April 29, 2013

To: Business Managers

From: Bruce Backus, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Environmental Health and Safety
      Alan Kuebler, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Resource Management

Subject: 12 to 15 Passenger Van Use

This message is a follow-up to Hank Webber’s April 19th message to deans, directors and department heads notifying them of a change in University policy which discontinues the use of 12 to 15 passenger vans for University activities. As stated in the April 19th notice, the reason for the policy change is to improve transportation safety for faculty, staff, students and visitors.

In addition to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommendations that schools and universities not use 12 to 15 passenger vans, because of safety concerns, the University's insurance providers are also recommending that 12 to 15 passenger vans not be used.

We recognize there will be situations where exceptions to the policy will be warranted. In these cases, please contact Bruce Backus, backusb@wustl.edu, 935-9882, to explain the situation. He will approve any exceptions to this policy.

The University is distinguishing between rental vehicles driven by University faculty, staff, students and volunteers, and commercial vehicles driven by contractor supplied professional drivers who have Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDLs) for chauffering or piloting passenger shuttles and motor buses. At this time, we are allowing departments to contract with professional transportation firms, such as Central States Trailways and others, which may use 12 to 15 passenger vans for some operations, as long as the transportation firm is providing a driver with a CDL to drive the vehicle. An exception is not being made for University faculty, staff, students or volunteers who may have a chauffeur license or motor bus CDL, who wish to rent or use a 12 to 15 passenger van on University business. Even when hiring a transportation firm with professional drivers, we ask that you consider using wider wheel-base passenger shuttles instead of 12 to 15 passenger vans for transportation safety reasons.

A reminder, University schools and departments that contract with professional transportation firms such as Central States Trailways or Cavallo Bus Lines for commercial transportation services including the driver should verify the transportation firm’s insurance coverage is primary for the contracted or chartered service. The University
should be included as Additional Insured on the firm's coverage for the contracted or chartered service. Recommended minimum coverage is $5,000,000 per occurrence.

Large University cargo vans, which seat one or two passengers in addition to the driver, and are primarily used for transporting equipment and supplies, not personnel, are exempt from this policy.

While we recognize that renting mini-vans and SUVs will cost a bit more, the safety factor outweighs the additional cost.

Please refer to the Resource Management web site, resourcemanagement.wustl.edu, to find available contract rates for the rental of mini-vans and SUVs, or for chartered shuttle rates for your University related functions.

Please contact Bruce Backus if you have any questions about the policy, or Alan Kuebler if you need any assistance with vehicle or charter rentals. Thank you.