

6.8.1. OFTC Field Trips Procedure

Oconee Fall Line Technical College (OFTC) encourages field trips as an important component of a student's educational experience when out-of-classroom experience is appropriate.

Field trips should be designed and planned for enrichment of students in their course of study and should be closely correlated with classroom instruction. As part of their regular course of study a student shall not bear any financial burden for participating in a field trip excluding meals, refreshments, or personal items.

In order to ensure that provision is made for maximum learning, the orderly progression of educational programs, and the safety of participants during field trip activities, the following regulations have been established. In addition, to minimize the risk of liability, not only must all employees exercise prudence and good judgment in the management of all field trip activities, they shall also be bound by the requirements and limitations of all aspects of this procedure.

DEFINITIONS:

A field trip is defined as a class related trip or student activity that takes place away from the regular classroom location and involves the class or group as a whole (as opposed to clinicals, externships, and internships that are individually arranged). The following procedures are intended to assist faculty, staff, students, and volunteers in planning and preparing for health, safety, and risk management issues related to field trips.

Section 504 Coordinator is an individual designated by the president of the college to ensure compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as Amended, and any other state and federal regulations governing disabilities; the responsibilities of the 504 Coordinator will include, but may not be limited to evaluating students requesting accommodations for a disability and ensuring equal access to facilities, services and programs.

Sponsor is an employee of the college who is organizing a field trip and/or accompanying students on a field trip.

PROCEDURE:

Driver Qualifications/Transportation

1. College Vehicles

An approved field trip activity entitles the instructor or faculty advisor to request a college vehicle for travel. Requests will be granted on an availability basis. Only employees of the college may drive college vehicles. Any employee who operates a

vehicle for field trip activities must be in compliance with the TCSG Driver Qualification Procedure.

2. Personal Vehicles

Absent extraordinary circumstances, no personal vehicles shall be used by any college personnel for the transporting of students on field trips. Students shall be discouraged from transporting other students on field trips and shall be prohibited from doing so if travel is a component of the field trip.

3. Citations

Any traffic and parking citations received during the course of a field trip are the responsibility of the driver, and must be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor.

4. Maintenance

Oconee Fall Line Technical College will ensure that any state-owned vehicle offered for transportation is properly maintained and insured in accordance with Georgia Department of Administrative Services regulations.

5. Professional Driver

If chartered transportation is utilized for field trips, colleges must ensure that the provider has the appropriate liability insurance and is utilizing properly licensed professional drivers.

6. College Transportation

College transportation for field trips must be provided and must depart from and return to the college campus.

7. Property and Vehicle Coverage

Vehicles are insured by a State of Georgia policy. The insurance company should be contacted at the time of the accident regardless of the extent of injury or damage. Insurance identification cards are kept in the notebook for each vehicle that provides contact information and procedures to follow in the event of an accident.

Field Trip Approval

Request for field trip activities must have prior approval to determine relationship to learning goals and budget availability. A Field Trip Request Form should be submitted to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs for approval at least two weeks in advance of the activity. Field trip participants (including college personnel) must be covered by accident insurance and must have completed and signed an Assumption of Risk, Agreement to Abide by Code of Conduct, Release of Liability, and Limited Medical Authorization form prior to participating in college sponsored field trips. If the student is under the age of 18, the form must be executed by a parent or legal guardian. Students should also be given a Field Trip Conditions of Participation Form.

Accommodations

Oconee Fall Line Technical College must provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to enable them to participate in field trips.

Preparations for Field Trips

A faculty member planning field trips as a course requirement should include that fact on the course syllabus given to students the first day of classes so that students will understand that field trips are part of the course's learning methodology. The faculty member should also

explain in the syllabus the learning objectives of the field trips. The sponsor should discuss in appropriate detail with students the risks associated with the activity, relevant emergency preparedness information, as well as expectations for behavior during the activity (including transit to and from the location(s)).

College Designated Contact Person

For each field trip, the technical college must have a designated contact person on campus with information about the field trip in the event that emergency communication is necessary. Information should include the purpose, location, duration, mode and route of transportation, and emergency contact information for each participating student or sponsor. Field trip sponsors should have access to communicate with contact or emergency personnel at all times and are required to maintain a copy of the emergency contact information for each participant during the course of the trip.

