



## Procedures for Policy 1131: Motorized Utility Vehicles

### Purpose

To establish standards for the safe use and operation of motorized utility vehicles (MUVs). This applies to the operation of motorized utility vehicles and other similar seated devices on all campus property, irrespective of whether the utility vehicle is owned by the University or another party. MUVs are defined as motorized utility vehicles not licensed under the laws of Virginia, and powered by electric or internal combustion motors. Examples include golf carts, Cushman vans, Bobcat utility carts, gators, ATVs and other similar devices; but do not include lawn and construction equipment, powered wheelchairs, electric bicycles, or scooters. These utility vehicles may be used to transport equipment and people, patrol the campus grounds, make deliveries, and provide campus maintenance activities.

### Authorized Use

The acquisition and use of MUVs at George Mason University is limited to GMU departments upon demonstration of Valid Business Use and approval by the Office of Parking and Transportation. Only utility vehicles owned or leased by the University or contractors and approved by Parking and Transportation may be operated on campus. MUVs used by non-Mason entities must be approved by Office of Parking and Transportation prior to use on university property. Contractors may be approved if there is a Valid Business Use and the contractor agrees to follow the GMU MUV policy regarding safety, routing, marking and registration of MUVs. Valid Business Use is defined as “Transporting personnel, equipment, or supplies for the university as well as transporting employees and students with temporary or permanent disability needs.”

### **Part I: Instructions for Operators**

#### A. Sanctions:

Failure to follow these procedures, render common practices or courtesies, or follow rules of the road for the Commonwealth of Virginia, could result in citation, appropriate disciplinary action, and/or suspension of operator's MUV driving privileges. Enforcement efforts for repeat offenders may escalate to include issuing a “No Trespass” order to the utility vehicle operator, impounding the utility vehicle at operator expense or otherwise removing or restricting the utility vehicle and/or operator from campus.

## **B. Before Driving**

1. MUV Operators must:
  - a. Have a valid Driver's License on file with no major traffic offenses.
  - b. Read this document and then sign the GMU Motorized Utility Vehicles Policy Acknowledgement Form.
  - c. Obtain prior written approval if they plan to operate another department's registered MUV.
  - d. Disconnect all battery charger cords before using the MUV.
  - e. Not be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or medications that affect operation.
  - f. Be over the age of eighteen (18).
2. MUVs owned or leased by George Mason University may only be used for official University business by University employees, contracted employees, student employees, and University approved volunteers associated with a University department. George Mason MUVs will be operated only within the confines of George Mason University owned or leased property.

## **C. Driving:**

1. Knowledge of and compliance with applicable state laws, rules, regulations and policies are the responsibility of the operator. Violators may be cited by police.
2. MUV operators must follow these operating rules:
  - a. MUVs must have all wheels touching the ground/roadway at all times.
  - b. MUVs must be driven on roads unless a road is unavailable. MUVs should use bike lanes when available. MUVs may not drive on sidewalks when a road is available.
  - c. MUVs must be operated at speeds no greater than 15 MPH.
  - d. Maximum speed on sidewalks must not exceed the speed of pedestrian traffic present.
  - e. MUVs must not impede or interfere with normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on sidewalks, ramps or roadways. Operators must not follow or pass closely or intimidate pedestrians. If the MUV must be on a landscaped area in order to allow pedestrians the proper right-of-way, it should be brought to a full stop, then immediately returned to the designated driving surface as soon as the area is clear.
  - f. Operators should always consider terrain, weather conditions and existing pedestrian and vehicular traffic which may affect the ability to operate the MUV safely.
  - g. Operators must stop at all "blind" intersections, sound horn then proceed with caution.

- h. Operators must never back up without looking to see what is behind the MUV.
- i. Smoking in an MUV is not permitted, either when sitting idle or moving.
- j. Operators must not wear headphones, use cell phones or use/operate any other device that may cause a distraction.
- k. Operators must utilize all safety equipment including seat belts if available.

#### **D. Load and Passengers:**

- 1. MUVs are to be used for business purposes only. Use of MUVs for personal convenience, other than for disability related needs, is strictly prohibited.
- 2. Never exceed the maximum load capacity recommended by the manufacturer, either by number of occupants or weight of the passengers and load. MUVs may not carry more passengers than seating provided.
- 3. Operators must never allow anyone to ride standing in, on the back, or in the bed of an MUV.
- 4. No one under 18 may be transported via MUV, except with permission from the University. Children are specifically susceptible to ejection from these utility vehicles due to their inability to touch their feet to the floor, and their reliance upon the hip restraint for stability. Any children being transported on an MUV must be secured with manufactured installed seatbelts.

