

**University of Pittsburgh / Fleet Services**  
**MOBILE DEVICE GUIDELINES WHEN DRIVING A UNIVERSITY OWNED and / or ANNUAL LEASED VEHICLE**  
**Mobile (Cellular) Phone / Handheld Devices**  
**Implemented November 2021**

Operating a motor vehicle requires the driver's constant attention. Anything that distracts the operator of a motor vehicle dramatically increases the risk of an accident. The University of Pittsburgh recognizes that employees are the University's greatest asset. The University is committed to the safety of our employees and will do everything possible to provide a safe working environment for all employees.

To further this goal, the Fleet Services Office and the Office of Risk Management developed guidelines for anyone driving a University owned and /or a vehicle leased by a Department through Fleet Services. The guidelines listed below **are indicative only and non-exhaustive**. Departments may have their own cell phone guidelines that also are to be adhered to. **\*These guidelines do not apply to rental vehicles booked through Travel Management/ Concur.**

**Definition:**

Mobile Handheld Units: Handheld devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smart phones, tablets, laptops, pagers, palm pilots or handheld transceiver and other communication devices. Handheld mobile telephone is further defined as: *"A mobile telephone other than a hands-free mobile telephone with which a user engages in a call using at least one hand."*

There are a few basic reasons for these guidelines:

- a. Your personal safety.
- b. The safety of others on the road – drivers and pedestrians.
- c. The University can be held liable for your accident.

**Guidelines:**

1. The use of handheld cell phones is prohibited while driving on University business. If you receive a call while you are driving, allow the call to go to voicemail and return the call when you have stopped driving.
2. If you need to place a call, pull over to a safe location before placing the call. Placing a call while driving a vehicle on University business is prohibited.
3. Sending or reading text messages while driving a vehicle on University business is prohibited and is banned in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
4. Checking email, sending text messages, checking social networks, using the Internet, using smartphone apps, or reading printed materials while driving on University business is not permitted.
5. GPS navigation devices may be used while driving on University business if they are set up in a manner that does not obscure your view. Always select your destination on a GPS navigation device before beginning a trip and do not attempt to enter a new destination into the device while driving.
  - a. Cell phones may be used as navigation devices if the phone is placed in a support device so that the driver does not need to hold or unlock the phone while driving in order to receive directions.
6. Any accident the driver is involved in while using a wireless communication device may be deemed avoidable based on the results of an investigation. If you are involved in an accident while operating a vehicle on University business and you are conducting a call, texting, or accessing and using internet transmissions, you will be subject to corrective actions up to and including termination. Your Department will work with Employee and Labor Relations.
7. It is never recommended to use your own personal vehicle on University business.

**Exception:**

The ONLY exceptions to these guidelines are for calls placed to or received for legitimate emergency purposes such as:

- The driver had reason to fear for his/her own safety.
- Reporting a traffic accident.
- Making a "911" emergency call.
- The operators of law enforcement or any emergency vehicle.

Remember, your responsibility to yourself and others is getting where you are going safely. Avoid activities that will distract you from this responsibility.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (employee name) have read and fully understand and comprehend these guidelines. Furthermore, I understand that any violation of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of my employment, which are outlined in the Staff Handbook for staff and in the Collective Bargaining Agreement of represented employees.

**Signed:**

**Date:**