



# 15-Passenger Vans: Dangerous and Deadly

*15-passenger vans are dangerous and should not be used to transport our members, guests, or children. Do not use 15-passenger vans any longer for any reason.*



Seventh-day Adventist® Church leadership actively prohibits the use of fifteen passenger vans across the North American Division (NAD).

## Why are 15-Passenger Vans Dangerous?

Fifteen-passenger vans were originally designed for transporting cargo, not passengers. The design of these vehicles places more weight towards the front of the vehicle, making 15-passenger vans unbalanced and extremely likely to rollover when loaded.

Other 15-passenger van risks that make rollover accidents more likely are:

- Seating configurations that place excessive weight on one side
  - Which often causes unevenly worn tires or unevenly inflated tires. Under-inflated tires can result in tire failure or blowouts that cause the driver to lose control of the vehicle.
  - Instability in crosswinds
- A high center of gravity, increased with passenger seating

Risks that make 15-passenger van accidents more severe are:

- Passengers often neglect to wear seat belts in 15-passenger vans.
- Drivers are often not familiar with driving a vehicle with that weight and potential for roll-over.

## Fifteen-Passenger Van Fatality Facts

Fifteen-passenger vans are significantly dangerous for transporting passengers. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that:

- An average of **65 Americans die each year in crashes while riding in 15-passenger vans.**
- Nearly **60 percent of fatalities** in these crashes were in **vehicles that rolled over.**
- About **50 percent of the fatalities** occurred in vans **loaded to capacity (15+ occupants)** that rolled over.
- Over **70 percent of the fatally injured** van occupants in crashes were **not restrained.**

The Adventist Church has had several accidents in which people, including children, have lost their lives in 15-passenger vans. These losses of life are tragic and would have been prevented if a 15-passenger van was not used.

## What To Do With Vans Your Ministry Already Owns

Our members, guests, and volunteers deserve our best efforts of care. We must not compromise.



The short-term financial savings can be tempting when looking to purchase or rent one of these dangerous vans, but more important than any cost saving is preventing the loss of life. We must not be the church that is known to compromise the safety of its members and guests. We can and must do so much better.

*“As we focus on doing ministry and outreach in a safe manner, a special emphasis is being placed on transportation safety in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventist (NAD). NAD leadership strongly supports our risk management committee’s initiative to remove 15-passenger vehicles from use in our territory and our NAD Executive Committee voted policy requiring such. I urge churches, schools, and other ministries to discontinue the use of these vehicles, as an important step towards the NAD having a safe impact in ministry in our communities.”*

—G. ALEXANDER BRYANT, PRESIDENT, NAD

**TAKE ACTION TODAY:**

Remove any 15-passenger vans from your fleet and discontinue use of all 15-passenger vans.

**REFERENCES:**

- LegalMatch—<http://www.legalmatch.com/law-library/article/15-passenger-van-injuries.html>
- NHTSA Data—<https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/15-passenger-vans>
- NHTSA Crash Stats—<https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/810947>



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**15-PASSENGER VAN**  
**Myths BUSTED**

**MYTH**

If I take out a row of seats from the 15-passenger van, it is then an approved form of transportation.

**FACT**

Removing a row of seats does not make it an approved form of transportation. The vehicle is still the same type of van with the same inherent flaws.

**MYTH**

If I use a van that is privately owned, my church won't be held liable.

**FACT**

Using a privately owned 15-passenger van or even renting a 15-passenger van for a church activity does not remove the liability from the church.

This material is fact based general information and should not, under any circumstances, be considered specific legal advice regarding a particular matter or subject. Please consult your local attorney or risk manager if you would like to discuss how a local jurisdiction deals with any specific circumstances you may be facing.