

CITY/COUNTY OF GOOD INDEMNITY

SAMPLE VEHICLE USE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

- The operation of City/County vehicles is necessary in conducting the day-to-day business of the City/County. This use of City/County vehicles represents one of the greatest risks facing the City/County. Recognizing this, it is imperative that the City/County take reasonable steps to control the use of City/County and privately owned vehicles used while performing City/County business. This policy sets forth the guidelines and policies governing the operation of vehicles used in the performance of official City/County business. Department heads are responsible for implementation and enforcement of this policy for all vehicles and drivers assigned to their department.

SCOPE

- This policy applies to all City/County owned, leased or rented vehicles operated on public roads and includes special-use vehicles such as construction and excavation equipment designed to operate primarily off-road but driven on public roads to a job site. (Law Enforcement vehicles in most cases are covered by the Law Enforcement Operating Policies.) This policy also applies to those employees that use personal vehicles while in the scope of employment and while performing official City/County duties.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Operators of all non CDL vehicles will have held a valid drivers license for at least three years before being allowed to operate a City/County owned vehicle.
- Only City/County employees are authorized to operate City/County vehicles. Persons volunteering services to the City/County are considered employees of the City/County for purposes of this policy and may operate City/County vehicles when their duties require travel as long as such travel is under the approval or direction of the department head and necessary in the course of performing official City/County business.
- Employees of other public entities may operate City/County vehicles under the specific approval of the department head as long as such operation is essential in conducting City/County business. Department heads granting permission for non-City/County employees to operate City/County vehicles are responsible for insuring that the driver is properly licensed, trained and qualified to operate the vehicle.

- Intentional abuse, moving violations, reckless operation, or negligent actions while operating any City/County vehicle may result in the suspension of the employee's driving privileges and is grounds for further disciplinary action.
- Employees shall obey all City, County, State and Federal laws while operating City/County vehicles and any time personal vehicles are used on official City/County business.
- City/County-owned vehicles are to be used only for official City/County business and shall not be used by employees for personal reasons.
- Only persons being transported in connection with official City/County business shall be passengers in any City/County vehicle.
- When cargo, materials or tools are being transported, the driver is responsible for assuring that all items are properly secured to prevent them from shifting or falling from the vehicle or trailer.
- No person shall be allowed to ride on running boards, fenders, hoods, tailgates, beds, or other locations on a vehicle not designed or approved by the vehicle manufacturer for passenger seating. An exception to this prohibition shall be vehicles assigned to the Solid Waste Division which are suitably designed and equipped for passengers outside the cab area.
- The driver shall not operate any vehicle when normal vision is obstructed.
- Alcoholic beverages shall not be transported or placed in any City/County vehicle.
- A qualified operator must be positioned at the vehicle's controls any time it is running unless otherwise approved by the manufacturer. No vehicle shall be left unattended without first stopping the motor, locking the ignition, removing the key, setting the parking brake and locking the doors or otherwise securing the vehicle to prevent theft, vandalism, and unintentional movement.
- Employees shall refrain from operating cellular telephones, laptop computers, fax machines, navigational devices and any other device that may cause driver distraction while operating a City/County vehicle or while operating a privately owned vehicle in the course of conducting City/County business. Use of such devices shall be limited to instances where it is absolutely necessary in the performance of City/County business. Drivers shall make every attempt to properly park their vehicle prior to using such devices.

SCHEDULED MAINTENANCE

- Maintenance should be scheduled at least every 3500 miles. Scheduled maintenance should include at a minimum: oil change, check fluid levels, check tire condition and check all lights and warning devices. All maintenance should be documented and each vehicle in the fleet should have a separate file to store all maintenance records.

