

# VEHICLE OPERATOR TRAINING & NEW HIRE POLICY

APPLICABLE TO ALL SAFETY-SENSITIVE POSITIONS

VERSION 0524

AGENCY NAME: AUTISM MODEL SCHOOL

SYSTEM TYPE: 5310

EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/1/2026

APPROVED BY: AUTISM MODEL SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## **PURPOSE**

This policy contains two sections and addresses new hire (Section 1) and ongoing training (Section 2) requirements for all Autism Model School operators and those in safety-sensitive positions. Training is vital to the safe and efficient operation of Autism Model School services.

## **APPLICABILITY**

This policy and requirements contained within apply to all safety-sensitive persons including full-time, part-time, and/or intermittent drivers, as well as any other staff that may be required to operate a vehicle.

## **TRAINING DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Transit Director or designated position will document all training in each employee's personnel file. The Transit Director or designated position will maintain a spreadsheet to track training completed for each employee, which must contain at a minimum the following information:

- ✓ Employee name
- ✓ Training/Course title
- ✓ Date of Training
- ✓ Instructor name
- ✓ Source of training
- ✓ Date of refresher (if required)

Employees are expected to attend periodic safety training and staff meetings to obtain necessary updates and changes in policy or procedure.

## Section 1: New Hires

Proof of the following will be kept in employees' files. All new hires who fall under this policy will:

- ✓ Be at least 18 years of age, with a minimum of 2 years of driving experience.
- ✓ Have a valid driver's license.
- ✓ Have a driver abstract obtained from the Ohio BMV that is no more than fourteen calendar days prior to the date of application for employment and does not contain six points or more. Driving abstract checks will be performed annually thereafter.
- ✓ Complete a background check, which will be conducted by the bureau of criminal identification and investigation (BCI) in accordance with section [109.572](#) of the Revised Code; or conducted by the federal bureau of investigations (FBI) for an individual who has not lived in the state of Ohio for at least five years immediately prior to application.
- ✓ Follow the appropriate Drug & Alcohol requirements as listed in that section of this policy.
- ✓ Attain a copy of a valid signed statement from a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant acting within their scope of practice or a department of transportation (DOT) physical declaring that the driver/operator does not have a medical condition, physical condition, including vision impairment (not corrected), which could interfere with safe driving, passenger assistance, the provision of emergency treatment activity, or could jeopardize the health and welfare of client and/or general public is to be received and in the employee file upon hire.
- ✓ Sign and date a written statement or form indicating they accept or deny the Hepatitis B vaccination that is offered by Autism Model School.

In addition to the full trainings listed in this policy, new hires will, at a minimum, be trained on:

- ✓ Policy and Procedures Manual
- ✓ Personnel Policy Manual
- ✓ Scheduling/Dispatching

- ✓ Radio or Phone Procedures (as applicable)
- ✓ Office and Paperwork Requirements
- ✓ Familiarization of all vehicles
- ✓ Basic Operations and Maneuvering
- ✓ Pre and Post Trip Inspections

## **Section 2: Training**

### **CPR Certification**

Employees will attain certification in adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), which shall include hands on training from the "American Red Cross," "American Heart Association," or "American Safety and Health Institute," (ASHI) or equivalent certifying organization approved by ODOT. Certification must be attained within sixty (60) days of hire and maintained thereafter.

### **First Aid Certification**

Employees will attain certification in basic first aid or show that the employee is certified as an emergency medical responder, emergency medical technician, advanced emergency medical technician, or paramedic. Certification in basic first aid must be attained within sixty (60) days of hire and maintained thereafter.

### **Defensive Driving Course**

All safety-sensitive positions shall complete a Defensive Driving training program prior to beginning safety-sensitive duties. If drivers are unable to complete the course prior to beginning duties, the course must be completed within ninety (90) days following their date of hire. At a minimum the training program shall address the following areas:

- ✓ Distracted driving
- ✓ Drowsy driving
- ✓ Smoothness of operation
- ✓ Following, breaking, and stopping distances
- ✓ Intersections
- ✓ Roundabouts
- ✓ Rail grade crossings
- ✓ Backing
- ✓ Common driving situations

### **Emergency Procedures and Evacuation**

All safety-sensitive positions must receive in-house training that specifically addresses emergency procedures specific to transit operations. This is to be done prior to the employee beginning any safety-sensitive duties.

Additionally, drivers are to complete a course in Emergency Procedures and Evacuation. The course shall be completed within ninety (90) days following their date of hire and a certificate of completion shall be added to the employee file. The training material must address at a minimum:

- ✓ Breakdown procedures
- ✓ Weather related emergencies
- ✓ Accident procedures
- ✓ Ill or injured passengers
- ✓ Emergency evacuations
- ✓ Special considerations for persons with disabilities

### **Bloodborne Pathogens**

All staff, transit operators included, must complete a course on Bloodborne Pathogens at the time of hire. An annual refresher course is also required, and completion must be documented.

As a 5310 subrecipient, Autism Model School provides transit operators education in compliance with [49 CFR Part 382.601](#) within thirty (30) days of hire. Employees sign a copy of receipt (kept in the employee file) verifying they have received the educational information and materials.

### **On the Road Training**

All new hires shall complete an on the road training program that emphasizes the operational responsibilities of transit operators. Due to varying levels of expertise and experience, the program will be adapted to meet the needs of the trainee. The process will include having the trainee assigned to a supervisor, designated trainer, or experienced driver for continued orientation and observation that includes both observing other drivers and supervised driving opportunities.

Autism Model School will have a supervisor or a designated trainer sign off before allowing the trainee to operate a vehicle in revenue service without supervision.

### **PAT/DRIVE/PASS Certification**

Certification in Passenger Assistance Techniques (PAT), DRIVE, PASS, or another ODOT pre-approved equivalent course is required for all safety-sensitive positions. This certification shall be renewed and maintained through refresher courses or additional certifications. The course must, at a minimum, include the following items.

### **Lift Procedures & Wheelchair Securement Training**

The course will include training on proper procedures for the safe use of all wheelchair accessible equipment, four-point securement devices, and boarding/alighting techniques, including:

- ✓ Lift operations
- ✓ Manual lift operations
- ✓ Proper occupant restraint use for persons using mobility aids
- ✓ Proper securement techniques
- ✓ Various mobility aid securement techniques
- ✓ How to work with and treat persons with disabilities
- ✓ Pass/Fail proficiency demonstration

### **Education on Transporting Individuals with Disabilities**

The course will cover the following transporting individuals with disabilities, addressing specific disabilities and how best to serve passengers with disabilities. Topics to be covered are:

- ✓ Strokes
- ✓ Developmental Disabilities
- ✓ Passengers with Autism
- ✓ Vision Impairments
- ✓ Hearing Impairments
- ✓ HIV and Kidney Dialysis
- ✓ Mental illness and Alzheimer's Disease
- ✓ Epilepsy or Seizure Disorders
- ✓ Neuromuscular Diseases

### Passenger Relations Training

The course will include training that addresses customer service, dealing with difficult people, and effective communication. At a minimum this training must address:

- ✓ What is good customer service
- ✓ Complaint processes
- ✓ Difficult people or difficult behaviors
- ✓ Listening skills
- ✓ Communication skills

### **POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Acknowledgment of receipt of this policy is required of all applicable staff, and it is a requirement for staff to sign the policy and procedure manual receipt form.