

# Safe van driving practices acknowledgement statement

## Instructions

Driver refers to employees, student-employees, students, and volunteers operating 12-passenger full size vans under the direction of a state agency, university, or community/technical college. All 12-passenger full size vans drivers are required to complete this form prior to initial operation of the van. A copy of the signed form will be maintained on file with the agency, and a copy provided to the driver. 15-passenger vans are not to be used for transport purposes.

## Risks Associated with operating 12-Passenger full size vans

1. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) safety advisory recommends that drivers insist all occupants wear safety belts at all times Drivers should verbally remind van passengers that safety belts are to be properly used until the vehicle is stopped and legally parked, RCW 46.61.688 also requires vehicle occupant safety belt use.
2. Drivers should visually check passenger safety belt use, and during transit, stop and legally park the van if made aware of passenger safety belt non-use.
3. 15-passenger full size vans have a rollover risk similar to other light trucks and vans. Prior NHTSA research has shown that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five to more than ten. 12-passenger full size vans, while having less total passenger seating capacity, still require special handling knowledge for safe operation of the vehicle.
4. The weight of the van, particularly when fully occupied, causes the center of gravity to shift rearward and upward increasing the likelihood of rollover.
5. The shift in the center of gravity will also increase the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers.
6. The weight of the van when fully occupied requires additional stopping distance, an especially important factor in rain, fog, or other difficult driving situations caused by weather conditions.
7. The width of the van allows for less lane room.
8. The length of the van increases distance needed for making turns, changing lanes, and braking.
9. General maintenance of the vehicle, including proper tire pressure is important to safety, and can be referenced in the vehicle owner's manual.

## Basic driving practices for safe van operation

1. Driving at posted or lower speeds.
  2. Adjusting to lower speeds for special conditions such as: rain, snow, fog, wind, and any other condition impacting visibility, stopping distance or general safe handling of the vehicle.
  3. Minimizing potential driver distraction by using cell phone or other electronic devices ONLY when the van is safely stopped or asking passengers to assist with calls for emergency situations.
  4. Properly loading passengers and equipment, and never placing equipment/luggage on the top of passenger vans.
  5. Minimizing driver fatigue on long trips by one or more of the following: driving rested, taking appropriate breaks, or sharing driving with authorized drivers. Follow agency policies on travel time restrictions.
  6. Not drive while under the influence of intoxicating beverages, drugs, or any other impairing substances as advised by health professionals.
- I have read and understand potential risks involved while operating 15 or 12-passenger full size vans \_\_\_\_ (initial)
- I am aware handling characteristics of 15 or 12-passenger full size vans may change, especially when fully loaded \_\_\_\_ (initial)
- I understand extra caution is required when operating 15 or 12-passenger full size vans, including reduced speeds. \_\_\_\_ (initial)
- I understand van driver/passenger safety belt use is required and will remind passenger and visually check for belt use. I will stop and legally park the van if made aware of passenger non-use during transit \_\_\_\_ (initial)

Driver's Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/Section \_\_\_\_\_