



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATION**

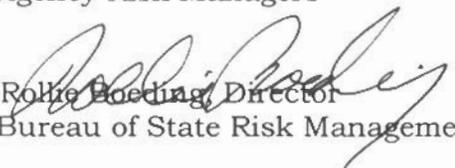
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DATE: February 6, 2004

TO: Agency Administrative Officers  
Agency Fleet Managers  
Agency Risk Managers

FROM:  Rolfe Hoeding, Director  
Bureau of State Risk Management

 Jeffery Knight, Director  
Bureau of General Services

RE: Update on training for drivers of 12/15 passenger vans

As you may recall, 12/15 passenger van guidelines for State agencies were issued last spring. Their implementation was delayed until arrangements for the new training program were finalized for those agencies that do not have their own programs.

Attached are the updated specifics on the basic classroom training and behind the wheel training that are now available for drivers of state vans. Online registration is available on the Department of Administration's website, [www.doa.state.wi.us](http://www.doa.state.wi.us); choose training from the navigation bar.

The guidelines that were previously issued also are accessible through the above-referenced website. One item that has since been clarified involves the active driver requirement. As originally indicated, a van driver must drive at least 10 hours or a minimum of 400 miles in the previous three months to remain a qualified 12/15 passenger van driver. It is now agreed that those drivers who do only in-city driving are exempt from the active driver requirement or refresher training. They must still, however, take van driver training before being authorized as van drivers.

Any questions regarding the 12/15 passenger van guidelines should be directed to John Vick, Property and Liability Manager, at (608)266-0168 or [John.Vick@doa.state.wi.us](mailto:John.Vick@doa.state.wi.us).

The State Vanpool has its own guidelines, since it is not covered under the State's Self-Funded Liability Program. Questions about the Vanpool Program should be directed to Brian Luther at (608)266-5612 or [Brian.Luther@doa.state.wi.us](mailto:Brian.Luther@doa.state.wi.us).

### **Basic Classroom Training**

Minimum of 100 minutes, which includes a classroom test at the end that must be passed before the student can participate in behind-the-wheel training. Class size should be six to eight students.

The classroom curriculum should include the following, many of which are addressed in the owner's manual for a 12/15-passenger van:

- Defensive driving skills**
- Speed management – 6 second rule**
- Speed illusion**
- Extreme driving conditions – ice/snow/rain/wind**
- Center of gravity – weight distribution**
- Space management**
- Turning radius – tracking difference**
- Lane changes**
- Parking**
- Backing – mirror usage**
- Loading/unloading – seating of passengers – mandatory seatbelt use for all occupants at all times**
- Hazard perception**
- Emergency maneuvers**
- Animal hazards**
- Oversteering**
- Braking – ABS – distance needed to stop when loaded/unloaded and subject to weather conditions and road surfaces**
- Off-road recovery**
- Skid control & recovery – right side mirror usage**
- Pre-trip checks, including tire maintenance guidelines, lights, horn, windshield wipers & washer fluid, oil, mirrors, seatbelts**
- Passenger safety/protection – flares, fire extinguisher**
- Driver/passenger relationships – driver distractions**
- Roadside maintenance**
- Night operations**
- Blind spots - visibility – using mirrors**
- Railroad crossings**
- Lights on for safety**
- Statistics (NHTSA ‘Characteristics of Fatal Rollover Crashes’ Technical Report)**
- NHTSA’s ‘Reducing the Risk of Rollover Crashes in 15-Passenger Vans’**

### **Behind-the-Wheel (BTW) Training**

BTW class size should be six to eight drivers. Minimum of 30 minutes driving time behind the wheel for each student in varied traffic situations in a group setting. Each driver should exhibit competency in van driving skills, including the following:

- Highway speeds**
- Emergency braking**
- Tracking differences – turning/backing**
- Parking – backing**
- Lack of visibility – lane change, turns**
- Height of vehicle – speed sense**
- On/off ramps (including a 180 degree ramp)**

Understanding the handling dynamics of a 12/15-passenger van is an important aspect of becoming a certified van driver. Being a passenger in the back of the van will provide the trainees a better understanding of the handling dynamics. Therefore, all but the driver and instructor will be seated in the rearmost seats of the van during behind-the-wheel training while on the road.