

# Section 05: Vehicle Travel to Off-Site Locations

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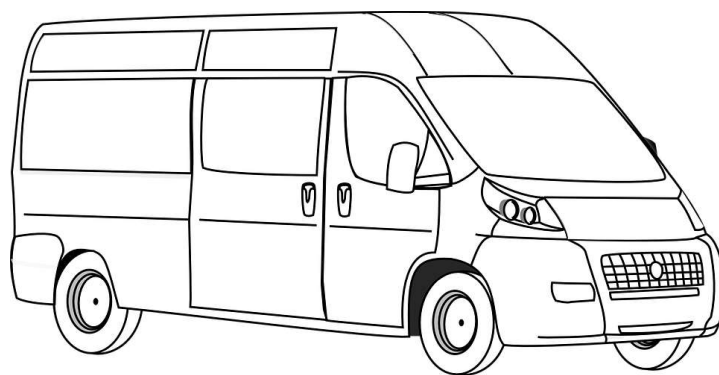


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## Vehicle Travel Policies and Procedures

All adventure trips that leave Camp Fitch YMCA property spend a considerable amount of time on the road traveling to activities and campsites/campgrounds. With this in mind it is important to remember the following policies and procedures explained below.

The following are summarized/ adopted standards in reference to vehicle travel and adapted from other adventure trip programs across the nation. Traditional summer camp leadership has the right to change or alter these policies and procedures with little to no notice based on state laws, YMCA of Youngstown change of policies, maintenance or safety committee meetings, or change in camp insurance.



### Drivers For Adventure Trips

All drivers must have a valid drivers' license and checked off to drive through Camp Fitch YMCA's procedures. All vehicles taken on a trip must have a staff labeled as the primary driver. Primary drivers, who are under the age of 25 cannot be behind the wheel for longer than eight hours. If a trip has a drive longer than eight hours, the relief driver must take over and the primary driver must have eight hours of rest before driving again. A relief driver can be available for one or more vehicles (if two or more vehicles are taken). An example of this can be a trip with two vehicles having three staff. If a driver is driving a rental vehicle the driver must be 25 years of age. Rest stops along the road will be taken every 2-3 hours.

### Rental Vehicles

If a rental vehicle is scheduled for a trip, the driver of it needs to be the Adventure Programs Director. If that person is not available then someone over the age of 25 must drive. All rental vehicle drivers must have submitted a photo of their drivers' license to the rental company.



## Driver Training and Skills Test

To become a driver for an adventure trip, a staff person must be approved by the YMCA of Youngstown, Ohio to drive for the company and a thorough driver training must be taken under the instruction of a maintenance director, that is a member of the safety committee or by the Adventure Programs Director. Steps in this process are the following:

- Complete all YMCA of Youngstown documents and be approved to drive. This includes submitting your driver's license for review.
- Watch two YouTube videos regarding driving and backing up a trailer.
  - 5 Tips for Van safety (Texas Department of Insurance)
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zcoz5a0DzyQ>
  - How to Back up a Trailer (DS Trucks)
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcgimKpMbsQ>
- Complete training on learning how to operate the vehicle assigned to. This includes any safety checks.
- Drivers are shown every document they need to fill out when requesting a vehicle.
  - Vehicle Calendar
  - Vehicle Request Form
  - Vehicle Inspection Sheet (Trips Specific)
- Driver Training #1
  - The driver test drives the vehicle on roads near camp property and on camp property with no trailer attached.
- Trailer Attachment
  - The driver is taught how to attach a trailer to a trailer hitch and how to properly dismount it from the vehicle.
- Driver Training #2
  - The driver goes back out on the same driving course and pulls a trailer with the vehicle. The driver is taught how to back up a trailer, make wide turns, and back the trailer into parking spaces and driveways.

## **General Camp Vehicle Rules**

See *Article 5 and 6 of Appendix B: Camp Fitch YMCA* in the Youngstown YMCA Association Policy for the full content.

### **Article 5 (Vehicles)**

16. Camp vehicles are to be used for purposes directly related to the normal operation of Camp.
17. Employees must check out each vehicle per protocols established by the Vehicle Supervisor.
18. The actual use of Camp vehicles is the responsibility of the driver:
  - a. The seat belt law must be obeyed.
  - b. All traffic laws must be obeyed.
19. Camp vehicle drivers - qualifications required to operate the camp vehicle:
  - a. The employee must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. (Twenty-one (21) years of age if the driver is transporting campers or staff.)
  - b. The employee must hold a valid driver's license.
  - c. The driver must maintain their own comprehensive insurance.
  - d. Proof of insurance must be on file with the association.
20. Before operating any vehicle, all drivers must do a safety check.
21. Reporting major maintenance problems to the Camp Maintenance Director and providing follow-up as necessary to ensure proper mechanical and body service.
22. Reporting breaches of policy, accidents, and other problems to the Branch Director for disciplinary action and/or other necessary action.
23. Overall supervision and responsibility of the Camp vehicles, their operation, and drivers.

