

Southwest Area Regional Transit District



SAFETY POLICY

Adopted by Board of Directors – June 5, 2012

Revised by Board of Directors – August 30, 2017

Revised by Board of Directors – February 28, 2018

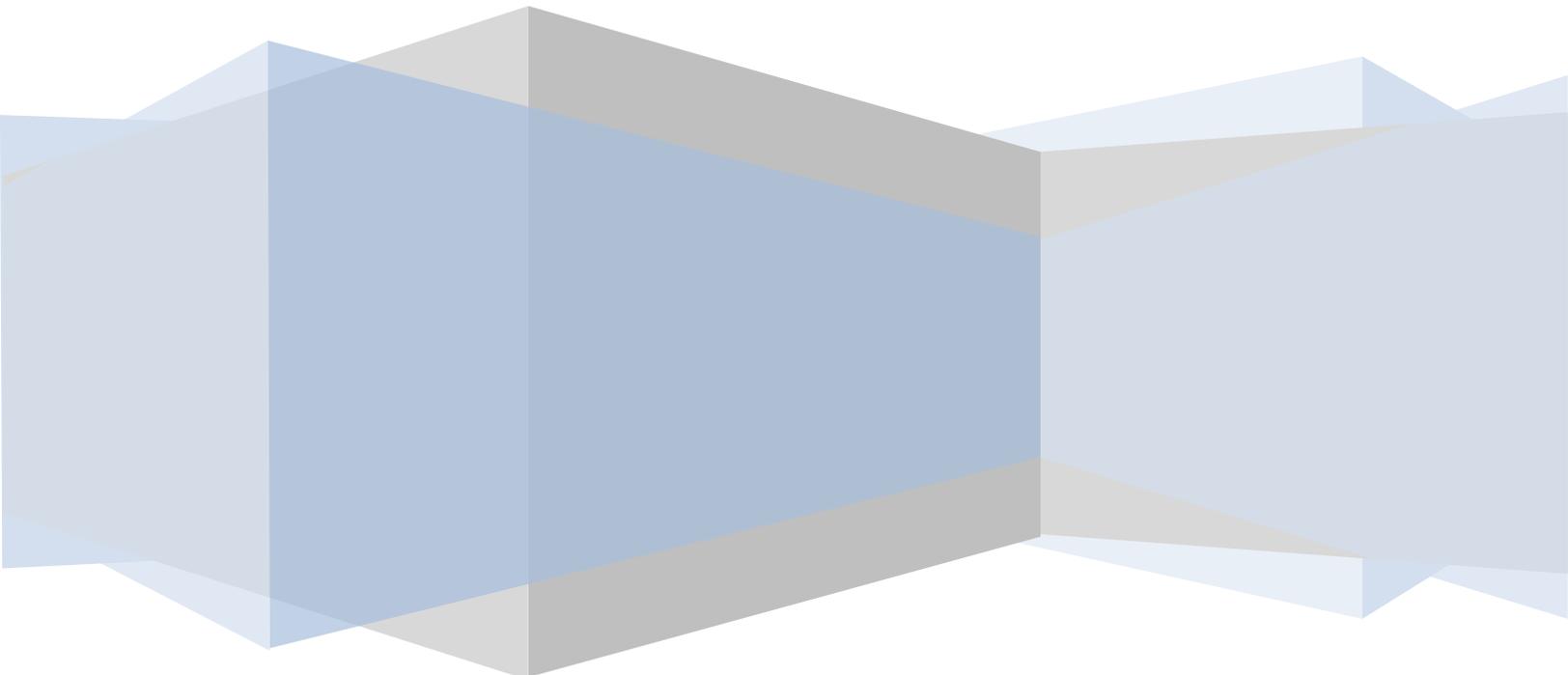


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1.0 Introduction

1.01 Introduction

Due to the nature of passenger transportation, it is necessary to apply strict rules, regulations, and procedures to ensure the most effective system possible, as well as the safest system for passengers. In addition to the SWART Personnel Policies which apply to all personnel, the Safety and Job Performance Policy strictly regulates those employees who transport passengers and are covered under the District's vehicle fleet insurance. Vehicles covered under the District fleet insurance include any District owned vehicle and rented/leased vehicles. If these conflict with the general SWART Personnel Policies, these shall control.

