Safe Operation of Low Speed Vehicles

Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) may look like a golf-cart to the casual observer, but it is actually a motor vehicle requiring proper insurance and registration with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). LSVs have four wheels, a license plate, a 17-digit vehicle identification number (VIN), a maximum weight of 3,000 pounds, and a maximum speed of 25 mph. An electric cart, however, may come in various wheel configurations, but does not require DMV insurance and registration, and may lack some of the standard features on an LSV (e.g., rear and side view mirrors, brake lights, headlights, and seat belts). LSVs may be operated on public streets where the speed limit is no more than 35 miles per hour. Like any vehicle, operating a LSV in an unsafe manner can result in a serious injury or even death. Special care must be taken by the driver to ensure the safety of all passengers, pedestrians, bystanders, other vehicles, property, and cargo.

Operator Requirements
All LSV operators (e.g., employees, students, student workers, contractors, volunteers, and vendors) must:

1. Follow university policy regarding the safe operation of vehicles.
2. Hold a valid driver’s license.
3. Successfully complete defensive driver’s training.
4. Be familiar with information provided in the LSV’s operator manual.
5. Perform pre-operational check at the beginning of each shift.

NOTE: Additional training is required for operation of golf/utility carts. Contact EHS@usc.edu for more information.

Safe Operation
While operating a low speed vehicle, it is important to:

- Ensure that all passengers are wearing seatbelts.
- Operate at a speed respectful of conditions.
- Observe all traffic rules.
- Yield to pedestrians. They have the right-of-way.
- Keep all body parts inside the vehicle.
- Secure all cargo.
- Never operate on roads having a speed limit greater than 35 mph.
- Never use a cellular phone while operating the vehicle.
- Never allow passengers to sit or stand in the cargo area.
- Never use a headset or headphones.
- Never block fire lanes or ADA access.
- Never leave the key unattended.
- Never modify any safety feature.
- Never overload the vehicle.

References
USC Policy - Vehicle/Driver Requirements
https://policy.usc.edu/vehicle-driver-requirements/

California Department of Motor Vehicles Information on Electric Vehicles
http://tiny.cc/dmv-lsv