### **Article 6 (Vehicle Supervisor)**

The Vehicle Supervisor is appointed by the Executive Director. The duties of the Vehicle Supervisor shall include, but are not limited to:

24. Screening of drivers for property qualifications.
25. Approving and scheduling requests for vehicle use to ensure that use is appropriate and necessary.
26. Instituting and implementing a system through which keys are checked out to drivers as needed and checked in after vehicle use is completed.
27. Ensuring that routine maintenance (i.e. oil changes, line pressures, routine safety)

### **Article 7 (Accidents)**

28. All accidents involving camp vehicles are to be reported to the Camp Executive Director and Vehicle Supervisor immediately.

29. At the discretion of the Executive Director, the operator could lose all driving privileges of camp vehicles for a time to be determined by the Camp Branch Director or the Vehicle Supervisor.

## **Article 8 (Personal Vehicles)**

30. Only full-time staff or staff members designated by the Camp Executive Director may operate personal vehicles in camp. Private vehicles may be parked in parking lots or in defined areas near private residences.
31. Personal vehicles are not to be used for transportation around camp.
32. All employees must carry comprehensive motor vehicle insurance on personal vehicles. Vehicle Supervisor or their designee on any vehicle to be driven. Operating instructions will be given to ensure safe operations.
33. The interior and exterior cleanliness of the vehicle is the responsibility of the operator. The “working status” of the vehicle must be checked before each use. Copies of ACA Standards for operation of motor vehicles shall be supplied to employees.



## **On Camp Speed Limits**

When using a camp vehicle to haul gear around camp or to strategically station vehicles at Beecher for the loading of gear and passengers, the driver must pay attention to pedestrians and drive at a slow speed to allow time to brake. The speed limit is ten miles per hour. Drivers also need to watch out for mountain bike trail crossings, as they may be in use.

When using a Kubota, drivers are to not pass ten miles per hour. If a trailer is attached the speed limit is seven miles per hour.



## **Parked Vehicle and Trailer Rules**

When parked at a campsite/campground the bus and trailer are off limits to all campers. Trips staff may go back in the bus and trailer to get items. At no point should a camper be in the trailer or by themselves in a parked vehicle.

The Trip Captain or Director is the only staff member that may use the bus or trailer as a 'temporary' shelter to sleep in. Examples of this may be loaning their tent out to the group because one broke or a tent was forgotten. Or it might be their own choice to sleep in it instead of pitching their own tent when doing a shuttle or late arrival to a campground.

The parked bus or vehicle is designated as the Trip Coordinator's office. They may sit in it to plan out logistics or talk on the cell phone out of view of campers. This helps keep the wilderness 'setting' of the trip.

When taking canoes off of a canoe trailer, staff should be the only ones climbing onto the side rails and taking boats off. Kids can walk boats down to the river once the boat is completely taken off the trailer. During Outdoor Education courses, teachers and adults may help at their own risk.

## **12 Passenger Van Seating and Trailer Attachment**

Most trips feature the use of a 12-passenger van. It is important to remember that driving a van can be more difficult than driving a car. As a driver, think about the van's height, width, and how the weight is distributed. Therefore, it is always good to factor in the seating of participants and the attachment of a trailer.

### **Seating**

Besides the two front seats for the driver and side passenger, there are 10 additional seats in the van. The first row behind the driver has three, the second row has three, and the third row has four seats. The following is a suggested method of loading passengers.

- 2 Persons
  - The driver and passenger occupy the front two seats of the vehicle.
- 3 Persons
  - Behind the driver, the third person sits in the middle seat of the first row.
- 4 persons

- Behind the driver, the third and fourth people occupy the first row, leaving the middle seat empty.
- 5-6 persons
  - The fifth and sixth passengers sit anywhere in the second (middle) row of seats behind the driver.
- 7-8 persons
  - The addition of the seventh or eighth passenger can use the back (third row) seating. This will be the standard configuration and maximum for adventure trips during pandemic protocols (2 staff, 6 youth).
- 9-12 persons
  - Fill whatever seats are left.

