

WALLER COUNTY

POLICY ON VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT

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| DEFINITION | 1. A county vehicle/equipment is defined as a vehicle/equipment owned, leased or rented by Waller County and includes vehicles/equipment awarded to Waller County. Supplement means something that supplies a want or makes an addition to. |
| ACQUISITION | 2. All fleet acquisitions are approved and coordinated through Waller County Commissioners' Court. |
| ASSIGNMENT | <p>3. Vehicle assignments to departments shall be established by Waller County Commissioners' Court. A schedule of vehicles will determine the number of vehicles per each department and the number that may be taken home.</p> <p>4. County vehicles shall be assigned to departments, individual employees, or a general vehicle pool on the basis of work responsibility. Vehicles may be assigned to employees, either solely for use during normal working hours or as a take home vehicle when deemed appropriate. The decision to assign a vehicle to an employee shall be based upon efficient and effective service delivery provided by the employee assigned to the vehicle and an overall county services delivery.</p> <p>5. Vehicle assignments to individuals will be approved by department heads and reviewed as necessary. <u>Before a vehicle may be assigned as a take home vehicle, it must be designated as a take home vehicle as per schedule adopted by Waller County Commissioners' Court.</u> An assignment shall be in accordance with the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. An agreement between the employee and the employer either prior to, or after, employment. This Agreement shall be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file in the County Treasurer's office.b. The vehicle is equipped with tools and/or instrumentation that are essential in an emergency response situation. The employee responds directly to the scene of an emergency and is trained to use the tools and equipment.c. An employee's responsibilities require that they perform certain job functions on a regular basis during off-hours, and the documented miles traveled per year (during off-hours) between home and job destination justify the decision. |

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ASSIGNMENT

6. The Sheriff's Department, and Departments that employ certified law enforcement officers may adopt departmental policies that supplement this policy. The policies must conform to requirements that allow for the proper IRS reporting of take home vehicles. After acknowledgement of the policies by formal action of Commissioners' Court, the departmental policies must be on file in the office of the County Judge and County Treasurer.

VEHICLE- EQUIPMENT USE

7. All county employees shall be responsible for the proper use and maintenance of all vehicles and equipment in their care, custody, and control.
8. All county employees who operate county vehicles shall have a valid State of Texas driver's license necessary for that vehicle or equipment.
9. Each county employee who is required to have a drivers license shall immediately notify their supervisor of any change in the status of that license. Suspension or revocation of the drivers license of an employee who is required to operate a vehicle or equipment as a normal part of their job may result in job change, demotion, or discharge.
10. Any employee operating county vehicles or equipment shall report all accidents and property damage to his/her supervisor immediately. Department heads/elected officials shall report all accidents and property damage to the proper law enforcement authority and County Treasurer immediately. Copies of all accident and incident reports shall be sent to the supervisor and County Treasurer.
11. All operators of, and passengers in county vehicles shall use the vehicle seat and lap belts if the vehicle is so equipped. Airbags shall not be rendered inoperable on vehicles so equipped. County vehicles shall not be altered in any way without obtaining written approval from the Commissioners' Court. No county vehicles will have any stickers, posters, signs, or any other similar attachment placed on or affixed to them unless previous approval has been issued by Commissioners' Court. Except as required by Section 16 below.

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VEHICLE USE

12. County vehicles are provided to officials, departments and specific employees based upon county business necessity. County vehicles are to be used solely for county business purposes. County vehicles are not provided for private or personal use. However, it is recognized that a minimum amount of personal use is acceptable for those who:
 - a. Are assigned a take-home vehicle and therefore, commute to and from work in the vehicle.
 - b. Conduct their daily work in and from a vehicle.
 - c. Are on county authorized travel.
 - d. Minimum personal use shall be limited to:
 1. Commuting to and from work.
 2. Driving to and from a restaurant during approved meal breaks.
 3. Personal emergencies.
13. Alcohol is not allowed in any county vehicle/equipment at any time.

VEHICLES AND CELLULAR PHONES/ EMAIL DEVICES

14. Employees who drive for the County are prohibited from drafting and reviewing emails while driving their vehicle in the course of the County's business. Text messaging while driving is likewise prohibited. In addition, accessing the internet or any other form of non-verbal electronic communication is prohibited while driving.
15. Use of a take home county vehicle may be a taxable benefit to the employee. A copy of a take home vehicle assignment shall be forwarded to the County Treasurer. If it is determined that IRS regulations require the reporting of a taxable benefit, the Department Head/Official is responsible to see that the employee reports the use of a take home vehicle in a format approved by Commissioners' Court.

INSCRIPTION REQUIREMENT

16. Elected/Appointed Officials and/or Department Heads in whose department a county motor vehicle or piece of heavy equipment is assigned, must have inscribed on each side of the vehicle or equipment the words that include "Waller County" and the title of the department. The inscription must be in a color sufficiently different from the body of the vehicle or equipment so that the lettering is plainly legible. The title of the department or office must be in letters plainly legible at a distance of not less than 100 feet in compliance with Transportation Code 721.004.

INSCRIPTION REQUIREMENT EXEMPTIONS

17. In accordance with Transportation Code 721.005, the commissioners' court exempts from the requirements of Section 721.004 any automobile when used to perform an official duty by a:
 - a. Sheriff's Office
 - b. Constable's Office
 - c. Criminal District Attorney's Office
 - d. Fire Marshal's Office
 - e. Magistrates as defined by Article 2.09, Code of Criminal Procedure
 - f. Code enforcement officers designated to enforce environmental criminal laws
 - g. A juvenile probation department vehicle used to transport children

**WALLER COUNTY
VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Department: _____

Employee: _____

I, the undersigned have read the attached policy, and having been issued a county vehicle, acknowledge that the Waller County Treasurer's Office will add any non-cash benefit item that is subject to Federal Taxes, in accordance with IRS regulations.

I also acknowledge that the vehicle is to be used for official county business as outlined in the policy.

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Policy Amended, Approved and Adopted by
Waller County Commissioners' Court
05.15.2024
Policy 5.11
Acknowledgment