



# Standard Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual

Title: **HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY**  
Section: **VEHICLE USE POLICY**

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## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish regulations governing employee responsibility for the use of personal vehicles and City vehicles for City-related business. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## **APPLICABILITY:**

This policy is applicable to all City employees who are authorized to operate City vehicles or who are authorized to use their personal vehicle in conducting City business.

## **IN GENERAL:**

Employees who are authorized to use a personal or City-owned vehicle in conducting City business shall receive a mileage reimbursement, a vehicle allowance, use of a pool vehicle, use of an emergency or special use vehicle, or be assigned a department vehicle in accordance with provisions of this policy.

## **AUTHORIZATION:**

Authority to regularly receive mileage reimbursements for the use of a personal vehicle or to use a City-owned vehicle on the basis of a department assignment or emergency or special use assignment must be received from the City Manager upon recommendation of the department director (department directors will have the authority and responsibility for approving the use of pool vehicles by their employees).

Employees not assigned City vehicles are not allowed to use vehicles without prior management approval.

## **TYPES OF ASSIGNMENT:**

Employees who regularly use a vehicle in performance of their work will use a pool vehicle, be assigned a department vehicle, an emergency or special use vehicle, or use a personal vehicle. Although each type of assignment will be

determined individually, the following guidelines shall be followed in making these types of assignments:

### **Pool Vehicle**

A pool vehicle, if available, will be used in most instances by employees needing transportation in performing their work. Each department director or assigned designee shall be responsible for dispatching pool vehicles.

### **Assigned Department Vehicle**

A department assignment of a City vehicle may be approved when:

- a. The vehicle is used extensively each working day;
- b. It is less expensive to furnish a vehicle than to pay mileage;
- c. It is important that radio contact be maintained with the employee;
- d. The nature of the assignment may cause unusual depreciation of the vehicle;
- e. A vehicle other than a passenger vehicle is required; or
- f. Other factors warrant such an assignment.

These vehicles will remain parked on City property at the end of the work day.

Employees who have been previously approved to take home a City vehicle will be allowed to continue to do so until they are no longer performing in that job classification.

The City shall follow IRS regulations regarding the valuation of fringe benefits for employees authorized to take home a City vehicle. Under this special IRS rule, the value of each one-way commute (from home to work or from work to home) is \$1.50. This amount will be included in the employee's taxable wages each pay period in the amount of \$30 (\$3 per day x 10 working days in the pay period). The employee should keep records to verify the number of commuting trips made and to notify the Human Resources Director of any changes. The total value of all commuting trips will be reported on the employee's W-2 form each year.

### **Emergency or Special Use Vehicles**

An emergency use vehicle will be approved to the department or division for take home use when the employee is frequently subject to 24-hour emergency calls throughout the year (e.g., public safety vehicles). A special use vehicle (that carries special tools, equipment, supplies, or parts needed to perform emergency work) may be approved for a department or division take home use for portions of the year for seasonal duties such as snow removal.

Emergency or special use vehicles shall not be assigned to City personnel, for take home use, who live outside the City limits unless approved for special circumstances.

### **Personal Vehicle**

Reimbursement for the regular use of a personal vehicle will be approved when this type of an arrangement is satisfactory. Normally, this type of assignment shall be considered when a vehicle is needed for a number of hours each day and the

use of a pool vehicle is, therefore, not practical and/or when no City vehicle assigned to the department is available.

## **APPROVED USE OF CITY VEHICLES:**

### **Permitted Uses**

City vehicles shall be used in the most economical and efficient manner, solely for the performance of City business. No City vehicle shall be used for personal benefit or personal business other than for commuting or de minimis personal use (such as stopping for a personal errand on the way between business and home).

Department directors shall be responsible for ensuring that all of their employees have a license to operate the type of vehicle used in their work, and that the employee's driving record justifies the operation of City vehicles.

A photocopy of each driver's state operator license will be kept on file with Human Resources. This will provide the necessary information for running a Motor Vehicle Report and review of the driver's restrictions.

A copy of each driver's Motor Vehicle Report will be obtained annually or more frequently if the driver is under disciplinary action, probation or suspension.

