

	City-Owned Vehicle and Equipment Use Policy	
	Section No: 2.01	
	Resolution Number: 257-2026	
	Effective Date: September 1, 2026	
	Supersedes: City-Owned Vehicle & Equipment Use Policy Resolution No. 2007-204 effective date June 19, 2007	
	Next Review Date: September 1, 2028 Responsible Office: Risk Management and Fleet Maintenance	
Policy Applies to:	☒ All City employees (Full-time, Part-time, LSEs, temps, etc.) ☒ All City and School Employees	☐ Full-Time employees only ☐ Other: _____

Policy

This policy is adopted pursuant to T.C.A. section 6-54-905. The purposes of this policy include the establishment of uniform vehicle and equipment use practices, the establishment of limitations on the use of city owned, leased, rented, or borrowed vehicles and equipment, and providing authority to the City Manager to promulgate assignment, accident reporting and pre-trip Inspection procedures.

The term “city-owned vehicle or equipment” as used in this policy includes all city owned, leased, rented, or borrowed vehicles and equipment, unless the context clearly dictates a different meaning. The proper operation and care of a city-owned vehicle or equipment is the responsibility of the user of such vehicle or equipment.

Generally, only city employees, including school employees, and members of the board of mayor and aldermen, members of the board of education, and in limited situations volunteers engaged in the transportation of city personnel and/or material and supplies used to carry out the functions and operations of a department of the city, and for which the immediate use of a vehicle is actually necessary or convenient, will drive or ride in city-owned vehicles.

The transportation of unauthorized personnel is strictly prohibited in city owned vehicles or equipment, with the following exceptions:

1. In emergencies where the city employee has a reasonable belief, based on a totality of circumstances, that the life, safety, health, or physical welfare of a citizen would be immediately threatened without the security and/or transportation the city-owned vehicle could provide him or her. Examples of such emergencies include, but are not limited to accidents involving personal injury, acute illness, and actual and potential victims of crime and violence. Among the circumstances a city employee must consider

in determining whether to transport a private person in a non-emergency city-owned vehicle under this emergency and motorist/passenger assistance exception is whether a more appropriate vehicle manned by trained police or other emergency personnel is reasonably available. Medically untrained city employees should not generally undertake the transportation of people with severe injuries and illness.

2. In motorist passenger assistance where there is no immediate emergency, but under a totality of circumstances, the city employee has a reasonable belief that the failure to transport the motorist and/or passengers in a city-owned vehicle could result in such person being left in real or potentially real danger, or would result in extreme inconvenience to them. The use of a city-owned vehicle in such case will be limited to transporting motorists and their passengers only to those places where they are reasonably safe and have a reasonable opportunity to obtain continued help without further conveyance in a city owned vehicle.
3. When it is necessary for reasons of inclement weather, late hour, lack of transportation, or other reasonable cause, to transport non-city personnel to and from city-owned property, to repair or supply such property, so that such non-city personnel can install, repair or maintain city equipment essential to the continuation or restoration of public services essential to the safety, health, and welfare of the citizens of the city.
4. When transporting federal, state, and local officers and employees, and the news media, private consultants, businesspersons, and other private persons visiting the city for the purpose of directly analyzing, reviewing, supporting, assisting or promoting the city's functions and operations.
5. When the vehicle is being driven to or picked up from private maintenance or repair facilities, and while it is being "road-tested" while in the possession of such facilities.
6. Vehicles may be used for meal and break stops taken in the course of employment provided the employee is on call or is using the vehicle at the time of the meal or break stop, and when it does not materially increase the number of miles a vehicle is driven.
7. When it is determined by the board of mayor and aldermen to be in the best interest of the public welfare and safety for a vehicle or equipment to be used lawfully in private employment, and specifically for such use by police officers engaged in off duty employment in the city and Sullivan County as approved by the chief of police. The board hereby finds that police officers engaged in off duty employment in the city and Sullivan County as approved by the chief of police is in the best interest of the public welfare and safety of the citizens.
8. Individuals, other than an employee or board members may travel out of town in a city-owned vehicle with an employee or board member with the written permission of the head of the employee's department, or in the case of school employees the

Superintendent or designee, and the Risk Manager and such person has executed an approved release provided by the Risk Management department.

Usage

Emergency response, command personnel, or other designated "on-call" response personnel, having specially assigned city-owned vehicles or equipment will permit immediate access to such at all times.

All employees and board members operating a city-owned vehicle or equipment will execute a driver agreement provided by the Risk Management department prior to operating a city-owned vehicle or equipment.

All operators of city-owned vehicles or equipment will be duly and appropriately licensed drivers of their state of residence. The license must be carried by the operator at all times during the operation of such vehicles or equipment. It is the responsibility of the employee to notify the head of the employee's department, or in the case of school employees the Superintendent or designee, and the Risk Manager of any discrepancy concerning status change or revocation of their state driving privileges.

The transportation of alcoholic beverages or prohibited substances is prohibited in city-owned vehicles or equipment, provided however, lawfully confiscated alcoholic beverages or prohibited substances may be transported by law enforcement personnel as approved by proper police authority.

Violations, citations, fines, or other actions taken by any law enforcement jurisdiction against any employee or non-employee while operating city-owned vehicles or equipment will be the responsibility of the operator. Such action will be reported by the employee to their immediate supervisor and the Risk Manager and may be cause for disciplinary action. All accidents must also be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor and the Risk Manager. Non-employees will report accidents, violations, citations, fines, or other actions taken by any law enforcement jurisdiction against such non-employee while operating city-owned vehicles or equipment to the City Manager and the Risk Manager. Unreported accidents, violations, citations, or any other action taken by a law enforcement agency against any employee or individual while operating city-owned vehicles or equipment will be cause for disciplinary action.