Emergency Information

Participant Information: The participant's closest relative or other contact person with address and telephone number must be available in case of emergency.

Reporting an Emergency

All emergencies must be reported to the Vice President of Administrative Affairs. In the case of accidents, employees should follow the guidelines as outlined on the State insurance card.

Vehicle accidents should also be reported in accordance with local requirements. Affected employees are asked to cooperate with local law enforcement authorities. Matters relating to insurance coverage, however, should not be discussed with anyone except an authorized agent of the college's insurance company. All questions regarding insurance should be directed to the Vice President of Administrative Services. Upon returning to campus, the driver of the vehicle must complete an Accident Report form that can be found on the OFTC Intranet.

Fiscal and Academic Responsibility

Transportation, lodging, and college-funded meals will be obtained at the lowest cost compatible with safety and security. Event-sponsored lodging and food will be used to the maximum extent possible. Activities will be planned with the academic purpose of the trip given utmost consideration.

Missed Classes as a Result of Field Trips

Instructors and college personnel initiating field trips will have supervisory responsibilities of the students. Students are required to make up any class work missed for assigned classes during their absence.

The sponsoring faculty/staff member should remind students that if they will miss classes or work study duties because of the trip they must contact their instructors and supervisors at least one week in advance. When a conflict occurs, the two faculty/staff members need to reach a resolution to the problem and communicate that resolution to the student. Although, instructors and supervisors are encouraged to cooperate in supporting field trips, the decision of whether or not to approve an absence and makeup work for an individual student rests with each supervisor or instructor affected by the absence.

Student Accident Insurance

All students enrolled at OFTC are covered by student accident insurance. Questions regarding student accident insurance should be directed to the Vice President of Administrative Services.

Alcoholic Beverages

No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances shall be transported in a state at any time.

Code of Conduct

During field trips, students will conduct themselves properly at all times and adhere to all the regulations of the College.

Adopted: March 19, 2015

Reviewed: March 17, 2016; March 23, 2017; March 21, 2018

Revised: March 6, 2019; April 2021

Attachment: 6.8.1p.a1.

RELEASE, WAIVER OF LIABILITY, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE

(READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING)

I hereby acknowledge my awareness that my participation in the _____ activity may expose me to risk of property damage, bodily or personal injury, including death. The Technical College System of Georgia and/or _____ Technical College will be providing transportation and activities will include _____. I understand that the risks that I may encounter include, but are not limited to transportation accidents, _____, _____, as well as other risks that may not be foreseeable. I have been informed and understand that there are inherent risks and dangers involved in this activity. (Attached description, syllabus or website.) I knowingly and freely assume any and all such risks and voluntarily participate in this activity.

In exchange for the use of equipment, materials, supplies and for being allowed to participate in this event, I hereby release and forever discharge _____ Technical College, the Board of the Technical College System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, their members individually and their officers, agents and employees from any and all claims, demands, rights, expenses, actions, and causes of action, of whatever kind, arising from or by reason of any personal injury, bodily injury, property damage, or the consequences thereof, whether foreseeable or not, resulting from or in any way connected with my participation in this activity.

I further covenant and agree that for the consideration stated above, I will hold forever harmless and will not take legal action against _____ Technical College, the Board of the Technical College System of Georgia, the Technical College System of Georgia, their members individually, and their officers, agents, and employees for any claim for damages arising or growing out of my participation in this activity whether caused by negligence or otherwise.

I grant permission for my likeness, image and voice to be recorded in any media during this activity and to be used by _____ Technical College on behalf of the Technical College System

of Georgia in any publications, media, or technology now known of or hereafter developed in the future for any lawful purpose whatsoever without further permission from me. I understand I will not be compensated further for use of these recordings.

In the event of an emergency and I am unable to act on my own behalf, I authorize the faculty and directors of the activity/field trip program to take whatever action they deem is warranted and appropriate regarding my health and safety.

I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. This consent is given freely and voluntarily by me without coercion, duress, threat or promise of any kind. I certify that I understand and have read the above carefully before signing. I understand that I am not subject to any adverse action if I do not sign.

Signature of Student

Date