

# PROCEDURE

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Related Policy:	8.1.1
Title:	Field Trips/Student or Group Travel
Responsibility:	Executive Vice President for Academic and Workforce Development Vice President for Student Affairs
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President

## I. Field Trip/Student or Group Travel Procedure

For the purpose of this procedure, “field trip” is meant to convey an out-of-the-ordinary and off-campus experience requiring participant travel.

Every field trip will require a Field Trip Sponsor, which will be a full-time employee of HGTC, unless approved by the Vice President of the division or the President. It is the responsibility of the Field Trip Sponsor of the organized student/group travel (College Department, registered student organization, academic program, College employee, etc.) to assure compliance with all applicable College policies and procedures. It is expected HGTC faculty, staff and students participating in any field trips/travel will exercise all appropriate caution and protocol, in keeping with applicable College policies and procedures, Student Code of Conduct for the South Carolina Technical College System, State and Federal laws, and general safety guidelines.

The parameters set forth in this Procedure apply to College-authorized travel for currently enrolled HGTC students and/or participants in HGTC-sanctioned programs for services, i.e., Upward Bound. The College is not responsible for any unauthorized travel, including such travel done outside the guidelines listed herein. The Use of College Vehicles for all trips are governed by HGTC Policy 4.2.2, College Vehicle Use. The guidelines for in-area and out-of-area field trips are described below:

### 1) In-Area Field Trips/Travel with HGTC Students

In-area field trips/travel and learning experiences are within our local service area of Horry and Georgetown Counties. Faculty to student ratios are 1:30 for in-area field trips.

*Required Documentation:* The Field Trip Sponsor is required to complete the forms listed below.

- A. Field Trip Notification and Roster (click here to complete form)

## 2) **Out-of-Area or Overnight Field Trips/Travel with HGTC Students**

Out-of-area field trips/travel and learning experiences are defined as any location outside the HGTC service areas of Horry and Georgetown counties. Faculty to student ratios are 1:20 for out-of-area field trips.

*Required Documentation:* The Field Trip Sponsor is required to complete the forms listed below.

- A. Travel Authorization Form (click here to complete form):  
The Travel Authorization Form must be submitted 15 working days in advance of the trip.
- B. Field Trip Notification and Roster (click here to complete form):  
The Field Trip Notification and Roster must be submitted 10 working days in advance of the trip.
- C. Acknowledgement of Student Responsibilities, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Release, and Consent for Medical Treatment Form (click here to complete form):  
This form must be completed by each student and submitted with the Field Trip Notification and Roster form.

## **II. Field Trip Sponsor Responsibilities for Field Trips**

Field Trip Sponsors are responsible for making all trip preparations, including transportation and registrations.

The Field Trip Sponsor must also provide appropriate trip information to all students traveling. (e.g., pre-trip meeting/orientation, date and time of departure and duration of trip, mode of travel, number of chaperones, purpose of trip, known hazards, special clothing or equipment required because of planned group activities, weather, or other conditions, etc.). Further, an orientation meeting is recommended for trips. In addition, a parent/guardian orientation is recommended for trips involving minors.

Field Trip Sponsors, College employees, students, chaperones, or anyone on trip shall not engage in willful misconduct including, but not limited to:

- Using alcohol or controlled substances while on the trip;
- Engaging in solicitous relationships;
- Placing students in clearly dangerous circumstance; or
- Hosting or condoning an occasion where any of the above is violated.

In addition, Field Trip Sponsors and other College employees on field trips must take appropriate, expedient action (such as sending the student home, if prudent), when it becomes evident that a student is placing themselves or the group in danger.

The Field Trip Sponsor shall inform students participating in the trip of their responsibilities related to the instructional/classroom time they may miss as follows:

- A. At least ten (10) instructional weekdays (Monday-Friday) in advance, students participating in a trip should notify instructors of courses/classes they will miss as a result of participating in the trip.
- B. Students should inform instructors of the days and times they will be absent and request appropriate arrangements to make up missed assignments.

