the appropriate licensing and insurance documentation in the vehicle at all times. I must also comply with all applicable regulations.

I also understand the NESD Head Start Program, Inc. will periodically review my Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) to determine continued eligibility to drive a Program vehicle. In accordance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act, I have been informed a Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) will be periodically obtained on me for continued employment purposes.

I acknowledge receipt of the above disclosure and I authorize the NESD Head Start Program, Inc. to obtain a Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) Report. This authorization is valid as long as I am an employee of the NESD Head Start Program, Inc. and it may only be rescinded in writing.

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Printed Employee Name

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Driver's License Number

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Employee's Signature

Date

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Transportation Manager

Date

(Retain the Original sheets in the Employee's Personnel File)

(March 2021)