Such employees which this policy will affect include:

- 1. SWART Vehicle Operators
- 2. SWART Personnel covered by the Fleet Insurance

2.0 Hiring & Employee Responsibilities for Public Transit Vehicle Operators

2.01 Hiring

All prospective applicants for positions of public transit Vehicle Operator, Operations Manager, Trainer, and Vehicle Technicians must meet the following qualifications at the time of their interview:

- 1. A valid Texas Driver's License.
- 2. CDL License Holders Must pass DOT physical and drug/alcohol screening.
- 3. Must pass a personal background check as outlined by funding sources. Must be clear of any misdemeanor or felonies for the past 7 years.
- 4. Must have a clear Texas Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) for the past seven (7) years.

2.02 Drug & Alcohol Testing

Testing will be done at the following times (refer to SWART Drug & Alcohol Policy for Safety Sensitive Employees):

- 1. Pre-employment
- 2. Reasonable Suspicion
- 3. Post Accident
- 4. Random

2.03 Training and Certification Requirements

Within 2 weeks of hire (annually if required thereafter), each Vehicle Operator shall complete the following:

First Aid & CPR (Every two years)

PASS training (Certification every two years) (In-house refresher course annually)

- Recognize when and how to call for emergency services
- Emergency Procedures use of fire extinguishers
- Wheelchair lift operation
- Recipient Safety
- ADA Training
- How and when to call for emergencies
- Dealing with client behavior and or violent behaviors
- Bus Safety
- Wheelchair lift operation
- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Distracted Driving
- PASS Information & Techniques
- Mobility Device and securing of Mobility Device in transportation
- Vehicle emergency evacuation
- Vehicle Operator Safety

Defensive driving (Certification every two years)

- Weather related safety

Blood Borne Pathogens (Annually)

On the job Training

Pre-trip inspections

Vehicle Operator required paperwork

Pass an annual physical exam (DOT Medical Examination Report)

2.04 District Certification Requirement Schedule

1. SWART will obtain the Texas Motor Vehicle Report for all Vehicle Operators on an annual basis.
2. An evaluation after 180 days of service and yearly evaluation thereafter.
3. SWART will obtain a Background Check for all Vehicle Operators on an annual basis.
4. SWART will perform an annual non-DOT drug test to meet requirements of funding sources on an annual basis.

3.0 Hours for Public Transit Vehicle Operators

3.01 Hours

All Vehicle Operators will be assigned hours of work which meet the needs of routes and passengers. Due to the nature of public transportation, changes are required to meet routing demands. It is the responsibility of the Vehicle Operators to check schedules daily, either by calling in, checking their email, or checking in before starting their assigned routes.

Overtime hours will not be permitted unless prior approval from the supervisor is given.

3.02 Absenteeism and Lateness

Vehicle Operators are expected to report to work as set in their schedule. Unnecessary absenteeism and lateness is expensive and disruptive. It places unfair burden on other employees and the supervisor. Unsatisfactory attendance will result in disciplinary action as per the SWART Personnel Policy.

3.03 Vacation and Leave

Due to the nature of public transportation and transportation, an employee will be required to submit a vacation request at least 2 weeks in advance for any vacation requests of three days or more. If the employee requests fewer than 3 days, a week notice is required. Leave will not be granted until a replacement is found or arrangements made. Emergencies will be considered by the Supervisor on a case-by-case basis and a decision will be made at that time based on each specific situation.

As a special number of Vehicle Operators are required to operate routes, dates for vacations will be granted on a first request basis.

3.04 Holidays

Due to the nature of public and medical transportation operations, Vehicle Operators may be required to work on holidays.

Employees working on holidays may either be paid for the additional holiday hours at regular time/pay or take their holiday on another day. Such arrangement must be made with Supervisor. Requests for time off during working holidays must be made at least one month in advance. Days off for holiday leave will be granted on a first request basis.

3.05 Bad Weather

SWART generally does not cancel service due to weather unless it is extreme. The Transit Director, or designee, will determine if services are to be disrupted due to bad weather. However, employees failing to report to work, because of bad weather, without approval of the Supervisor will acquire points as described in Section 5.00 based on Section 3.00 Absenteeism and Lateness.

Bad Weather is defined as tornado, flooding, high winds, hail, severe thunderstorms, snow, and ice, etc...

4.0 Accidents, Incidents, & Traffic Violations for Employees Covered Under District Fleet Insurance

4.01 Accident, Incident, and Traffic Violations

Employees should report to their supervisor all observed safety and health violations, potentially unsafe conditions, and all accidents and incidents (no matter how minor), involving property, clients, passengers, or employees before the close of business on the date of the incident.