#### **E. Parking and Charging:**

- 1. MUVs must be parked in regular, service, or designated parking spots.
- 2. MUV keys must not be left in unattended utility vehicles. Always lock and secure the MUV with the parking brake when not in use.
- 3. Improperly parked MUVs may be cited, towed, or otherwise disabled.
- 4. Smoking must not be allowed within 50 feet of the recharge station. Only an approved battery charger will be used to recharge the batteries (designed to shut off automatically when the batteries are fully charged). Do not recharge near an open flame or source of ignition.
- 5. Extension cords must not be used to charge MUVs.
- 6. MUVs may not be used to jump-start any other utility vehicle.
- 7. Each MUV operator is responsible for providing timely notification of safety and maintenance concerns to the supervisor of the department to which the MUV is registered.

#### **F. Accidents/Incidents:**

1. All accidents involving MUVs shall be reported immediately to the police, the supervisor of the department to which the MUV is registered, and the Office of Risk Management, regardless of whether property or personal injury occurred. Upon completion of the investigation by GMUPD, depending on the severity, the driver may lose all privileges to operate MUVs.
2. If a university employee sustains personal injury in an accident, then a First Report of Accident form must be filed with the Workers' Compensation Claims Coordinator in the Department of Human Resources and Payroll within 24 hours of the incident.
3. If any other person (non-university employee) sustains personal injury in an accident, a report must be filed with the Office of Risk Management within 24 hours of the incident.

## **Part II: MUV Standards**

### **A. Safety Standards**

1. The Parking and Transportation Department will inspect each MUV initially and annually for compliance with the following standards. Each MUV operated on University property shall be equipped with:
  - a) A "Slow Moving Vehicle" reflective orange triangle as mandated by the Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles.
  - b) Headlights, taillights, and brake lights (2 each) and electric turn signals if the MUV is to be operated after dusk and before dawn. MUVs without headlights and/or taillights are to be used only during daytime operations.
  - c) A horn with an activation button/switch within reach of the driver.
  - d) Cipher lock or ignition/on-off key to prevent unauthorized use.
  - e) A parking brake with adequate strength to hold the MUV securely at a fifteen degrees ( $15^\circ$ ) incline.
  - f) An audible (at least 80 decibels at 10 feet) back-up alarm when placed in reverse.
  - g) Reflective tape placed on the front and rear bumpers for easier visibility at night.
  - h) Mirrors if cargo or other equipment blocks rear vision.
  - i) Only electric-powered MUVs should be purchased, although exceptions may apply.
2. If the MUV is not equipped according to the above standards, it will not be approved.

- 3.** Modifications must not be made to an MUV without manufacturer's approval. MUVs must not be modified in any manner that affects the recommended mode of operation, speed or safety of the utility vehicle.
- 4.** Golf carts running on gas must have seat belts.
- 5.** All existing MUVs must comply with these safety standards within one year of implementation of the MUV policy.

## **B. Charging Safety Standards:**

- 1.** MUV batteries must only be recharged by an approved battery charger (designed to shut off automatically when the batteries are fully charged).
- 2.** MUVs must not be recharged near an open flame or source of ignition. Smoking is not allowed within 50 feet of the recharge station.
- 3.** Any MUVs that have batteries that can have the fluid checked by removing caps shall only be serviced by Facilities Management Auto Shop.
- 4.** Extension cords must not be used.
- 5.** The MUV may not be used to jump-start any other utility vehicle.

## **Part III: Responsibilities**

### **A. Departments**

- 1.** To procure a University-owned or leased MUV, Department Heads must:
  - a)** Apply to Parking & Transportation prior to the purchase of the utility vehicle. Once reviewed, the application will be returned to the requesting Department with all appropriate signatures indicating approval or denial.
  - b)** Submit a request to purchase the MUV to the Purchasing department. Purchasing will not place any orders without the approval documentation from Parking and Transportation.
- 2.** Department Heads must register all new and existing University MUVs with the Parking and Transportation Department.
  - a)** Registration forms must include the following information:
    - i. Name of School/Department/Operating Unit or Contractor
    - ii. Responsible Person (who could be personally liable to the University if they allow the utility vehicle to be used by an unauthorized individual)
    - iii. Make and Type of utility vehicle
    - iv. Serial Number of utility vehicle

v. Business Purpose

- b) To register an existing MUV, submit the registration form to Parking and Transportation, then make an appointment with the Auto Shop to complete the MUV inspection and registration. Utility vehicles must meet all safety standards listed in Part II.A. of these Procedures.
- c) All MUVs must display a number issued by the Parking and Transportation Department used to track the utility vehicles. Any utility vehicle without proper markings and identification will be cited and/or impounded by Parking and Transportation.