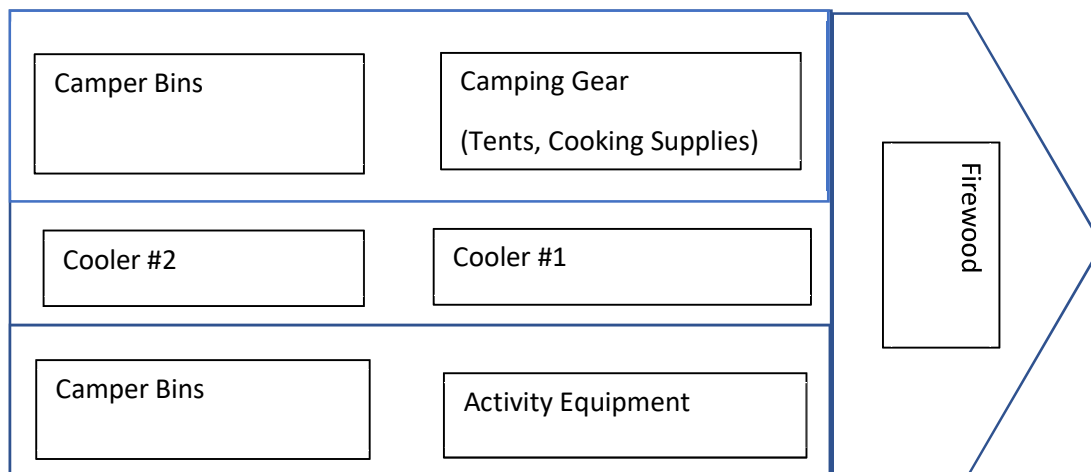
If gear for trips is being hauled in the van, place all tubs and bins in the back trunk. After this, if more gear is decided to fit in the van, use the first-row seating behind the driver and load all passengers in rows 2 and 3. Other smaller items can be stored in the very back behind the third row (4 seats). If at any time gear, luggage, equipment of any sorts is being placed on the seats for transport- do not hinder the vision of the driver being able to see out of the rear-view mirror. No matter what, gear should never be stored on top of the vehicle.

### Trailer Use

When hauling a trailer, make sure everything is attached to the vehicle correctly. This also includes making sure the chains are opposite and opposed and that the lights are connected to the vehicle. Before the vehicle leaves, make sure the trailer can display brake lights and turn signals. This will be a part of a routine maintenance checkup as well. Trip Captains and Trip Directors are responsible for checking the trailer lights and brake lights while the trip is off camp property.

### Loading a Trailer

When loading a trailer, it is suggested that the heaviest equipment be placed toward the back of the trailer (where the trailer attaches to the vehicle). This is known as the tongue. For adventure trips this includes items like food coolers, tents, climbing gear etc. It is then suggested that lighter items be stacked on top of these heavy items or placed near the front of the trailer (door). Lighter items include PFDs, helmets, sleeping pads, and individual camper bins. It is the duty of the Trip Captain or Trip Director to oversee the 'stacking' of all equipment bins. Trip Leaders need to get permission before telling campers to load the trailer. If firewood is loaded into the trailer, it is suggested to be a 'heavier' item and placed toward the tongue of the trailer.



## Moving Vehicle

While a camp vehicle is in motion, campers must have seatbelts fastened and be facing forward. At no time should a camper be turned around with their butt in the gap where their legs go or sitting sideways with feet in the aisle way. Campers also cannot lie down horizontally, using the seat as a bed while the vehicle is moving down the road.

The aisle way (bus) and area near the sliding door (van) must be clear of all gear during travel. The driver must be able to see out the back window and all emergency exits should be clear.

Campers can roll/slide down windows but all feet, hands, head, whole body must stay inside the vehicle.

## Motion Sickness

If a kid knows they will be carsick, give them Dramamine or other motion sickness medicine. See the medical section of the manual for other first aid needs.

If the camper gets sick while in transit, the driver should try and find a pull off point for the kid to vomit outside. If a stop cannot be made quick enough, have the camper pull their shirt up and puke in their shirt. It is easier to clean clothing than it is an entire vehicle. After this stop has happened, get a trash bag for them to hold the rest of the trip.



## **Trip Leader Duties While in Transit**

The primary role of the trip leader in a moving vehicle is to supervise campers while in transit. That means enforcing the rules mentioned before and everything about road stops below. The Trip Leader is also expected to inform campers of their next task when approaching a stopping site. Trip Leaders can also control what music is played. Games and songs may be played while the bus is in transit if the driver can handle the noise. It is advised too that trip leaders spread out in a vehicle or sit next to a problem child if needed.