Covered employees must follow the procedures below:

1. A call will immediately be made to the immediate supervisor and/or dispatch.
2. Proper local authorities (police, sheriff, highway patrol) will always be called by central dispatching (or by Vehicle Operator if out on an out-of-area route), unless they have already been notified.
3. A written incident/accident report shall be filed with the supervisor within 24 hours.
4. A copy of the police report will be turned into the supervisor within ten (10) days. It is the responsibility of the Vehicle Operator/covered employee to obtain and submit the police report.
5. Vehicle Operators/covered employees found at fault ~~involved~~ in any accident will accumulate disciplinary points (See Section 5.00).
6. A Drug & Alcohol test will be administered based on SWART Drug & Alcohol Policy for Safety Sensitive Employees.

4.2 Preventable Incidents and Accidents

A preventable incident and accident is defined as an incident and accident in which the employee is found at fault.

4.3 Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is defined as any action which distracts the Vehicle Operator/covered employee from safe operation of a vehicle. This includes but is not limited to talking on a cell phone, texting, talking to passengers, eating, drinking, reading manifests, radio dialing, etc...

4.4 Handheld Mobile Telephone Use for Employees with Commercial Vehicle Operators Licenses

As per Federal Highway Regulations, Vehicle Operators with a Commercial Vehicle Operator's License are prohibited from the use of handheld mobile telephones while driving any Commercial Motor Vehicle.

5.0 General Disciplinary Procedures for Public Transit Vehicle Operators

5.01 Point System Evaluation

Accumulated Total within a Twelve Month Calendar Period (January through December).

Point System

- 5-10 Points Personal Review with verbal warning, written report/memorandum on file.
- 20 Points Written reprimand with warning that additional points may result in termination.
- 30 Points Termination (Mandatory)

Offense	Points
Possession of/ under the influence of intoxicants, narcotics, amphetamines or other dangerous substances while driving on or off duty.	30
Failure to report any accident/incident - on duty	30
Failure to report any accident - off duty	10
Preventable accident (with bodily injury to others and/or damage in excess of \$5000) - on duty	30
Preventable accident (other) - on duty	20
Boarding or disembarking passengers at other than designated spots	10
Proven improper passenger relations	30
Personal use of company equipment or time.	10
Failure to report defective equipment, or falsifying daily inspection reports	10
Failure to maintain contact with central office/dispatch	5
Conviction of a DWI (on or off duty)	30
Speeding on duty with passengers (in excess of 6 miles per hour over the speed limit)	30
Speeding on duty without passengers (in excess of 6 miles per hour over the speed limit)	20
Failure to report any traffic citation (on duty)	15
Failure to report any traffic citation (off duty)	10
Vehicle Operator's License Expired	10
Valid client complaints.	10
Smoking in vehicle	10
Taking gifts, tips, or gratuity	5
Failure to perform a pre-trip/post trip inspection on District vehicle.	10
Failure to secure or properly secure any passenger.	30
Distracted Driving	30
Failure to wear a seatbelt	10
Failure to report damage to an District vehicle (reprimand issued)	10
Failure to attend required training	10
Failure to follow safety dress code	10
Use of handheld mobile telephone for CDL Vehicle Operators while driving a CMV	30

6.0 General Disciplinary Procedures for Employees Covered Under the District Fleet Insurance

6.01 Point System Evaluation

Accumulated Total within a Twelve Month Calendar Period (January through December).

Point System

5-10 Points	Personal Review with verbal warning, written report/memorandum on file.
20 Points	Written reprimand with warning that additional points may result in termination.
30 Points	Termination (Mandatory)

Offense	Points
Possession of/ under the influence of intoxicants, narcotics, amphetamines or other dangerous substances while driving on or off duty.	30
Failure to report any accident/incident - on duty	30
Failure to report any accident - off duty	10
Preventable accident (with bodily injury to others and/or damage in excess of \$5000) - on duty	30
Preventable accident (other) - on duty	20
Personal use of company equipment or time.	10
Failure to report defective equipment, or falsifying daily inspection reports	10
Conviction of a DWI (on or off duty)	30
Speeding on duty	20
Failure to report any traffic citation (on duty)	30
Failure to report any traffic citation (off duty)	10
Vehicle Operator's License Expired	10
Smoking in vehicle	5
Failure to perform a pre-trip/post trip inspection on District vehicle.	10
Distracted Driving	30
Failure to wear a seatbelt	10
Failure to report damage to an District vehicle (reprimand issued)	10
Use of handheld mobile telephone for CDL Vehicle Operators while driving a CMV	30

7.0 Automatic Disciplinary Actions

7.01 Immediate Termination

The following violations will result in immediate termination for vehicle operators, operations managers, and vehicle technicians:

1. Failure to maintain a valid Texas Driver's license for public transit Vehicle Operators.
2. Conviction of a DWI on and off duty.
3. Speeding ticket in a District vehicle while on route with passengers in excess of 6 miles per hour.
4. Failure to report any tickets or moving violations.