While on an out-of-area trip, the Field Trip Sponsor must maintain a copy of the Acknowledgement of Student Responsibilities, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Release and Consent for Medical Treatment forms which must be completed by students as a condition of participation.

Individual departments or groups may have further requirements for approval of student/group travel which must be submitted to the appropriate Department Chair, Dean, and/or Vice President for review and authorization, in advance.

The Field Trip Sponsor must advise students of rules and regulations regarding conduct during the trip including, but not limited to, hotel curfew and responsibility for obligations, purchases or damages incurred by the students/group. Any student traveling on a College-sponsored, recognized, or funded trip will be subject to enforcement of the College and South Carolina Technical College System Student Code of Conduct and local, state, and federal laws at all times while traveling on an authorized trip. No student traveling on a College-sponsored, recognized, or funded trip may use alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while on a trip. The Field Trip Sponsor must report any disciplinary issue to the Vice President for Student Affairs immediately.

### **III. Student/Field Trip Sponsor Responsibilities for Field Trips**

It is the responsibility of the Field Trip Sponsor and student participants to advise of any known limitations, special disabilities, certified medical conditions, or needs that may require an accommodation. In the event of any emergency or severe behavioral/conduct violation involving students, the Field Trip Sponsor must immediately take responsible, reasonable action to address the situation and must notify their direct supervisor and/or the Vice President for Student Affairs by telephone as soon as possible.

The Field Trip Sponsor must advise students of rules and regulations regarding conduct during the trip including, but not limited to, hotel curfew and responsibility for obligations, purchases or damages incurred by the students/group. Any student traveling on a College-sponsored, recognized, or funded trip will be subject to enforcement of the HGTC Student Code of Conduct and local, state, and federal laws at all times while traveling on an authorized trip. No student traveling on a College-sponsored, recognized, or funded trip may use alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while on a trip. The Field Trip Sponsor must report any disciplinary issue to the Vice President for Student Affairs immediately.

### **IV. Medical Coverage**

The College assumes no responsibility for medical coverage of student travelers. It is recommended each student, staff, or faculty member have their own medical and accident insurance. Any costs not covered by insurance will be the responsibility of the traveler. Insured travelers must carry their insurance cards or proof of insurance with them on the trip.

## **V. Modes of Travel/Transportation**

Absent extraordinary circumstances (specifically approved by the President or Vice President), no personal vehicles shall be used by any College personnel for transporting students on field trips. This does not preclude adult students from providing their own transportation to and/or from events or trips, providing the student notifies Field Trip Sponsor in advance of departure and provides all required documentation as required. In such instances, the student assumes all liability as a driver and waives College liability for their actions as a driver.

Absent extraordinary circumstances (specifically approved by the President or Vice President), field trip transportation offered by Horry-Georgetown Technical College shall be conducted by:

- A. Fully insured, properly licensed professional drivers using either licensed commercial/charter vehicles, vehicles rented by the College, or vehicles owned and maintained by the State of South Carolina that meet all appropriate safety standards, including but not limited to: use of passenger restraints, and occupant protection requirements.
- B. Field Trip Sponsors or chaperones driving College cars or vehicles rented by the College shall be deemed to have met the licensure and safety requirements.

Student use of College vehicles is governed by College Policy 4.2.4, Official Student Use of College Vehicles. Students operating a College vehicle must be directly supervised by the Field Trip Sponsor at all times.

Each mode of transportation requires common and mode-specific safety precautions (e.g. seatbelts) be used at all times. In addition to following applicable local, state and federal laws and using sound judgment when traveling, students and College personnel must follow the procedures associated with this policy according to the specific mode of travel involved. Travel conditions must be considered prior to departure on any travel involving students, and the Field Trip Sponsor must exercise sound judgment in making decisions regarding travel.