All operators of city-owned vehicles or equipment owned must be deemed capable of operating such vehicles or equipment by the head of the employee's department, or in the case of school employees the Superintendent or designee.

City vehicles and equipment are provided for official City business and shall be used solely for authorized City purposes. **Personal use of City vehicles or equipment is prohibited**, unless specifically authorized by the City Manager or designee.

Fueling, Oil, and Fluids

Unless traveling out of town, only city-owned fuel or fluids will be used in city-owned vehicles or equipment unless otherwise specifically directed by the Fleet Maintenance Manager. Out-of-town fuel and fluid purchases may be made by following the established guidelines of the Fleet Maintenance and Purchasing Department.

All vehicles or equipment operated locally will be fueled at the city fueling site located at 609 West Industry Drive. Vehicles or equipment exempted from this requirement are construction type equipment used at the landfill or at specific offsite jobs where transporting to the city fueling site is deemed as inappropriate by the Fleet Maintenance Manager. Exceptions to this requirement will be made on an emergency or as needed basis when approved by the Fleet Maintenance Manager, in his sole discretion.

When fueling offsite vehicles or equipment the fueling will be only from OSHA approved containers.

Only the correct type fluids or additives as prescribed by law or as recommended by the vehicle or equipment manufacturer will be used in city-owned vehicles or equipment.

Maintenance, Care, and Safety of Vehicles and Equipment

Employees driving or operating city-owned vehicles or equipment will be responsible for adhering to and addressing periodic maintenance schedules as prescribed by the terms of the vehicle or equipment manufacturer, the owner's manual, or the Department of Fleet Maintenance Preventive Maintenance Program.

Employees driving or operating city-owned vehicles or equipment will keep such vehicles or equipment neat and clean in appearance. Only approved wash facilities may be utilized. Departments will be notified annually of approved wash facilities.

Cleaning supplies required in the cleaning and maintenance of vehicles or equipment may be obtained through Fleet Stores by the proper authority.

Operators will notify the Fleet Maintenance Department of any concerns of any possible defect, mechanical or safety as soon as reasonably possible.

Operators will be responsible for the proper operation of their respective vehicles or equipment and will ensure that the operation is within the engineered safety design limits as outlined in the respective manufacturer's owner's manual or as prescribed by the city. Owner's manuals may be obtained through the Fleet Maintenance Office.

Employees are responsible for their assigned vehicle or equipment through the duration of their designated task period. Employees may be held responsible for any damage to any city-

owned vehicle or equipment assigned to or used by them which results from intentional abuse, misuse, improper care, or negligent operation.

The Fleet Maintenance Manager may authorize individuals other than city employees to pick up vehicles or equipment for repairs or maintenance.

Smoking and/or vaping of any substance in city-owned vehicles is prohibited by operators and passengers.

Many city-owned vehicles are equipped with telematics and cameras. Employees driving or operating city-owned vehicles or equipment shall not unplug, obstruct, or otherwise alter these city-owned devices.

Employees are required to wear seatbelts at all times while operating city-owned vehicles and equipment. The only exception to seatbelt usage is T.C.A. section 55-9-603 (h) (4) which provides an exception for meter readers and utility workers while:

- (A) Emerging from and reentering a vehicle at frequent intervals; and
- (B) Operating the vehicle at speeds not exceeding forty miles per hour (40 mph).

Cellphone use is prohibited while driving or operating city-owned vehicles or equipment unless using a hands-free device.

Motor Pool

Employees who do not have an assigned vehicle and have need of a vehicle for transportation in the performance of official city business, may be permitted to use a vehicle assigned to the Motor Pool. Vehicle rental will be coordinated with the Motor Pool Custodian. For all Motor Pool vehicles the following will apply:

1. The vehicle log with the appropriate information and keys will be returned to the Motor Pool Custodian upon conclusion of the business.
2. Mechanical failures will be reported to the Department of Fleet Maintenance as soon as reasonably possible.
3. The vehicle must be refueled prior to being returned to the Motor Pool.

Take Home Vehicles

Certain employees are required to take their assigned vehicles home so that they may be available for immediate emergency response and communication. These employees include the following:

Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and Deputy Chiefs, Police Chief, Deputy Police Chiefs, Detectives, Wastewater Supervisor, and police officers permitted to participate in the vehicle take home program.

Other employees may be assigned a take home vehicle when it is in the best interest of the department and approved by the City Manager.

Consequences of Policy Violation

A violation of this policy will be considered misuse of city property. Anyone misusing or abusing city-owned vehicles or equipment must be reported to the City Manager, or in the case of school employees the Superintendent or designee, the Human Resources Manager and the Risk Manager. Employees are subject to appropriate disciplinary action for a violation of this policy, and employees and non-employees may be denied future use of a city-owned vehicle or equipment

Related Information or Procedures:

Non-Employee Release Form

Other Provisions:

Nothing in this policy should be construed to conflict with or supersede state or federal law, or as interfering with the constitutional rights of employees.

While the city is committed to the principles embodied in this policy, the policy itself is not intended to state contractual terms and does not constitute a contract between the city and its employees. Furthermore, this statement constitutes ONLY the policy of the city. A finding of a violation of this policy does not mean that the conduct violates state and/or federal laws.

Contacts

The following can address questions regarding this Policy:

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