If Trip Leaders want to sleep during a long drive, they must switch off to where at least one staff member is awake to monitor the campers. Both Trip Leaders must be ready to execute their attack plan when the vehicle makes a stop. Always think two steps ahead and know what needs to be accomplished.

## **Vehicle Travel Ground School**

Before an adventure trip leaves camp property, a Trip Leader must inform passengers of basic information they need to know. Trip Leaders are encouraged to make it as fun as possible. An example of a ground school is given below. Some of the information is repeated from above but very entertaining.

- When the vehicle is moving, face forward and wear a seat belt.
- During gas stations stops and rest stops, everyone must exit the vehicle.
- How to lower and raise windows for air conditioning (bus travel).
- Sticking hands, feet, head out of the window is unacceptable.
- Music is played by the Trip Leader, not the driver. If you don't like the music played- too bad.
- If you are feeling sick, let the Trip Leader know. They will try to tell the driver to pull over so you can leave the vehicle to puke. If this cannot happen a Trip Leader will try to pass back a trash bag.
- If you continue to feel sick and cannot wait for the driver to pull over, no trash bag is available, lift your shirt and puke in your shirt. It is easier to clean your shirt than the entire van. Just understand as the puke slushes around on the van floor, that friend that you thought was your friend, may no longer be your friend!

## **Gas Stations and Rest Stops**

While stopping at a gas station or rest stop, the bathhouse/ shower facility procedure should be followed (*Section 04: Standard Policies and Procedures*). The Trip Leaders should position themselves in strategic positions. One might want to be outside the restrooms, while another may want to stand by the cash register to monitor what kids are buying. Kids cannot buy lighters or pocketknives. Campers cannot buy souvenirs unless they ask permission. Trip Leaders are responsible for setting limits such as only 1 drink and 1 snack, etc. Kids buy things at a gas station with their own money, camp money will not be used. The only time camp money will be used is in the rare case where the Trip Captain or Trip Director forgot to pack out the snacks.

When stopped to get gas, everyone in the vehicle must get out and go inside the gas station with the Trip Leaders. If no building is available, all persons must stand in a grassy area away from the fueling pump. The driver is the only person allowed to pump the gas.

Leaving a camper accidentally at a gas station or restaurant stop is considered child abuse and will be grounds for immediate termination of employment.

## **Dining and Restaurant Stops**

When stopping at a dining facility or restaurant, the bus or van must be parked away from the entrances to where it does not hinder public parking. A prayer may be said outside before walking into the establishment. When ordering food, the campers go through first with the Trip Leader supervising how much monies worth each kid is getting. The Trip Leaders and driver order last with the Trip Captain or Director using petty cash or camp credit card to pay for the meal. While eating it is the Trip Leaders' responsibility to monitor and supervise campers' behavior and interaction with other guests.

After paying for all meals, if a camper wants to order more food they must do so with their own money. All meals must be on one receipt to turn into Youngstown. All campers must purchase a food item even if they are not hungry. Not ordering food makes the Trip Leader liable for child abuse.



## **Dessert and Ice Cream Stops**

Dessert such as ice cream is not considered a meal and can be taken away as a form of misbehavior. One ice cream stop is planned per trip and paid for by camp. Any other ice cream stops need to be camper paid.

## **Food Storage**

While on a trip, food must be stored properly. Dry food will be stored in dry storage containers. Frozen and refrigerated food will be stored in a cooler or team of coolers. If multiple coolers are used, staff are to try and separate meat from fruit and vegetables, designate a cooler for each. Coolers should be kept below 40 degrees F. Trip Captains and Directors should keep up with how much ice is in the cooler and know when to purchase more ice. Temperature checks should be conducted every morning and evening.

When cooking a meal, adventure staff should try and only pull things out of the cooler for that specific meal. At the end of the meal, only things that can be safely kept and planned for other meals like condiments, dairy and certain vegetables should go back into the cooler. All meat

scraps, fruit and other items that have been left in the temperature danger zone, 40°F to 140°F, should be thrown away. Vegetarian and vegan items should be cooked separately.

All these food storage policies fall under vehicle travel because the Director or Trip Captain that is driving is also responsible for food safety.