PRE-OPERATION INSPECTION

- An employee who operates a City/County vehicle, regardless of frequency, is responsible for the proper care and operation of that vehicle.
- Pre-operation Inspection for Passenger Sedans, Light Duty Pick-Up Trucks and All Other Vehicles that do not Require a Commercial Driver License.
 - At least once per day, the operator of these vehicles is responsible for insuring that all vehicle safety equipment including headlights, turn signals, brake lights and horn are functioning properly. The operator is also responsible for insuring that fluid levels including brake, transmission, engine oil and coolant are properly maintained.
- Pre-operation Inspection for All Vehicles That Require a Commercial Driver License.
 - At least once per day, the operator of these vehicles is responsible for insuring that all vehicle safety equipment including headlights, turn signals, brake lights and horn are functioning properly. The operator is also responsible for insuring that fluid levels including brake, transmission, engine oil and coolant are properly maintained.
 - In addition to the requirements above, the operator of these vehicles is responsible for insuring that all pre-operation checks as required by Department of Transportation CDL rules are complied with. In addition, the operator shall complete a Vehicle Condition Report at the beginning of the first shift of each day. At the end of the week the form shall be forwarded to the Central Garage for archiving. A new form shall be initiated at the beginning of each week.

- Any defects which will affect safe operation of the vehicle will be promptly reported to the driver's supervisor or Central Garage. No employee shall operate a City/County-owned vehicle in an unsafe condition. Any vehicle damage, which is beyond normal wear and tear must be documented and reported to the employee's supervisor and Central Garage.

OPERATOR'S LICENSE

- A valid Georgia vehicle operator's license must be in the employee's possession at all times while operating a City/County-owned vehicle. In the case of commercially rated vehicles, the proper commercial driver's license for the vehicle's weight and class must be valid, and in the driver's possession.
- Any employee who operates a vehicle in the performance of official City/County duties and whose operator's license is suspended or revoked shall immediately report this fact to the appropriate department head.

TAKE HOME VEHICLES

- The decision regarding assignment of City/County vehicles to employees as vehicles allowed to be driven to and from work shall be left to the discretion of the department head and is subject to City/County Manager review. Examples of situations warranting a City/County vehicle to be taken home include the following:
 - Managerial employees whose personal use of a City/County owned vehicle is consistent with the requirements of the position.
 - Employees who are subject to 24 hour call out or have job responsibilities requiring highly irregular work hours.
 - Duty vehicles designed or equipped for high priority response where response time will be enhanced by allowing the vehicle to remain in custody of individual employee. Employees assigned to duty vehicles which are taken home must be available to respond upon request on a 24-hour basis any time the employee has custody of the vehicle.
 - To prepare for a post-disaster response in order to plan an effective and efficient recovery.
- City/County vehicles taken home overnight shall be locked and secured in the responsible employee's driveway or other designated parking space which is in close proximity to the employee's residence.

- Employees taking a vehicle home are permitted to stop briefly at a grocery store, pharmacy, etc., for reasons of personal convenience. Such stops must be completed within one half hour of the end of the employee's shift.

OUT OF TOWN TRAVEL AND MEETING ATTENDANCE

- With department head approval an employee may take a City/County vehicle home prior to leaving for an out-of-town trip or attending a late evening or early morning meeting which would require a return to the work place after normal duty hours. The employee may use the City/County vehicle only for travel necessary to accomplish official City/County business.

TRAILERS AND TOWING

- A driver whose vehicle is towing a trailer, dolly, or other equipment shall assure that the trailer hitch is securely latched, adequate for the load being towed, properly installed on the towing vehicle, and that safety chains are properly attached.
- The driver shall insure that the trailer or other towed equipment is supplied with proper lighting including brake lights, turn signals, and running lights.
- Any vehicle having a load which extends more than four (4) feet beyond the rear shall have the end of the load marked with a red flag which shall be at least twelve (12) inches square.

LEASED/RENTED VEHICLES

- When it is necessary for a City/County employee to use a rental vehicle for City/County business, the employee shall utilize a City/County approved leasing agency. The City/County shall purchase optional comprehensive/collision damage coverage through the leasing agency at the time the vehicle is rented.

