

SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY

Field Trip Guidelines



**Guidelines Developed by
Academic & Student Affairs**

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Traveling with Students

Programs that include traveling with or by students need to be planned in advance with all precautions taken.

Emergency information is to be provided by each participating student prior to travel. The information must include

- Student: first and last name of student, ID, mobile phone number;
- Emergency Contact: first and last name of emergency contact, phone number;
- Trip Advisor: first and last name, mobile phone number
- Destination
- Transportation Contact: phone
- Departure and Return Date and Time

An electronic copy of this information and a headcount of participating students (e.g., 42 students attending) must be sent to the department chair, college dean, Dean of Students office, and Provost office. The Provost or designee will be responsible for storing an electronic copy of this

information on the Travel shared drive located at \\sushare\travel\$. In the event the trip leaves outside normal business hours, the hard copy of the list should be left with the Shepherd University Police Department (SUPD).

The Trip Advisor must provide the following information to all students on the trip.

- The Trip Advisor's mobile phone number
- SUPD Emergency Phone Number, 304-876-5202

What are the Liabilities for ALL field trips?

Under the definition of "Who is Insured", employees are covered but only for acts within the scope of their employment or while performing duties related to the conduct of Shepherd University business.

- **Negligence** - *Failure of one who owed a duty of care to another to fulfill that duty, resulting in injury to the party owed the duty of care.* Negligence can occur both by doing something that a reasonable, prudent person **would not** do in a particular situation or from failure to do what a reasonable, prudent person **would** do in a certain circumstance.
- **Duty and Risk** - *Duty to invitees (i.e. students) to discover and correct any unreasonable dangerous condition or to warn of its existence.* Duty and risk liability takes into account that in certain situations potential dangers are obvious to all participants. Sponsorship of an activity (i.e. field trips, intercollegiate athletics) creates a special relationship and heightens the obligation of university employees to supervise and prepare students for the foreseeable hazards that they might encounter during the field trip.
- **Duty to Warn/Educate Participants** - *A duty to warn field trip participants of known hazards and prepare students for the foreseeable hazards they might encounter during the field trip.* When faculty or staff are aware of conditions that may pose an unreasonable risk to a field trip participant, especially those hazards that may be unclear to a casual observer, there is greater potential for institutional liability.
- **Duty to Use Reasonable Care** - *A duty to provide reasonably safe conditions for participation in a field trip.* There is an obligation to provide a reasonably safe environment for students when field trip coordinators know or should have known of a potentially dangerous situation. Good judgment is required by all field trip organizers in exercising this responsibility to use reasonable care in planning and implementing a field trip.
- **Assumption of Risk** - *In many situations students assume the obvious and inherent risks associated with a field trip activity that cannot be eliminated by the exercise of reasonable care.* The student is required to act responsibly and not be negligent.

What Can I Do to Minimize Field Trip Risks and Liability?

It is impossible to completely eliminate all risks. The following information is designed to serve as a guide to assist Shepherd faculty and staff in making a reasonable effort to ensure a safe

educational experience for students participating in field trips under their guidance. Most claims against colleges and universities associated with field trips can be attributed to the following:

- Lack of planning
- Lack of supervision
- Failure to enforce policies or rules
- Failure to provide proper or well-maintained equipment
- An unsuitable site

What Do I Need To Consider In Planning The Field Trip?

1. Destination Site

The instructor should be familiar with the site and prepare a site safety plan to present to participants. The instructor or field trip supervisor should determine what skills are necessary, what students should do to acquire those skills, and how competency will be evaluated prior to the trip. The number of supervisors for the trip and their competency level should be based upon the number of students and range of their skill levels.

Lodging premises and locations should be reasonably safe or written documentation provided concerning associated risks (i.e. inner-city accommodations in high crime area). Orientation for field trip participants should include any procedures for a “buddy system” and information on known risks as well as local cultural, custom and legal requirements.