5. Failure to inform the supervisor within 24 hours of a revocation or suspension of license for any reason.
6. Use of alcohol or drugs while driving a District vehicle or on SWART property.
7. Improper or fraudulent information given to the office upon application.
8. Theft of District property including fares.
9. Unreported accidents and incidents of any kind.
10. Carrying concealed weapons.
11. Failure to pass annual DOT physical examination for CDL holders.
12. Failure to secure and/or properly secure any passenger.
13. Distracted driving while operating a District vehicle including District rented vehicles.
14. Deliberate actions to conceal or obstruct line of sight of vehicle security cameras.

Accumulation of the following points within the specified period will result in termination:

- 1 year = 30 points per calendar year (January through December)
- 3 years = 60 accumulated points from hiring date
- 5 years = 75 accumulated points from hiring date

At the inception of the sixth (6) year, the accumulated points will be cleared and a new cycle begins.

8.0 General Work Regulations

Although general work regulations are listed in this policy, a more in depth list of rules and general work operations are listed in the SWART Vehicle Operator’s Manual. Please refer to this policy for clearer definitions of operational regulations.

8.01 Vehicle Cleanliness

Covered Employees and Vehicle Operators are responsible for the internal and external cleanliness of the vehicle assigned to them. Vehicles must be wiped down and swept daily. Vehicles must be washed a minimum of once per week.

8.02 Vehicle Inspection

1. Covered Employees and Vehicle Operators are responsible for performing daily pre and post vehicle inspections and for correcting items that require attention. (Air pressure to tires, add oil, add water/coolant, etc...)

8.03 Keeping Timely Schedules

1. Vehicle Operators are responsible for adhering to all route schedules in a timely manner.
2. Vehicle Operators are responsible for turning in daily reconciled logs, mileage logs, fuel tickets, etc...
3. Vehicle Operators are responsible for turning in all fares on a daily basis.

8.04 Reporting Repairs

1. Covered Employees and Vehicle Operators shall report needed repairs to their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will authorize repairs and/or assign a different vehicle.
2. It is the responsibility of the covered employee and/or Vehicle Operator to submit a Vehicle Maintenance Work Order along with the pre-trip/post trip vehicle inspection to their immediate supervisor.

8.05 Assistance to Passengers

Vehicle Operators are to assist all passengers on and off of the vehicle, as instructed in training sessions. SWART adheres to a “Door to Door” policy for for the elderly and disabled. All other riders will be serviced curb to curb. Employees shall be helpful and courteous at all times.

8.06 Smoking, Eating, and Drinking

Eating and drinking is prohibited while driving a District vehicle. Smoking is prohibited at all times while on a District vehicle.

8.07 Change of Employee Status

Employees are required to report immediately any status change to their supervisor. Such is as listed below:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone Number
- Cell Number
- Email Address
- Person to notify in case of an emergency

8.08 Receiving Gifts

Gifts for services rendered may not be accepted. Tips or gratuity will be cordially refused or will be put in the fare box and will be counted as fares.

9.0 Uniforms and Appearance

9.01 Requirements

Vehicle Operators of the SWART Program are required to wear uniforms at all times while on duty. This includes name tags. SWART will cover the costs of 5 uniform shirts per year. If the employee should leave before their 180 day probationary period, costs of the uniforms will be garnished from their last payroll check.

Uniform Includes:

Vehicle Operators & Dispatchers:

- Shirt (provided by District)
- Khaki or Denim pants or shorts (provided by employee)

- Working shoes with rubber grip soles (provided by employee). The shoes must be low heeled and closed toe. (Included are boots, athletic shoes, and loafers.)
- Name Tag (provided by District)

Vehicle Technician:

- Shirt (provide by District)
- Work pant (provided by District)
- Safety Shoe (provided by District)
- Name Tag (provided by District)
- Overalls (provided by District)

Note: Vehicle Operators and Vehicle Technicians must provide their own jackets.

9.02 Restrictions

Uniforms may not be worn for any other reason or time other than working for SWART during assigned work hours. Uniforms including pants/shorts must be clean, unwrinkled, and have no holes or tears.