## Receipts

All purchases on adventure trips require that an adventure staff keep a printed receipt or ask that an email of the receipt be sent to the Trip Captain or Trip Director. The adventure staff will then take a picture of the receipt and send an email to Youngstown with the text's body including the last four digits of the credit card used and the four-digit code for adventure trips. It is important to note that typically codes for gas and food outside of camp do not apply to the adventure trips program, everything during summer trips is under this one budget line. After doing this, the receipt will be stored in a giant money envelope.

1. Obtain receipt via print or email.
2. Take a picture of the receipt or download the email.
3. Send a new email to [ap@campfitchymca.org](mailto:ap@campfitchymca.org)
  - a. Subject Line of Email
    - 2568 Adventure Trips, Trip Name
  - a. Email Body
    - List the last four digits of the credit card
    - List store or outfitter and if needed, the number of people

Example:

Subject:2568 Adventure Trips, Sweet Carolina

Body:                   Card used: 7125  
Riverside Canoe, 6 canoes, 2 cabins

## Driver Purchase Exceptions

While on a trip, the driver of a vehicle may use a camp credit card to purchase a coffee, energy drink, or related item that is going to help them stay awake for a difficult drive as long as it is not drug related. This is not a privilege to be taken advantage of during every gas station stop. Examples when to use this exception is on a very long drive at the beginning of a trip (Level 4), the journey back to Camp Fitch YMCA on Fridays, and not getting sleep the night before due to arriving at a campground late or solving an issue with a camper/ staff person.



## **ACE Adventure Resort Guest Relations Desk**

Most trips visit ACE Adventure Resort in Oak Hill, West Virginia for their whitewater rafting portion. When the trip arrives at ACE, it is the driver(s) responsibility to check their group in at the guest relations building. Upon check-in they will be shown where to camp, find out their check-in times for rafting, and receive a parking pass to display from the rearview mirror. If there are multiple trips arriving, the trip that gets to ACE first can check-in the remaining trips. The driver of this first trip can then just text the others to let them know where they are camping.

At the main front desk in the guest relations building, any adventure trip staff member may add any water, soda, energy drink, or iced coffee to the ongoing tab to be paid at the end of summer. This tab will be different from the current trip invoice. No shirts or souvenirs may be added to this. This is a perk of working for adventure trips. Trip Captains and Trip Directors are encouraged to purchase firewood, fire starting cookies, and any camp resource that may help the trip run better.

## **Emergency Vehicle Travel/ Extended Trip**

In the event of a broken-down vehicle, the adventure trip may have to adjust the schedule to accommodate the time it takes to fix the vehicle. This might mean changing the backpacking section or spending an extra day at a campground.

If a trip is not going to make it back in time for parent pick up, arrangements will be made by the Adventure Programs Director for the trip to stay in hotels or campgrounds and eat at restaurants until the broken-down vehicle is fixed, or substitute drivers/ vehicles are found. Parents will be notified on the estimated new arrival time or where to travel to pick up their child. Bad weather may also be the cause for a situation like this.

Sometimes camp credit cards become maxed out. To try and prevent this a Trip Leader may be granted a credit card to use instead of using the Adventure Programs Director's. If every camp card is maxed out, the trip will stay in the area until funds are sent. In a rare situation, a Trip Leader may use their personal credit/debit card to purchase gas and food for the trip and be reimbursed afterwards. We try our best to avoid this.



## **Tire Repair Kit and Other Items**

A spare tire and replacement kit will be available on all vehicles being used for adventure trips. Before a trip leaves Camp Fitch YMCA, a Trip Leader will be responsible for completing the Vehicle Checklist (found in the resources attached to the end of this section).

Other Items that will be in the vehicle include, but may not be limited to:

- Jack
- Vehicle first aid kit with extra items.
- Vehicle plastic tub with the Driver's most commonly used items.
- Folder of waivers, camp forms, and camper health/medical forms (copies)
- Insurance and Registration for the vehicle.
- Adventure Trip Manual
- Wilderness First Aid Manual
- Credit Card & Receipt Organizer (blue money envelope)
- Fire extinguisher
- Hand sanitizer
- Paper towels
- Extra toilet paper
- Sunscreen
- Trash bags

## **Dismissals Involving Vehicle Accidents and Abuse**

Adventure staff are expected to take expert care of all camp owned vehicles when they are checked out for us and rental vehicles. Failure to be professional in keeping vehicles clean, failing to report accidents involving minor bumps and scrapes, failing to perform routine safety inspections and driving recklessly

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are subject to immediate dismissal from the adventure trips program. Camp Senior Leadership, involving the Maintenance Director, will then act if it involves termination or loss of job.