2. Transportation

The type of field trip determines the method of transportation. The majority of Shepherd University field trips use university-owned vehicles; however, trips by rental vehicles, chartered buses and commercial airlines also occur. If renting a vehicle, please work through the Facilities Department (certain stipulations apply). Determine your transportation needs in advance to allow the Facilities Department time to make the necessary arrangements.

3. Travel Using College-Owned Vehicles

All short-term field trips require a faculty or staff member to be an approved driver or passenger in the University-owned vehicle for the entire duration of the trip. All drivers (faculty, staff and students) must complete the State driver training program and must have a valid driver’s license.

4. Travel Using Faculty, Staff or Student’s Personal Vehicles

Faculty, staff and students are strongly encouraged to use University-owned or provided vehicles for all field trips rather than their own personal vehicle. While it is not a requirement to use University-owned or provided vehicles, faculty, staff and students should understand that their

own personal auto insurance for both liability and property damage is primary. Transporting students increases the driver's personal liability.

5. Deviation from Travel Plans

In certain situations, students may wish to deviate from the group travel plans such as requesting to drive their personal vehicle or make their own travel arrangements. Students should be *discouraged* from doing so and must be made aware that they will be traveling at their own risk and understand their own auto insurance is primary. The University is not liable for physical damage to personal vehicles or medical compensation for their passengers.

6. Trip Expectations

Faculty and staff coordinating field trips should provide the participants with some form of orientation prior to departure. The type of field trip will again dictate the level of detail needed in the orientation. Orientation materials should include the trip destination and purpose, a travel itinerary, route, rest and meal stops, lodging and transportation information, appropriate clothing or gear, and the established rules and protocols specific to the field trip. In addition, materials should include a summary of activities and physical requirements students will encounter, any known or unusual circumstances that would require advance preparation or equipment, and any known unique hazards.

7. Emergency Planning

The type and scope of the field trip also dictates the level of emergency planning needed. If the trip location is remote, it is strongly recommended that at least two persons on the trip have first aid skills, a first aid kit and a cell phone or appropriate means of communication in the event emergency aid is needed. Confirmation that cell phones will operate from the field trip site should be made in advance so that alternative arrangements can be made if needed. Also, determine a protocol for circumstances that may necessitate the supervisor's leaving the group to accompany an injured or ill student.

For short-term field trips, faculty or staff should make sure that each field trip participant completes a waiver of liability form, emergency contact information form (See pages 8-9). Copies of these documents should be kept with the trip coordinator and copies should be maintained within the academic department in the event that the on-location documents are inaccessible. Students should be reminded to carry ID and medical insurance cards. Trip coordinators should carry emergency phone numbers; however, all participants should know how to contact the Institution from the site, find and use the first aid kit, find and use the cell phone and what to do if separated from the group.

8. Trip Contingencies

Even with the best planning effort, things can still go wrong. Try to anticipate what complications could arise, and develop contingency plans in advance. Examples include: a student needs to leave early because of a personal emergency; a student violates established rules; weather or transportation delays or cancellations. Understand any contract limitations or restrictions. Any unused portion of pre-paid trip expenses is not refundable.

9. Special Requirements for Participation in the Trip

If any students have disabilities or special requirements that may need to be accommodated, please contact Disability Support Services no later than two weeks prior to the trip departure date [<http://www.shepherd.edu/disability>] at 304-876-5122.

10. Additional Insurance

In certain circumstances, it may be reasonable for departments to require proof of health insurance or a medical care plan. Examples might include trips with known physical hazards or trips requiring special physical skills or fitness levels.

11. Compliance with University Policies

All participants must understand that University policies for faculty, staff, and students apply to field trips regardless of the location. Activities and settings should be consistent with Shepherd University policies including, but not limited to policies on alcohol and drug use, vehicle use, student misconduct, principles of academic freedom, policy on sexual harassment and consensual relationships.

12. Records and Documentation

Trip coordinators should consider the nature of the field trip and review documentation to ensure language is clear and accurate when providing information to participants or preparing informed consent forms or release statements. The following are written records that should be obtained in advance of the field trip and easily accessible. We recommend that the field trip leader have copies, as well as maintain a back-up record.

