



Northern Illinois Conference

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

303 E. Wacker Dr. • Suite 2020 • Chicago, IL 60601

Office (312) 346-9766

Church Staff & Volunteer Driver Policy

This policy has been adopted to promote the safe operation of vehicles in support of the mission of the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church. All staff and volunteer drivers who operate a vehicle on behalf of a local church or the Conference must comply with the requirements of this policy.

1. Driver Eligibility and Authorization

To be authorized to drive on behalf of a church or the Northern Illinois Conference, an individual must:

- Be at least **21 years of age** and have held a valid driver's license for a minimum of **two (2) years**.
- Possess and maintain a valid state driver's license.
- Maintain personal automobile liability insurance with minimum limits of:
 - **\$100,000** bodily injury (per person)
 - **\$300,000** bodily injury (per accident)
 - **\$100,000** property damage
- Understand that when using a personal vehicle for church-related activities, the driver's personal automobile insurance is the **primary coverage** for any accident, loss, or claim.
- Cooperate with all required Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) reviews and provide requested documentation. Insurance coverage and driving eligibility may be verified annually.
- Hold a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) whenever required by law for operation of a church-owned or leased vehicle.
- Immediately notify the church if:
 - their driver's license is suspended, revoked, restricted, or expires;
 - they are charged with or convicted of DUI or another serious traffic offense;
 - they become medically unable to safely operate a vehicle; or
 - their automobile insurance lapses or is cancelled.
- Read, acknowledge, and comply with this policy.
- Receive authorization from the church or the Northern Illinois Conference before operating a vehicle for church-related activities.



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Driver Disqualification

A driver is not eligible for authorization if the Motor Vehicle Record reflects any of the following:

Within the previous ten (10) years:

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (DUI)
- Driving while impaired
- Reckless driving or participation in a speed contest
- Failure to stop or report an accident
- Making a false accident report
- Vehicular homicide, manslaughter, or assault
- Driving with a suspended or revoked license
- Attempting to elude a law enforcement officer

Within the previous three (3) years:

- Two or more moving violations
- Two or more at-fault accidents

2. Safe Driving Requirements

Authorized drivers shall:

Vehicle and Trip Safety

- Perform a pre-trip inspection, including lights, turn signals, brakes, tires, windshield wipers, horn, mirrors, and fluid levels.
- Ensure the vehicle registration, insurance, and any required inspections remain current.
- Carry proof of insurance and appropriate emergency supplies, including a first-aid kit, flashlight, jumper cables, and emergency contact information.
- When renting a vehicle for church-related activities, the church shall purchase the rental company's Collision Damage Waiver (CDW), Loss Damage Waiver (LDW), or other equivalent damage waiver, as well as Supplemental Liability Insurance (SLI) or Supplemental Liability Protection (SLP), if offered. These coverages help protect the church and the Northern Illinois Conference from uninsured or underinsured exposures that may not be covered under the Conference's insurance program.

Passenger Safety

- Never transport more passengers than the manufacturer's designated seating capacity.
- Ensure every occupant is properly restrained before the vehicle is placed in motion.



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- Comply with all state laws regarding child passenger safety seats and booster seats.
- Never permit passengers to ride in cargo areas.
- Never allow youth participants to transport other participants.

Driver Conduct

Drivers shall:

- Obey all traffic laws and posted speed limits.
- Drivers shall not use handheld electronic devices while operating a vehicle. Texting, emailing, browsing the internet, or manually entering information into a mobile device while driving is prohibited. If communication is necessary, drivers should safely pull off the roadway before using a mobile device. Hands-free technology may be used only for brief, essential communications when it can be done without compromising the driver's full attention to the safe operation of the vehicle.
- Drive with headlights illuminated whenever practical.
- Never operate a vehicle while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, medication, illness, or fatigue.
- Plan appropriate rest stops and arrange relief drivers for extended trips.
- Never permit alcohol or illegal drugs to be consumed in the vehicle while transporting passengers on church business.

Administrative Responsibilities

Drivers are responsible for:

- Paying any traffic or parking citations personally. Such fines will not be reimbursed.
- Securing personal belongings. The church and the Northern Illinois Conference are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.

3. Accident Reporting

If involved in a motor vehicle accident while conducting church-related activities, the driver shall:

- Stop immediately.
- Contact 911 when appropriate.
- Render reasonable assistance if it is safe to do so.
- Exchange all legally required information with other involved parties.
- Notify the church as soon as practical and the Northern Illinois Conference when required.



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- Report the accident to the appropriate insurance carrier in accordance with church and Conference procedures.
- Refrain from admitting fault or discussing liability at the accident scene.

4. Use of Personal Vehicles

Drivers using personal vehicles for church-related activities acknowledge and agree that:

- Their personal automobile insurance is the primary insurance coverage for any accident, loss, or claim arising from the use of their personal vehicle.
- The Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church, the Bishop, District Superintendents, affiliated local churches, conference agencies, trustees, employees, clergy, and volunteers do **not** provide collision or comprehensive coverage for damage to the driver's personal vehicle and are not responsible for repairing or replacing that vehicle following an accident, except to the extent coverage is provided under an applicable insurance policy.
- The driver is responsible for maintaining the automobile insurance required by this policy and applicable law.
- To the fullest extent permitted by law, the driver agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church, the Bishop, District Superintendents, affiliated local churches, conference agencies, trustees, employees, clergy, and volunteers from and against claims, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, and reasonable attorneys' fees arising out of the driver's negligent or wrongful operation of a personal vehicle while engaged in church-related activities, except to the extent such claim results from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of an indemnified party.
- This acknowledgment does not create, expand, or modify any insurance coverage provided under the Northern Illinois Conference insurance program.

5. Driver and Church Authorization

Driver Acknowledgment

I certify that I have read and understand the Northern Illinois Conference Church Staff & Volunteer Driver Policy. I agree to comply with its requirements and understand that my authorization to drive on behalf of the church or the Northern Illinois Conference is contingent upon my continued eligibility under this policy.

Driver Name (Printed): _____

Driver Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Church Name: _____

Church Authorization

I certify that the individual identified above has met the requirements of the Northern Illinois Conference Church Staff & Volunteer Driver Policy and has been approved to operate a vehicle on behalf of this church, subject to continued compliance with this policy.

The church has verified, as applicable:

- ☐ Valid Driver's License
- ☐ Required Automobile Insurance
- ☐ Acceptable Motor Vehicle Record (MVR)
- ☐ CDL (if applicable)
- ☐ Driver Policy Acknowledgment Completed

Authorized Church Representative (Printed): _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Driver Records Retention

Driver Authorization Forms and Motor Vehicle Reports (MVRs) shall be maintained in a confidential file while an individual is authorized to drive on behalf of the church. After an individual is no longer authorized to drive, these records shall be retained for a minimum of **seven (7) years**. If an accident, claim, investigation, or litigation involving the driver has occurred, all related records shall be retained until the matter is fully resolved and the applicable retention period has expired, whichever is later.

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