The following are considered minimal guidelines for new employees and will place current employees under disciplinary action if not in compliance:

1. No more than three convictions for moving traffic violations within any 12 month period within the last 5 years.
2. Conviction of any traffic violation that is defined as serious by Iowa Code within the last 5 years.
3. No Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) convictions in the last 5 years.
4. No designation of being a "Habitual Offender" within the last 5 years.

Only employees of those departments or divisions assigned emergency or special use vehicles may use the vehicle for transportation to and from work or to lunch. Those assigned a department vehicle or a pool vehicle, who regularly work in the field most of the day, may drive the vehicle to lunch if they are away from the office when the lunch hour occurs, and if they have received approval from the responsible department director.

Only authorized persons are to be passengers in a City-owned vehicle. Authorized persons include customers, vendors, and fellow employees. Family members or friends should not be allowed as passengers in the City vehicle except as authorized for City events as approved by the City Manager (e.g., Summerfest parade). Personal use and trips outside of the City are not allowed without prior approval of management

An employee's department supervisor should know of intended travel plans by way of an itinerary or other equivalent method. This also allows a means of contact during an emergency.

### **Responsibility**

Employees using a City vehicle shall assume responsibility for reporting any mechanical failures or difficulties. It shall be the responsibility of department directors to see that their employees use City vehicles in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

Employees who are assigned City vehicles are responsible for keeping the vehicle interior and exterior clean, notifying the Central Garage when routine service is due, reporting any vehicle problems or defects and maintaining the vehicle according to City policy.

Employees are required to report any moving or parking violations they receive while operating a City vehicle. Employees are responsible for final disposition (court appeal or payment of fine) for any traffic citation issued while operating their own vehicle for City business or while operating a City-owned vehicle. Failure to resolve a traffic related fine as with any other violation of a City ordinance is a performance issue subject to the disciplinary process separate from the act resulting in the traffic citation.

An employee operating a City-owned vehicle that activates a red light or speed camera shall be responsible for any related fee, unless the employee's Department Director determines that the incident was justified.

All accidents must be reported to your department supervisor immediately. The local law enforcement agency shall be called to the scene and required to prepare an accident report that will be submitted to the Iowa Department of Transportation. The Auto Physical Damage/Auto Liability Claim Report in the glove box should be filled out regardless of fault and will help speed the insurance process. The driver of the City vehicle involved in the accident should provide all the necessary identification and insurance information to the other party involved.

Drug testing of the employee must occur if the accident involves a loss of human life; any person is transported from the scene for medical treatment; there is disabling damage to any motor vehicle requiring tow away; the employee receives a ticket for a moving traffic violation arising from the accident; or if there is reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The driver may be held accountable for the deductible if the driver is found in violation of the driving policy.

Seat belts are required to be worn in Iowa and must be used at all times; and the driver is responsible for making sure all passengers are also wearing their seat belts in accordance with state law. This includes all vehicles which have factory installed seat belts including skid loaders, utility carts, backhoes and mowers which have a Roll over Protection Structure (ROPS).

The driver is responsible for locking the vehicle when parking and may be held responsible for any items stolen from the vehicle if not properly secured.

Use of any tobacco products, including smoking and smokeless tobacco as well as electronic cigarettes, is prohibited in City vehicles and equipment.

Drinking alcohol or illegal drug use while driving or prior to driving a City vehicle is prohibited and can result in immediate termination.

Drivers are required to inform their supervisor of any OWI tickets, suspensions or revocation of driving privileges immediately, regardless of which state they are received. Continuing to drive a City vehicle while under suspension can result in termination.

Drivers are responsible for operating a motor vehicle safely. To do this, you must focus your full attention on the driving task. Employees must comply with the Iowa Code regarding the use of electronic communication devices while driving. An employee may not write, send, or read a text message while driving a motor vehicle unless the motor vehicle is at a complete stop off the traveled portion of the roadway. The provisions of this section do not apply to public safety agencies performing official duties.

## **USE OF A PERSONAL VEHICLE:**

### **General Requirements**

The employee or the employee's personal automobile insurance policy will be responsible for payment of any damage to the employee's personal vehicle while acting within his or her scope of employment or duties.

The City considers any payment of City mileage reimbursement or vehicle allowance as satisfactory reimbursement to an employee to cover that portion of the employee's personal automobile insurance premium that could be associated with the employee's use of his or her personal vehicle to act within his or her scope of employment or duties.

