

Procedure No. 4-10-48

Revised: 03-01-23

Issued: 04-01-10

**SUBJECT:** Distractions while operating a Woodhaven vehicle**PURPOSE:** To carry out the Mandate of the Office of Human Resources

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**OVERVIEW**

Driving is a skill that requires full attention to safely control a motor vehicle and respond to events happening on the roads. Events or things that prevent a driver from safely operating a vehicle are distractions. Driver distractions are the leading cause of most vehicle accidents and near-crashes, and may occur within three seconds before the vehicle crash. At Woodhaven, most staff are required to operate a motor vehicle to transport individuals served. The employee's obligation and priority in operating a motor vehicle for Woodhaven is to properly guard the safety of the individuals served as well as themselves. This policy states Woodhaven's expectations regarding the operation of a motor vehicle.

**CELL PHONE USAGE**

Use of personal cell phones during Woodhaven paid time should be considered a privilege as long as there is not abuse by staff. For the safety of staff and the public, use of either Woodhaven or personal cell phones while operating a motor vehicle on Woodhaven business is prohibited. Cell phones should be turned off or not answered while driving. If a call needs to be answered, staff should stop their vehicle in a safe location and park while using the cell phone. Texting, use of a camera feature or hands free device is also prohibited.

**FOOD / DRINK**

Eating or drinking while driving causes the driver to focus on the food or drink item instead of the road and surrounding environment. Meals, drinks or snack items should be consumed before or after operating a motor vehicle. The opening of packages, unwrapping and re-wrapping of food items are also prohibited.

**HANDLING BUSINESS**

Multi-tasking takes place when driving because the mind and body are working simultaneously to safely operate a moving vehicle. Any other task should not be added to what is already needed to drive safely. Staff are prohibited from the following tasks while operating a Woodhaven vehicle: Reading a newspaper, book, or a map. Working in the vehicle to include: typing on a laptop, making business calls, and writing notes or reports. The use of good judgment and time management should be in place to handle these types of obligations.

**SMOKING**

Smoking can be a distraction to the peripheral vision and blind spots. Dealing with lighting up, putting out cigarettes and falling ashes can pose a safety hazard for the driver, all passengers, and other motorists while on the road. Smoking in any Woodhaven vehicle is prohibited. Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigs) or any other device that resembles a tobacco product are also prohibited in the workplace and in Woodhaven vehicles.

**PERSONAL GROOMING**

All issues of personal grooming will need to be handled before reporting to work. Staff are discouraged from grooming hair, shaving or applying make-up while operating a Woodhaven vehicle.

**VEHICLE CONTROLS**

Radio surfing or adjusting vehicle climate controls are distracting activities that can put the driver and passengers in danger of an accident. It is recommended that staff adjust vehicle controls (climate controls, mirrors, radio, seat, etc.) before operating the vehicle. Take advantage of normal stops to adjust controls. At times it may be appropriate to ask a passenger to adjust the radio, climate control, etc. The use of headphones or earplugs is prohibited while driving.

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**REACHING**

Items in the vehicle may shift while driving. Reaching, leaning, or wiping can be a dangerous activity while operating a moving vehicle. Be sure to properly fasten and secure all items of importance before driving. If necessary, staff should stop the vehicle in a safe location to park and pick-up the items that need to be retrieved. If the item(s) are not of significant importance, they should be tended to at the end of the trip.

**CLOSE OBSERVATION**

Concentration on certain objects or “getting a good look” while driving is considered a distraction. This will include such instances as: an auto accident, a vehicle pulled over by law enforcement, construction work, a billboard announcement, a scenic view, or street names and addresses.

Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including discharge depending on the violation. The progressive disciplinary guidelines should be followed when staff violate the rules. Consult the Human Resource Manager when counseling above verbal warning occur.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Human Resource Manager

Date: \_\_\_\_\_