3. Department Heads must:

- a) Keep a copy of a valid Driver's License and signed GMU Motorized Utility Vehicles Policy Acknowledgement Form in the employee operator's file.
- b) Implement procedures for controlling access to and use of MUVs available to their department.
- c) Track that each MUV owned or leased by their department is scheduled for, and receives, semi-annual preventative maintenance.
- d) Ensure compliance with all safety standards listed in this procedural document. Keep all original equipment and safety features in good working order, and make sure that their utility vehicles maintain good physical appearance (no dents, scrapes or other body damage).  
Department Heads must also submit the work order to the sign shop to have the golf cart labeled.
- e) Ensure timely repair of such safety and aesthetic concerns and, if the MUV cannot be operated safely without said repairs taking place, the MUV will be taken "out of service" and so marked until the repairs are completed. In the event that an MUV is out of service, the key must be kept by an authorized person to prevent use of the MUV until repairs are completed.

4. Storage and Battery Charging: The Department of Ownership is responsible for the storage of each of its registered MUVs. Whenever possible, the MUV should be stored in an area to allow for battery recharging and to shield the MUV from foul weather. MUVs must be stored in a secure area and/or the use of a chain and padlock or steering wheel lock should be considered.

5. Maintenance: The Department of Ownership:

- a) Must be financially responsible for all repair and maintenance costs (labor, parts and supplies).
- b) Must keep all preventative maintenance and repair records related to the MUV.

- c) Must schedule routine preventative maintenance for its MUVs at least once every twelve (12) months. (In certain cases, MUVs 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 MUV receives adequate preventative maintenance.)
  - d) Must submit work orders to the Facilities Management department if an MUV requires service.
- 6. Registration Fee and Insurance: Each Department owning or leasing an MUV will be assessed an annual registration fee of \$250.00 for each of the first three utility vehicles and an annual registration fee of \$100 will be assessed for any additional utility vehicles. These fees will be placed in a fund to be used to defray the costs associated with grounds maintenance and repair due to the damage caused by these utility vehicles. A \$1,000 deductible will be charged to the user's budget unit in the event an MUV is damaged. The University employee or student responsible for the MUV could be personally liable for the deductible and/or the entire loss should they allow the MUV to be used by an unauthorized individual. Employees who allow MUVs to be damaged through their negligence could also be personally liable for the deductible and/or the entire loss of the MUV. Employee Relations should be contacted in such cases of employee negligence.

## **B. Parking and Transportation**

Parking and Transportation will:

1. Administer this Policy and Procedure,
2. Cite and/or impound MUVs which are in violation of this Policy and Procedure,
3. Issue and maintain records of MUV tracking numbers,
4. Maintain records of safety inspections

## **C. Contractors**

Contractors must follow these Procedures for MUVs operated on GMU property, except for those regarding Procurement. Contractors should not use GMU-owned MUVs unless pursuant to their contract. Contractor-owned or leased MUVs must also be registered with and approved by the director of Parking & Transportation.

## **D. Office of Risk Management**

The Office of Risk Management provides liability and property insurance for University owned property, which includes MUVs. The department will be responsible for paying the \$1,000 deductible if an MUV is damaged.

#### **E. Facilities Management**

Facilities Management will:

1. Apply all utility vehicle markings
2. Complete utility vehicle inspections and forward the results to Parking and Transportation.

#### **F. University Police Department**

The University Police Department will issue citations for moving violations to MUVs that are not operated in accordance with this policy.

**Appendix A: GMU Motorized Utility Vehicles Policy Acknowledgement Form**



**Procedures for Motorized Utility Vehicles  
Acknowledgement Form**

Failure to follow these procedures, render common practices or courtesies, or follow rules of the road for the Commonwealth of Virginia, could result in citation, appropriate disciplinary action, and/or suspension of operator's MUV driving privileges. Enforcement efforts for repeat offenders may escalate to include issuing a "No Trespass" order to the utility vehicle operator, impounding the utility vehicle at operator expense or otherwise removing or restricting the utility vehicle and/or operator from campus.

Authorized Operator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

G#: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledge that:

- ✓ I possess a valid driver's license \_\_\_\_\_ initial
- ✓ I have read the GMU's Procedures for Motorized Utility Vehicles \_\_\_\_\_ initial
- ✓ I understand and agree to the terms and conditions stated in the GMU's Procedures for Motorized Utility Vehicles \_\_\_\_\_ initial

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Operator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

**Supervisors must maintain this form on file for as long as the  
Authorized Operator remains under their supervision.**