

San Diego State University Research Foundation

Distracted Driving Guidelines

Purpose

The **San Diego State University Research Foundation (SDSURF)** is committed to protecting the safety of its employees and the public. To help reduce the risk of accidents and injuries, SDSURF has established these **Distracted Driving Guidelines**, which apply to **all employees** operating a motor vehicle while conducting official SDSURF business.

These guidelines apply **regardless of vehicle ownership** and cover driving **SDSURF-owned vehicles, rental vehicles, or personal vehicles** for work-related purposes.

1. Prohibited Mobile Device Use

To comply with **California Vehicle Code § 23123.5** and ensure safe driving practices, SDSURF strictly prohibits the following behaviors while driving on SDSURF business:

- **Texting and messaging** – Employees are **prohibited** from writing, sending, or reading text-based communications on any mobile device while driving.
 - **Handheld phone use** – Making or receiving calls using a **handheld device** is **strictly forbidden**.
 - **Hands-free requirement** – If a call is necessary, employees **must** use a **hands-free device** and ensure it does not distract from safe vehicle operation.
 - **Applies even when stopped** – These restrictions apply **even when the vehicle is stopped**, such as at red lights, stop signs, or in traffic.
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2. Authorization to Drive for SDSURF Business

Employees must be authorized to operate any vehicle for SDSURF business:

- **Driver Certification Form** – Employees must complete and sign the **Driver Certification for Business Use of Vehicle(s)** form upon hire or whenever driving duties change.
- **Risk assessment and monitoring** – Employees who frequently drive for work may be enrolled in the **California DMV Employer Pull Notice (EPN) Program** for continuous or annual monitoring of driving records.

- **Driving record requirements** – Employees must maintain an **acceptable driving record**. Drivers with **more than three (3) moving violations or at-fault accidents within a 12-month period** may lose authorization to drive on SDSURF business.
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3. Vehicle and Insurance Requirements

When operating any vehicle for SDSURF business, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- **Primary insurance coverage** – If using a **personal vehicle**, the employee's **personal auto insurance** serves as the **primary coverage** in the event of an accident.
 - **Vehicle safety standards** – Vehicles used for business must be in **safe mechanical condition** and equipped with **functional safety belts**.
 - **Passenger restrictions** – Employees may **only** transport individuals who are **also on official SDSURF business**. Transporting unauthorized passengers is **strictly prohibited**.
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4. Accident Reporting Requirements

If an accident occurs while on SDSURF business, employees are required to:


- **Report immediately** – Notify the **SDSURF Risk Management Office** within **24 hours** of the incident.
- **Do not admit fault** – Employees must **not** admit liability, make statements implying SDSURF responsibility, or negotiate with third parties.
- **Refer inquiries** – All inquiries related to the incident should be directed to the **SDSURF Risk Management Office**.

Questions

For questions regarding this policy or to report an incident, please contact:

SDSURF Risk Management Office

 sdsurfriskmanagement@sdsu.edu

 (619) 594-4076