



First Baptist Church of District Heights  
Dr. Robert A. Manning, Senior Pastor

## Transportation Ministry Church Van Policies & Guidelines

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The church van shall be operated under the general supervision of the Transportation Ministry of Directors established by the Transportation Ministry of the First Baptist Church of District Heights (FBCDH).

**Purpose:** To provide safe and dependable transportation for FBCDH members, residents of District Heights (and surrounding areas), and others as deemed necessary who desire to attend various church activities or events at FBCDH.

### A. Use of the Church Van

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Any FBCDH ministry or departments shall be allowed to use the van upon submission of a request to the Administrator of the Transportation Ministry and subject to approval of the Transportation Ministry. The leader of each ministry or department desiring the use of the van, must complete a Church Van Request Form (Appendix A) at least 7 days before the requested day.
2. **NUMBER OF PASSENGERS REQUIREMENT:** The maximum number of passengers **MAY NOT** exceed the 15 passenger capacity of the van design, including the driver. There is no minimum requirement.
3. **SCHEDULING PROCEDURE:** The van will be provided on a first request received/first request approved basis. However, priority will be given to FBCDH ministries. Scheduling conflicts will be resolved by the Transportation Ministry.
4. **POINT OF ORIGIN:** The van will depart from and return to a designated area located in the church parking lot. (The tentative location is the last parking space on the middle row in front of the church).
5. **VAN CLEANLINESS:** Each ministry or department is responsible for cleaning the van, including picking up all refuse, cleaning spills and clearing all debris from the seats and floor. A maximum fee of \$50.00 will be assessed to any ministry or department that does not adequately clean the van. The fee will be transfer from the ministry or department budget.
6. **TRIP RECORDS:** The driver is responsible for completing the Van Checklist (Appendix B) and the Van Trip Log (Appendix C). Completed forms are to be filed in the Van Log Book.
7. **SMOKING POLICY:** No smoking is allowed in or around the van by passengers or driver.

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**B. Passenger Safety**

1. **PASSENGER CONDUCT:** All passengers of the church van are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies Christian principles. The Transportation Ministry reserves the right to deny use of the van to passengers whose conduct becomes detrimental to the general safety of the ministry or department. Vandalism or property damage shall be paid for by the person and /or ministry or department responsible for the damage and constitutes due reason to deny use of the van for future trips. Trip sponsors and adult supervisors shall have sole responsibility for passenger conduct.
2. **TRIP SUPERVISION:** It is the responsibility of the ministry or department or trip sponsor using the van to provide the proper adult supervision. Youth leader sponsoring activities must have adequate adult supervising support. Parents / guardians must sign a Liability Release Form (Appendix D) for all minors under the age of 18. The Liability Release Form authorizes FBCDH to act on the parent / guardian's behalf in administering medical treatment, in the event that such treatment is deemed necessary, if the parents or guardians cannot be reached. After the activity the Liability Release Form shall be placed in the Church Office.
3. **SAFETY BELTS/CHILD RESTRAINTS:** Maryland law requires that all passengers use seat belts or appropriate child safety restraints while the vehicle is in motion. For children under 8 years of age, parents/guardians are responsible for child restraints seats

**C. Drivers**

1. **REQUIREMENTS:** All drivers must complete the Van Driver Application (Appendix E) and satisfy the following qualifications:
    - Be a church member;
    - Have a regular driver's license;
    - Be at least 21 years of age but not older than 70;
    - Have at least two years of driving experience;
    - Have no reckless driving record in the last five years; and
    - Have no more than two moving violations in the last five years.
  2. **AVAILABILITY:** The Transportation Ministry shall maintain an up-to-date list of approved drivers. It shall be the responsibility of the ministry requesting use of the van to secure its own driver from that approved list.
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3. **RESPONSIBILITY:** The driver of the church van will have sole responsibility and authority in matters pertaining to the van operation, maintenance and safety. The driver is responsible for:
  - Keeping all licensing requirements up to date;
  - Complying with this policy;
  - Properly securing the van when passengers depart; and
  - Returning the van key, along with the Van Checklist and Trip Log, to the church official who provided the key, and completing the Post-Trip Checklist (Appendix F) prior to noon the next day.
4. **TRAINING:** The Transportation Ministry shall ensure that all drivers are properly trained in the operation of the van and that they are supplied with all pertinent information and instructions.

### D. EMERGENCY

1. In any accident or emergency situation involving the church van, FBCDH should be represented at the scene by only one individual in any ensuing discussion with authorities, insurance representatives, etc. The primary driver will be the spokesperson on the scene for the church in any such situation. If the primary driver is injured, the secondary driver will be the spokesperson or the ministry or department leader.
2. In case of a van breakdown due to mechanical failure, the driver should contact the Transportation Ministry, Deacon Herbert Brown, or the church immediately.
3. In case of an accident, the driver or a passenger should call 911 and contact the transportation ministry leader or designated representative immediately.
4. The driver is responsible for filling out all forms required by the law enforcement as well as accident reports for the church.

### E. Operations and Maintenance

1. The church van's operation for local trips is restricted to inside the District Heights city limits, not exceeding 50 miles. For non-local trips, the outer limit is defined as all states connected to Maryland.
2. Driver must obey all traffic laws.

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3. Seat belt use is required at all times during van operation for the driver, assistant, and all passengers in the van when the vehicle is in operation.
4. No cellphone use by driver while the van is in motion.
5. No audio devices with headphones or earplugs covering both ears permitted while driving.
6. The Transportation Ministry will be responsible for all major vehicle maintenance such as tire replacement.
7. The Transportation Ministry will also provide for operational upkeep and common maintenance services such as registration renewal, checking fuel and oil levels, air filter replacement and lubrication, exterior wash, and minor tune-ups.
8. Each ministry or department shall pay for fuel consumed from their budget during their trip and will return the van with the same level tank of gas prior to use. If the van is not refueled, the transportation ministry will automatically transfer the payment to refuel the van from the responsible ministry/department budget to the transportation ministry budget.

### **F. Insurance**

The church shall insure the van. The cost of the insurance shall be provided for in the annual church budget.

### **G. Safety**

1. At all times, the driver of the church van shall have final responsibility and authority in matters relating to the safety of the van and its passengers. In this regard, passenger discipline is considered to be related to safety.
2. Driver performs pre-trip and post-trip inspections and completes the inspection forms.
3. Drivers confirms safety equipment is stored at all times in its prescribed location.

### **H. Outside Use of Van**

The van will not be available to individuals or to outside groups or organizations.

### **I. Review of Policies**

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All of the foregoing is subject to review at any time by the Transportation Ministry of Directors. The Transportation Ministry shall approve exceptions to this policy on an individual basis.

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7234 Lansdale Street, District Heights, Maryland 20747

(301) 736-7872