

Chapter 5.3

Driving, walking, and bicycling safely

This could be you . . .

At least two pedestrians have been hit by cars at JSC, and several have almost been hit.

A truck went straight from a left-turn-only lane at JSC and almost caused an accident.

1. Applicability of this chapter

You are required to follow this chapter if you work at JSC, Ellington Field, or Sonny Carter Training Facility. If you work at a field site, see your site traffic rules. NOTE: Ellington Field may include additional traffic rules.

2. Operating a motor vehicle at JSC

You shall follow these requirements whenever you operate a private or government motor vehicle such as a car, truck, van, motorcycle, or forklift.

- a. Follow the JSC Vehicle Code, which you can find at:
<http://www6.jsc.nasa.gov/ja/js/js4/external/docs/Vehcode.doc>.
- b. Wear a lap or shoulder belt as a driver or passenger. This includes operating rental vehicles while on government business.
- c. Use a ground guide to help you back up if you can't see out the back of the vehicle.
- d. Yield to pedestrians crossing streets:
 1. Stop for pedestrians in or pedestrians approaching crosswalks.
 2. Don't pass a vehicle that is stopped at a crosswalk.
 3. Be courteous to each other. Remember, you are both a driver and a pedestrian at one time or another.
 4. If you are driving an emergency vehicle such as an ambulance or fire truck, you have the right-of-way, but you still have to drive with due caution.

Pedestrians at JSC have the right-of-way when they cross streets after they stop and look both ways to make sure it is safe to cross. They shall respect the vehicles' presence because drivers may not see them or may not have time to react and stop.

Pedestrians shall yield to emergency vehicles.

- f. Follow these traffic regulations:
 1. Observe JSC's 25-miles-per-hour (mph) speed limit unless another limit is posted.
 2. Comply with all traffic signs, barriers, or cones.

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3. Observe a 15-mph speed limit in parking lots and through all gates.
4. Report all traffic accidents immediately to JSC Security, (281) 483-3333 or (281) 483-4658.
5. Follow the JSC Vehicle Code.
6. Follow local, state, and federal traffic laws at all times.
- g. Never, while driving on NASA business, exceed:
 1. 10 hours of continuous driving, including personal driving.
 2. 12 hours of combined work and driving in a 24-hour period without at least 8 continuous hours of rest.

3. Carrying passengers

Follow these requirements when you carry passengers:

- a. Come to a complete stop before you load or unload passengers.
- b. Don't put the vehicle in motion until everyone in the vehicle is properly seated, has his or her lap or shoulder belt on, and all doors are closed.
- c. Don't carry people in the backs of trucks unless:
 1. The truck has sides.
 2. Everyone is seated in a seat with seatbelts that meets 49 CFR 571.207.
 3. The load will not shift during an emergency maneuver injuring passengers.
 4. Everyone keeps his or her arms and legs completely inside the bed.
 5. You close the tailgate.
 6. You drive no faster than 25 mph.
- d. Don't carry anyone on a trailer or on an attachment to a vehicle.

4. Walking or crossing streets

You shall follow these practices when walking or crossing streets:

- a. Cross streets at marked crosswalks whenever possible.
- b. Follow paragraph 12, table 6, of the JSC Vehicle Code.
- c. Even though a vehicle should yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian, don't stake your life on a driver whose attention may be elsewhere. Don't cross unless the vehicle gives you the right-of-way. Remember, a crosswalk isn't an extension of the sidewalk. It is an intrusion into the traffic and requires caution on your part. You shall:

1. Stay on the sidewalk until you look both ways to make sure it's safe to cross the street. Also remember, it's hard for Space Center Houston trams to stop quickly. Give them an extra margin of safety.
2. Remember, emergency vehicles always have the right-of-way. Yield to them.
3. Be courteous to each other. Remember, you are both a driver and a pedestrian at one time or another.
- d. Sidewalks and crosswalks may be slick when wet or in the winter. Walk carefully. Flat-soled shoes are the best footwear when you walk outside in wet or icy conditions.

5. Bicycles and motorcycles

If you ride a private or government bicycle or motorcycle, you shall follow these requirements in addition to the traffic rules in paragraph 2 of this chapter:

- a. Follow paragraph 12, table 7, of the JSC Vehicle Code.
- b. Wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle.
- c. Observe these practices when riding bicycles:
 1. Follow all state and local traffic rules and laws for bicycle riders.
 2. Stop at pedestrian crosswalks, stop signs, and red lights.
 3. Avoid riding on sidewalks if possible.
 4. Limit your speed.
 5. Yield to pedestrians at all times. Warn pedestrians before you pass them.

6. Protective equipment for bicycles

Organizations with government bikes shall:

- a. Provide helmets to bicycle riders on request.
- b. Install handlebar bells or other warning devices.

7. Other requirements for government vehicles

If you operate any motorized government vehicle, you shall follow these requirements in addition to those in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this chapter:

- a. Be trained to operate the vehicle effectively and safely, to include periodic refresher training. This applies if the vehicle operation requires any special skills beyond operating a normal motor vehicle. Your training will depend on the kind of vehicle you operate:
 1. You shall have an initial briefing from your supervisor to orient you to the vehicle and introduce you to the peculiarities of the vehicle, as needed.

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2. If the vehicle requires special skills, you may need formal classroom training and road testing. Contact the JSC Transportation Officer for more details.
3. Continued operation of a government vehicle requires safe and sensible driving on your part.
- b. Display a “slow moving vehicle emblem” on any vehicle with a maximum speed of 25 mph or less as described in Section 139B of the Texas Traffic Laws.
- c. Make sure the vehicle is inspected yearly under the JSC transportation preventive maintenance program if it is licensed for road use. Government vehicles used off site shall have a current state inspection sticker.
- d. The Transportation Branch shall keep maintenance records.
- e. Check the vehicle daily or before each use to make sure safety devices are in good condition. If you find any defective safety devices on the vehicle, report the problems to the Transportation Branch and don’t use the vehicle until it is repaired. Check the following:
 1. Tires and brakes
 2. Head lamps, tail lamps, stop lights, and turn signal lights
 3. Windshield wipers
 4. Horn
 5. Steering
 6. Lap and shoulder belts or harnesses
 7. Fuel, cooling, and oil systems
 8. Backup warning devices
 9. Rearview mirror

8. Carry hazardous materials

If you carry hazardous materials in your vehicle, you shall follow the requirements in Chapter 9.1, “Hazardous materials safety and health,” of this Handbook.

9. Other requirements and regulations to follow for transportation

In addition to the above requirements, JSC shall follow these traffic and transportation requirements and regulations:

- a. Everyone shall follow the JSC Vehicle Code. Contact the Security Branch.
- b. JSC’s Security Branch shall escort any vehicle that:
 1. Has a WIDE LOAD sign.
 2. Is wider than a traffic lane even if it doesn’t have a WIDE LOAD sign.

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- c. JSC's Transportation Branch shall escort cranes and other equipment it is responsible for.
- d. Traffic control devices or road markings shall follow American National Standards Institute (ANSI) D6.1, "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices."
- e. Vehicle operation and transportation shall follow:
 - 1. Department of Transportation requirements that apply.
 - 2. Other federal, state, and local requirements and regulations that may apply.