- A. Vehicles owned, leased, rented or borrowed by the College. All drivers operating College owned, rented, leased or borrowed vehicles as part of organized student/group travel must:
  - 1. Be a full or part-time employee and possess a valid South Carolina or other state driver's license or
  - 2. Be a currently enrolled student with the direct supervision of the Field Trip Sponsor and possess a valid South Carolina or other state driver's license.
- B. Commercial Travel. Students traveling by commercial transportation must comply with all laws regulating travel and the rules of the specific carrier.

Safety Requirements. Drivers and passengers must obey all traffic laws and regulations, obey all policies and procedures, and act responsibly and use sound judgment when traveling. Further, drivers must not exceed the vehicle manufacturer's recommended load capacity (see owner manuals for specific instructions), avoid

horseplay, racing or other distracting or aggressive behavior, and refrain from cell phone use and eating while driving.

## **V. Unapproved Expenses**

Any unapproved travel-related expense incurred by the student, faculty or staff traveler is the responsibility of the respective traveler. Students must be informed the College assumes no responsibility for providing student/groups with funds in case of unanticipated delays or other incidents, which may require additional expenditures. Reimbursement for emergency circumstances may be considered.

## **VI. Trip Contingencies and Emergencies**

### **A. Trip Contingencies**

Field Trip Sponsors or chaperones should try to anticipate complications and develop contingency plans in advance. Examples of unplanned circumstances include but are not limited to the following: student needs to return early because of a personal or family emergency; student violates established conduct rules; weather or transportation delays or cancellations require overnight housing. Field Trip Sponsors should seek to understand contract limitations and restrictions, whether they arise from rental vehicle, lodging, admission or other agreements. (Determine whether any portion of pre-paid trip expenses will be refundable, etc.)

### **B. Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency (e.g. car accidents, injuries, hospitalizations or death) or serious student behavioral conduct issue, Field Trip Sponsors or chaperones must immediately seek professional assistance as required, and then immediately notify: 1) The listed emergency contact(s) for the student(s) involved, 2) the Vice President for Student Affairs, and 3) their respective department chair/direct supervisor by telephone as soon as possible.

## **VII. Special Requirements for Travel Involving Minors**

The following requirements are specific to travel involving minors (e.g., student participants in Upward Bound, et al). These are in addition to other procedures outlined herein.

- A. All participants in overnight travel and events must be rising ninth-grade students or older.
- B. For travel involving minors, a mandatory orientation meeting with parents/guardians may be scheduled no fewer than fifteen (15) working days (Monday-Friday) prior to departure. Participants who are not represented at the meeting by parent/guardian may not be allowed to participate. At the meeting, all required documents can be distributed and all necessary forms collected.
- C. Required documents must be received no later than ten (10) working days (Monday-Friday) prior to travel or student participation will be disallowed.

- D. Only activities directly related to scheduled events shall be allowed, with absolutely no participation in unscheduled, unauthorized or unnecessarily risky activities. Activities will be outlined, scheduled and listed on the travel itinerary and strictly followed.
- E. It is the responsibility of participants and/or parents/guardians to inform the College of any existing certified medical condition that requires medication. Further, all participants with said condition(s) must be able to keep, monitor and administer all required medications without assistance; however, if assistance is required, the College reserves the right to determine what level of assistance is reasonable and does not negatively affect the rights or participation of other students.
- F. For Upward Bound field trips the student to chaperone ratio will be in keeping with the guidelines set forth by area districts, but not to exceed 12:1.
- G. The College reserves the right to restrict, limit or disallow student participation if extenuating or unusual circumstances exist that do cause or may cause unnecessary risk or liability to the participant, faculty, staff or other participants.
- H. A signed Field Trip Rules of Conduct Form is required for students traveling with the Upward Bound Grants.

### **VIII. Exceptions**

Any exception to this procedure will only be granted by written authorization of the College President.