Without unduly restricting individual tastes, the following personal appearance guidelines should be followed:

- Shoes must provide safe, secure footing, and offer protection against hazards. No flip flops or leisure sandals.
- Operators shall be required to wear agency provided uniforms and an easily identifiable company name tag. They must wear appropriate shoes to ensure safety. Open toe shoes and sandals are not permitted.
- Tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube or halter tops, or shorts may not be worn under any circumstances.
- Mustaches and beards must be clean, well-trimmed, and neat.
- Hairstyles are expected to be in good taste and present an appropriate professional appearance.
- Offensive body odor and poor personal hygiene is not professionally acceptable.
- Perfume, cologne, and aftershave lotion should be used moderately or avoided altogether, as some individuals may be sensitive to strong fragrances.
- Jewelry should not be functionally restrictive, dangerous to job performance, or excessive.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.

SAFETY & JOB PERFORMANCE POLICY

RECEIPT OF POLICY

I, _____, have received a copy of the “Safety & Job Performance Policy” for Safety Sensitive Employees and Fleet Covered Insured Employees. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and become knowledgeable of this policy. I am aware that this policy has been revised and becomes effective February 28, 2018.

Employee Signature

Date

ATTACHMENTS

Safety Sensitive Employee Disciplinary Offense Report

For Public Transportation Vehicle Operators

Employee Name		1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
Job Assignment		Date of Offense	Date of Offense	Date of Offense
Date of Action				
Date Action Terminates		Points Earned	Points Earned	Points Earned
Interviewed By				
Points Applied		Action Taken	Action Taken	Action Taken
Offense Description				

	Offense	Points
	Possession of/ under the influence of intoxicants, narcotics, amphetamines or other dangerous substances while driving on or off duty.	30
	Failure to report any accident/incident - on duty	30
	Failure to report any accident - off duty	10
	Preventable accident (with bodily injury to others and/or damage in excess of \$5000) - on duty	30
	Preventable accident (other) - on duty	20
	Boarding or disembarking passengers at other than designated spots	10
	Proven improper passenger relations	30
	Personal use of company equipment or time.	10
	Failure to report defective equipment, or falsifying daily inspection reports	10
	Failure to maintain contact with central office/dispatch	5
	DWI (on and off duty)	30
	Speeding on duty with passengers (in excess of 6 miles per hour over the speed limit)	30
	Speeding on duty without passengers (in excess of 6 miles per hour over the speed limit)	20
	Failure to report any traffic citation (on duty)	15
	Failure to report any traffic citation (off duty)	10
	Vehicle Operator's License Expired	10
	Valid client complaints.	10
	Smoking in vehicle	10
	Taking gifts, tips, or gratuity	5
	Failure to perform a pre-trip/post trip inspection on District vehicle.	10
	Failure to secure or properly secure any passenger.	30
	Distracted Driving	30
	Failure to wear a seatbelt	10
	Failure to report damage to an District vehicle (reprimand issued)	10
	Failure to attend required training	10
	Failure to follow safety dress code	10
	Use of handheld mobile telephone for CDL Vehicle Operators while driving a CMV	30

Point System

5-10 Points Personal Review with verbal warning, written report/memorandum on file.

Vehicle Fleet Insurance

Covered Employees Disciplinary Offense Report

Employee Name		1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
Job Assignment		Date of Offense	Date of Offense	Date of Offense
Date of Action				
Date Action Terminates		Points Earned	Points Earned	Points Earned
Interviewed By				
Points Applied		Action Taken	Action Taken	Action Taken
Offense Description				

	Offense	Points
	Possession of/ under the influence of intoxicants, narcotics, amphetamines or other dangerous substances while driving on or off duty.	30
	Failure to report any accident/incident - on duty	30
	Failure to report any accident - off duty	10
	Preventable accident (with bodily injury to others and/or damage in excess of \$5000) - on duty	30
	Preventable accident (other) - on duty	20
	Personal use of company equipment or time.	10
	Failure to report defective equipment, or falsifying daily inspection reports	5 10
	DWI (on and off duty)	30
	Speeding on duty	20
	Failure to report any traffic citation (on or off duty)	30
	Failure to report any traffic citation (off duty)	10
	Vehicle Operator's License Expired	10
	Smoking in vehicle	5
	Failure to perform a pre-trip/post trip inspection on District vehicle.	10
	Distracted Driving	30
	Failure to wear a seatbelt	10
	Failure to report damage to an District vehicle (reprimand issued)	10
	Use of handheld mobile telephone for CDL Vehicle Operators while driving a CMV	30

Point System

5 -10 Points	Personal Review with verbal warning, written report/memorandum on file.
20 Points	Written reprimand with warning that additional points may result in Termination.
30 Points	Termination (Mandatory)