

# Vehicle Use Policy

## **Policy Statement**

It is the Board of Assessor's policy that vehicles used for County business be operated in a careful, safe, and prudent manner consistent with all policies, regulations, and procedures of the County and with all local and State laws. County vehicles will be maintained in a safe and cost-effective manner and will be used only for intended purposes. Employees are expected to display courteous and considerate driving habits when operating a County vehicle or a personal vehicle for County purposes.

## **Authorized Uses**

Vehicles owned by or otherwise controlled by the County are authorized for use in performance of essential travel and transportation duties, including the following authorized uses:

1. When on official travel status, between place of business and place of temporary lodging.
2. When on official travel status and not within reasonable walking distance between either of the above places and: 1) places to obtain meals; 2) places to obtain medical assistance, including drugstore.
3. Transport of officers, officials, employees, clients or guests of the County, including transport of consultants, contractors, or commercial firm representatives when in direct interest of the County.
4. Transport of materials, supplies, equipment, parcels, baggage or other items belonging to or serving the interest of the County.
5. Transport of any person or item in an emergency situation.
6. Commute between place of dispatch or place of performance of official business to personal residence, if employee is assigned a vehicle with take home privileges.

7. "De minimis" personal use such as lunch or an occasional stop for a personal errand on the way between a business delivery location and work. ~~and the employee's home~~

### **Unauthorized Uses**

Unless express permission has been otherwise granted by the Chief Appraiser in writing, use of a County vehicle is not authorized for unofficial travel duties or tasks, the transport of unauthorized persons or items, or the performance of tasks outside the rated capabilities of the vehicle. The following are considered unauthorized uses:

1. Travel for reasons of a personal nature and not connected with the accomplishment of official business, except for authorized commuting and "de minimis" personal use.
2. Travel or task performance beyond the stated capabilities of the vehicle.
3. Transport of family, friends, associates or other persons who are not employees of the County or serving the interest of the County. ~~except for authorized commuting and "de minimis" personal use. An example of "de minimis" personal use is taking a child to school on the way to work.~~
4. Transport of items or cargo having no relation to the conduct of official business, except for "de minimis" transport.
5. Transport of any item, equipment or cargo projecting from the side, front or rear of the vehicle in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to safe driving.
6. Extending the length of dispatch beyond that required to complete the official business purpose of the trip.
7. Loan of vehicle for use in non-County functions, unless authorized by the Chief Appraiser.

### **Driver Disqualification**

Employees and applicants will not be qualified to drive a County vehicle, nor a personal vehicle for County business, if the following has occurred within the prior 36 months. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Board of Assessors

1. Conviction of an alcohol or drug-related offense while driving (includes Driving Under the Influence, Driving While Intoxicated, etc.);

### **Notification Requirements**

Employees who operate vehicles in the course and scope of their employment must notify their supervisor:

1. When their driver's license becomes invalid or suspended for any reason. Such employees will immediately be prohibited from operating vehicles on County business.
2. When they receive a citation for any violation while operating a County vehicle. The employee will be responsible for paying any fine or penalty incurred and will be subject to corrective action, and disciplinary action. Failure to report a citation received may also be grounds for corrective action, and disciplinary action.
3. When they receive a citation, whether such citation occurred on-duty or off-duty, for Driving Under the Influence, Hit-and-Run, Reckless Driving, or other serious driving offense. This requirement applies regardless of whether the vehicle being driven is owned by the County, owned by the employee, or owned by a third party.

### **Operation of Vehicles**

1. Employees shall operate any vehicle used for County business in a careful and prudent manner and shall obey the laws, policies, regulations, and procedures of the County and State pertaining to such operation.

2. County vehicles are to be used only as required for the performance of job duties. Under no other circumstances should County vehicles be used for personal benefit or to transport family members or other unauthorized persons.
3. County vehicles may be used to transport an employee to the doctor or hospital when an on-the-job injury occurs.
4. Employees who operate vehicles should inspect the vehicle weekly prior to driving. Any defective equipment shall be reported immediately to the driver's supervisor.
5. Drivers are responsible for the daily inside cleaning of vehicles; removal of drink cans, food wrappers, paper, and excessive soil; and for ensuring that vehicles are washed and waxed on a regular basis.
6. Smoking, vaping (the use of e-cigarettes), and other tobacco use in County-owned or leased vehicles is prohibited.
7. Vehicles left unattended will be locked with engine off and the key removed from the ignition and retained by the driver.
8. Drivers shall adhere to all County safety procedures for vehicle operation and also to any additional departmental procedures for vehicle operation.
9. Drivers must never operate a vehicle when physically impaired or otherwise unfit to do so. This includes operating a vehicle while using or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or while taking prescription or over-the-counter medications that may alter the employee's ability to safely operate a vehicle or equipment.
10. Drivers must wear seat belts at all times and ensure that each passenger in the vehicle is also restrained by a seatbelt.

11. In the event of an accident involving a County vehicle, drivers must follow all established accident reporting procedures.

**Duty Restrictions**

A physical, mental, or driving skill impairment that cannot be reasonably accommodated that affects an employee's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle, or failure to comply with the driver qualifications outlined in this Section, precludes that employee from operating any vehicle for County business.