- Roster of Participants. Prepare a list of participating students. Roster should include the participant's name, date of birth and cell phone number. For short-term field trips, please email list to the Dean of Students Office (DOS) and SUPD one-week before the trip's departure. (Remember, authorized passengers in Shepherd University vehicles are defined as University employees or participants in an official University sponsored/authorized program.) Trip coordinators should account for all participating students by taking a headcount of participants on a daily basis
- Emergency contact information, Liability Waivers form. These forms are only needed for short-term field trips. Parent signatures for minors (17 years or younger) are required.

What Do I Do if Something Happens During the Field Trip?

In the event of an emergency, field trip supervisors should attend to the injured and then determine what condition(s) or act(s) caused the injury or illness. The supervisor should initiate any steps necessary to prevent similar incidents in the future. Things to look for are:

- Specific sequence of events that led to the emergency situation;
- Conditions that may have contributed to the emergency situation; and
- Statements from eyewitnesses, if available.

The Field trip supervisors should contact their supervisor as soon as possible. If a student has been in accident and transported to a hospital, one of the first numbers you should call is the SUPD emergency number (304-876-5202). SUPD will notify the Senior Student Affairs Staff On-Call who will notify the students' emergency contact person. The field trip supervisor is not expected to remain with the transported student. However, the decision to remain with an injured student or the group should be made in consultation with the Field trip supervisor and the Senior Student Affairs Officer On-Call who can be reached via SUPD. Other important phone numbers include:

- SUPD (emergency): 304-876-5202
- SUPD (non-emergency): 304-876-5374
- Facilities Department: 304-876-5236
- Student Affairs/Dean of Students: 304-876-5214
- Health Center/Services: 304-876-5161
- Disability Services: 304-876-5122
- College Main Line (Switchboard): 304-876-5496

Student Medical Insurance

Students are responsible for their own medical insurance coverage for field trips just as they are while attending classes on campus.

Property Claims

All losses or damage to University property should be reported to the SUPD. Be advised - the use of personal property by employees or students is at your own risk. Shepherd University does not pay for loss or damage to personal property.

WAIVER, RELEASE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



The undersigned (Print Name), _____,
(The Student) being an enrolled student at Shepherd University in the class
_____, hereby acknowledges that
the class includes a field experience, which will consist of the following field trip or trips
during the _____ semester for which the University is providing transportation.



The Student wishes to participate in the field experience, and The Student is advised that if The Student elects to participate in the field experience, the activities will include exposure to safety risks at the field experience which the University cannot control, and The Student is electing to accept all those risks, for which neither the University nor the Instructor shall be responsible in any way and The Student hereby Releases the University and the Instructor from any possible future claim of liability arising during the field experience. These risks may include a traffic accident or other physical injury to The Student caused by unknown third persons. It is necessary that The Student be at the required places at the required times to participate in the field experience, and The Student has complete personal responsibility to be at the designated place and time for leaving the field experience on the University transportation. Any student who is not at the designated place, on time, may be left behind at the field experience location and will have to make personal arrangements to return to campus or to home. The Student also agrees to abide by all University policies while on the field trip.

The Student (signature)

Date



Shepherd University Field Trip Emergency Contact Form



Date _____

Student ID Number _____ Student Mobile Number _____

Student First and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact First Name and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact Mobile Phone Number _____

Emergency Contact Secondary Phone Number _____



Shepherd University Field Trip Emergency Contact Form



Date _____

Student ID Number _____ Student Mobile Number _____

Student First and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact First Name and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact Mobile Phone Number _____

Emergency Contact Secondary Phone Number _____



Shepherd University Field Trip Emergency Contact Form



Date _____

Student ID Number _____ Student Mobile Number _____

Student First and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact First Name and Last Name _____

Emergency Contact Mobile Phone Number _____

Emergency Contact Secondary Phone Number _____