

SCOTLAND COUNTY
VEHICLE USE POLICY

1. POLICY AND SCOPE

- 1.1. It is the policy of Scotland County that certain positions require employee access to county-owned vehicles, such as assignment during the work shift, on a 24 hour on-call basis, on a temporary and time-limited basis, or on a permanent assignment.
- 1.2. County vehicles are not personal vehicles and are not for personal use. County vehicles should be viewed as belonging to the citizens of Scotland County and are assigned solely for purposes consistent with providing services to those citizens.
- 1.3. This policy and procedure shall be followed for the use of all County-owned vehicles except for the Sheriff's Department and Jail. The Sheriff's Department and Jail are subject to a separate policy.

2. ASSIGNMENT OF COUNTY VEHICLES

- 2.1. The assignment of County vehicles to employees is based upon job description. Department Heads who have County vehicles available for this purpose may assign such vehicles in a manner consistent with departmental workload and employee function.
- 2.2. The assignment of vehicles for 24 hour use will be made in writing by the Department Head subject to the County Manager's approval, and will only be considered for employees who require a vehicle for the ordinary and necessary discharge of their job functions. Criteria that will be used in the determination of eligibility for 24-hour vehicle use include:
 - 2.2.1. Officially designated on-call status;
 - 2.2.2. Requirement for frequent emergency availability;
 - 2.2.3. Emergency or other equipment contained in the vehicle;
 - 2.2.4. No County facility is available for garaging in a safe and convenient location;
 - 2.2.5. Best economic interest of the County justifies assignment to the employee.
- 2.3. The County Manager or the Department Head may rescind the assignment of vehicles at any time.
- 2.4. Employees assigned County vehicles for use will be given a copy of this policy and will be required to sign a confirmation of receipt.

3. AUTHORIZATION TO DRIVE AND DRIVING RECORD

- 3.1. Employees who operate County vehicles must have a valid motor vehicle license issued by the state of their current residence and be considered an insurable risk by the County's automobile liability insurance carrier.
- 3.2. On at least an annual basis, the County may obtain from the Department of Motor Vehicles, or authorized vendor for DMV records, the driving record of every driver of County vehicles to determine his or her ability to drive safely.

- 3.3. Employees driving County vehicles shall obey all applicable traffic and parking regulations, ordinances, and laws.
 - 3.3.1. Employees who incur parking or other fines in County vehicles will generally be personally responsible for payment of such fines unless the payment of such fines by the County is approved by the County Manager.
 - 3.3.2. Employees who are issued citations for any offense while using a County vehicle must notify their supervisor and Department Head immediately when practicable, but in no case later than 24 hours or the start of the next business day, whichever is later. Failure to provide such notice will be grounds for disciplinary action.
 - 3.3.3. An employee who is assigned a County vehicle and who is arrested for or charged with a motor vehicle offense for which the punishment includes suspension or revocation of the motor vehicle license, whether in his or her personal vehicle or in a County vehicle, must notify his or her supervisor and Department Head immediately when practicable; but in no case later than 24 hours or the start of the next business day, whichever is later. Failure to provide such notice will be grounds for disciplinary action.
 - 3.3.4. Any motor vehicle accident must be reported to the supervisor and Department Head immediately when practicable, but in no case later than 24 hours or the start of the next business day, whichever is later. Failure to report an accident will be grounds for disciplinary action.
 - 3.3.5. All accidents will be reviewed by the Accident Review Committee and the Safety Committee. Such review may result in a recommendation to the department head for disciplinary action of the employee, if such accident was a result of a violation of the safety policy.
- 3.4. A violation of an applicable traffic and parking regulation, ordinance, and law may be grounds for loss of County vehicle privileges.
- 3.5. For employees whose job responsibilities require that they possess an active, valid driver's license, a suspension or revocation of the motor vehicle license may result in termination from employment.

4. GENERAL RULES DEFINING APPROPRIATE USE OF COUNTY OWNED VEHICLES

- 4.1. Except as otherwise noted, use of county-owned vehicles is restricted to official county business. Official county business is defined as travel to and from any function, event or location that is visited as part of the employee's official duties.
- 4.2. The County vehicle may be used during non-duty hours on overnight assignments away from the employee's workplace or residence when other forms of transportation are not available. Use is limited to the immediate vicinity of the assignment area with Department approval.

