

High Capacity (10-15 Passenger) Van Risk Management

High capacity vans require a higher level of driver controls due to the fact that the weight distribution of the passengers and the high center of gravity makes these vehicles more difficult to control, including longer stopping distances and a higher propensity to rollover than the average vehicle. To help reduce the likelihood of a serious accident involving your high capacity vans, the following should be instituted as a formal procedure:

Driver Certificate Program – Driver Qualifications and Training.

A van driver certificate program should be instituted by your organization, with a certificate issued to the driver and required to be shown prior to being given keys to the van. The key ring (or signage within the vehicle) should also indicate that only certified van drivers are authorized to drive the vehicle. Requirements for certification should include:

- A review of Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs) covering the last 5* years should be obtained prior to issuance of a certificate and at least annually. Your organization should carefully examine these records and not permit persons with poor driving records to drive company vehicles or leased, rented or personal vehicles on company business.
*Exception: The maximum period allowed in the states of Idaho, Kentucky, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Washington is 3 years.
- Drivers should be experienced, having no less than 5 years driving experience.
- Drivers should receive Defensive Driver training specific to driving passenger vans which includes specific characteristics of high capacity passenger vans.

Navigator/Designated Driver Assistant

To reduce driver distractions, the front seat passenger should be designated to assist the driver by reading maps, caring for passenger needs (radio, cell phone), etc.

Driver Fatigue

Procedures should be in place to control driver fatigue (e.g. trips not to exceed 250 miles one-way; use of chartered buses for longer trips; multiple van-certified drivers.)

Vehicle Loading

No roof-top loads or luggage should be allowed. Cargo trailers should not be attached. In-vehicle storage should not be allowed above seat bench level. Cargo should be stored in front of rear axle position. Passengers should be placed in front most seats first filling to rear.

Enforced Seatbelt Usage

Use of seatbelts by driver and passenger should be strictly enforced.

Note: If a high capacity van is in use, but indicated as not ever used for more than 10 passengers plus driver, the rear seat should be removed from the vehicle. The vacant space **should not** be used for stowage of extra luggage or gear.

Refer to the **National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration** website at (www.nhtsa.dot.gov) and type "15 Passenger Vans" in the search window for more information, safety flyers and hang-tags.

Our loss control service is advisory only, and should not be interpreted as legal advice. We assume no responsibility for management or control of customer loss control activities nor for implementation of recommended corrective measures. This correspondence, and any recommendations it contains, is based on information supplied by the customer and/or observations of conditions and practices at the time of the visit (if a visit was made). We do not warrant to have identified all hazards. We do not warrant that requirements of any federal, state or local law, regulation or ordinance have or have not been met, nor that compliance with any or all of the recommendations stated herein will guarantee coverage under any specific factual scenario.