All employees using their personal vehicle for City business on a regular basis will, if requested, provide proof of insurance to the Human Resources Director. Independent contractors using vehicles as part of their service should be required to furnish evidence of insurance and carry the same specified liability coverage.

### **Vehicle Allowance**

Employees receiving an allowance are prohibited from the use of the Central Garage for gas, vehicle washes, vehicle repairs, and all other services. Those vehicles requiring radio contact will be provided mobile radios—installed and maintained by the City. However, installation will be provided only once every 24 months unless extenuating circumstances arise. The cost of additional installations will be borne by the employee.

The monthly vehicle allowance is a form of compensation, subject to applicable state and federal income tax and withholding laws. The City will not maintain mileage or any other records for reporting business expense deductions on personal income tax returns.

Employees who are receiving the vehicle allowance and who travel out of state for City business purposes will be eligible for mileage reimbursement for that trip.

### **Mileage Reimbursement**

In order to receive reimbursements for travel expenses in a personal vehicle, it is necessary that proper travel and training forms be completed.

Reimbursements for mileage shall be made at the current IRS allowable rate. The mileage reimbursement rates include factors for variable costs, gasoline, oil, lubrication, tires, battery, washing, and winterization; and fixed costs—depreciation, repairs, insurance, and license fees.

Reimbursements will be made only for mileage traveled in conducting City business. Mileage for travel between home and work and between work and lunch does not qualify for reimbursement. The Human Resources Director may use any reasonable means of checking the validity of mileage reimbursement requests.

### **COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE:**

Additional controls are required by the state for drivers of vehicles requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) according to the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986.

A CDL is required to operate any of the following vehicles:

- a) A single vehicle with Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) over 26,000 pounds.
- b) A trailer with GVWR over 10,000 pounds if the gross combination weight is over 26,000 pounds.
- c) A vehicle designed to transport more than 15 people.
- d) Any vehicle requiring hazardous material placards.

Firefighters are excluded from this requirement.

Transporting hazardous materials or a regulated load weight without the proper CDL license can subject the driver and City to significant litigation.

Federal regulations require that Iowa licensed commercial drivers must report ALL violations (except parking violations) to their employers within 30 days of conviction, whether the driver was operating a commercial or non-commercial vehicle.

### **INSPECTION OF EQUIPMENT:**

The driver shall report any defects to the Central Garage that may have developed during the day. If the brakes are not working properly, they shall be

adjusted or repaired before the vehicle is put in operation. Other items that affect safety shall be repaired before continued vehicle operation.

All lights and reflectors of vehicle shall be inspected by the driver, and if found defective, they shall be repaired immediately.

The driver shall inspect windshield wipers frequently and see that they are in good operating condition and that the windows and windshield give sufficient visibility for safe operation of vehicle.

### **OPERATION:**

Before leaving a parked vehicle unattended, off City property, the ignition key shall be removed to prevent theft or unauthorized starting of vehicle.

Vehicles are to be driven in a manner such as to create a favorable impression on the public. Drivers shall exercise special precaution when:

- Children are playing on the roadway, alley or near the curb.
- Passing schools or play grounds.
- Approaching persons on bicycles.
- Driving during inclement weather.

### **BACKING PROCEDURES:**

Backing situations shall be avoided when practical, however, when vehicle must be backed, the following procedures shall be observed:

- The backing maneuver shall be accomplished upon arrival at site when possible.
- A safety zone shall be established before vehicle is moved. Establishing safety zone requires completing a 360-degree visual inspection around the vehicle looking for potential hazards. NOTE: The visual inspection shall include all sides of the vehicle and the intended travel path.
- Where possible, back from the driver's side.

Backing operations involving an obstructed view to the rear shall:

- Be equipped with a reverse signal (backup alarm) audible above the noise level of the surrounding area.
- Be backed with the assistance of a ground guide, whenever a second employee is available, stationed at the rear of the vehicle.

During all vehicle operations, the vehicle operator shall:

- Keep a constant lookout the entire time.
- Carefully check any blind areas.
- Back or move ahead slowly until clear of obstructions.
- Watch both sides. Do not depend entirely on mirrors.
- Enlist the aid of other employees to act as a ground guide whenever a second employee is in the vehicle or available at the job site.