- 4.3. The employee may use the County vehicle for necessary personal business when the following conditions exist:
 - 4.3.1. the employee is in route between locations visited for official county business or when in route between home and the workplace and,
 - 4.3.2. The use is "de minimus" in time and value. Personal use is bound to the limits of reasonableness and to public responsibility.
- 4.4. County vehicles should be driven over the most economically, direct route taking into account exceptions due to safety needs, road conditions and traffic considerations.

5. GENERAL RULES GOVERNING USE OF COUNTY-OWNED VEHICLES

- 5.1 County vehicles may be driven only by County employees. However, nonemployees may drive County vehicles only under the direct approval of the County Manager.
- 5.2 Passengers in County vehicles must be County employees or others whose presence is justified by official County business. No hitchhikers or family members who are not themselves County employees may be passengers in any County vehicle. Under special circumstances requiring a temporary and/or onetime deviation from this prohibition, an employee may request permission from the employee's Department Head or the County Manager to allow the employee's family member to be a passenger in the vehicle. Any special circumstance requiring a recurring deviation from this policy must be requested by written justification and receive advance written authority from the County Manager.
- 5.3 All areas of County-owned vehicles, inside and out, are open to inspection at all times by County Authorities, including the employee's supervisor, Department Head, the Human Resources Officer, Risk Manager, the County Manager or a designee of the County Manager. Random inspections shall be conducted by these authorized personnel and may be assisted by Law Enforcement. No expectation of privacy exists except for items expressly permitted.
- 5.4 Vehicles should contain only those items designed for use with the vehicle, items installed by the County or items assigned by the County for transportation on the vehicle. Personal items in County vehicles shall be prohibited except for items of clothing, items of general purpose use such as purses, wallets, cell phones, and office related items.
- 5.5 Vehicles shall not contain items such as weapons; alcohol for consumption, non-prescribed drugs, obscene materials, and other items whose possession would be deemed "Gross Personal Misconduct".
- 5.6 Employees are expected to keep County vehicles clean, and to report any malfunction or damage to their supervisors immediately.
- 5.7 Employees assigned vehicles for commuting purposes are expected to park such vehicles in safe locations.

- 5.8 Seat belts, shoulder harnesses and other appropriate restraint systems must be used by both the driver and passengers of County vehicles. Failure to do so constitutes a misuse of a County vehicle.
- 5.9 Employees may not operate County vehicles under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription drugs or other medications, such as over the counter medications that may interfere with effective and safe operation.
- 5.10 No employee may use a County vehicle for out of state use without advance approval of the County Manager.
- 5.11 Employees shall not alter or change any operational aspect of a County vehicle.
- 5.12 Any such alterations or changes must be approved by the Department Head.
- 5.13 Animals may not be transported in a County Vehicle, with the exception of service animals accompanying official passengers or animals transported by Animal Control personnel. Exception is made for the safety of the animal or general public.
- 5.14 County vehicles may be equipped with a GPS monitoring device. This device provides data on the physical location of the vehicle as a function of time. Any employee who tampers with the device, who attempts to prevent the device from functioning properly, or who attempts to affect the accuracy of the information collected, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The employee responsible for the County vehicle is equally accountable for preventing others from tampering with the device.

6 MISUSE OF COUNTY VEHICLES AND POLICY VIOLATIONS

- 6.1 Failure to comply with any and all provisions of this policy, as specified above, or misuse of a vehicle may result in:
 - 6.1.1 Denial to the employee of further use of vehicles;
 - 6.1.2 Reimbursement by the employee to the County for any resultant damage or cost; and/or
 - 6.1.3 Disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

7 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 7.1 This policy is intended to provide a basic framework governing the use of County vehicles, and, as such, cannot contain procedures governing every situation that might arise. Employees seeking clarification of or exemption from the provisions of this policy should contact the Human Resources Manager or Risk Manager who will provide such clarification and may authorize exceptions to the policy under mitigating circumstances.