PARKED VEHICLES

- Any vehicle left unattended shall be legally parked in a designated parking space. Keys to operate the vehicle shall be removed from the vehicle when left unattended. Vehicles responding to emergency situations or those parked on job sites shall be parked with due regard to safety and security considerations.

- City/County vehicles not taken home shall be secured in City/County parking lots during non-duty hours. The keys shall be removed and the vehicle locked. When it is necessary to leave a vehicle at a job site over night, the operator shall insure the vehicle is parked and secured in an area which provides reasonable security.

ACCIDENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Any accident involving a City/County owned, rented or leased vehicle or privately owned vehicle used in the performance of City/County duties shall be reported as follows:
 - Summon medical care for any injured parties.
 - Notify appropriate law enforcement authorities.
 - Notify employee's immediate supervisor.
 - **Do not admit responsibility or fault or offer settlements.**
 - Cooperate with law enforcement and emergency medical personnel.
 - Obtain names and addresses of witness/involved parties.
- The supervisor shall immediately notify the cities Insurance Carrier.
- The supervisor shall be responsible for initiating the departmental investigation of the accident, completing all required City/County reports and recommending any follow-up preventative actions.
- When the City/County driver is determined to be at fault in a vehicle accident, the supervisor shall recommend disciplinary action subject to review and approval by the department head.

BACKING GUIDELINES FOR LARGE VEHICLE AND CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

- Whenever possible, the driver will position the vehicle so as to avoid the necessity of backing. Before entering the vehicle, the driver shall check the rear clearance of the vehicle. The driver shall not back the vehicle unless such movement can be made with reasonable safety and without interfering with other traffic. A spotter should be used whenever possible. Before and during backing movements, the driver and spotter will check blind zones for objects not visible in rear-view mirrors, watch both sides for adequate clearance, and limit speed to allow a full stop.

PERSONALLY OWNED VEHICLES USED FOR CITY/COUNTY BUSINESS

- The City/County will not provide coverage for liability or physical damage to an employee's privately owned vehicle. Employees who use personally owned vehicles for City/County business should confirm that their personal auto insurance policy provides coverage for this use.
- Employees who use their personal vehicle or receive a monthly vehicle allowance while conducting City/County business shall maintain liability coverage in an amount not less than \$100,000 per occurrence/\$300,000 annual aggregate, and property damage coverage in an amount not less than \$100,000 per occurrence. Annual verification of minimum coverage will be requested.

USE OF SAFETY RESTRAINTS

- All City/County vehicles must be equipped with seat belts/safety restraints and all occupants of City/County vehicles must properly wear seat belts/safety restraints any time the vehicle is in motion.
- The operator of construction, excavation and other off road equipment shall use the occupant restraint system any time the vehicle is in operation.
- Employees are prohibited from removing, deactivating, modifying or otherwise defeating any occupant restraint system installed by the manufacturer unless approved or instructed by the manufacturer.

MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVING RECORD REVIEW & POINTS RESTRICTION POLICY

- Employees whose job requires the use of a City/County or privately owned vehicles are expected to maintain driving records that reflect the practice of safe driving habits both on and off the job. The City/County shall use the State of Georgia individual driving record and corresponding point system to monitor the risks associated with operating vehicles while in the City's/County's employ.
- The City/County will request a copy of the transcript of driving record from the Division of Driver Licenses for each employee whose position requires operation of a City/County vehicle. This process will be performed at least once a year.

- An accumulation of eight or more points in the previous 12 month period or an accumulation of 10 or more points in the previous 18 month period shall be cause for disciplinary action up to and including suspension of City/County driving privileges. The City/County Manager shall advise the employee's department head and Human Resources Director when a driving record meets this threshold.
- Problem drivers should be identified and if possible should be enrolled in a defensive driving training course.
- Any DUI conviction or refusal to submit to a lawful road side sobriety test shall result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension of City/County driving privileges.
- An employee whose driver license has been suspended for any reason shall not be allowed to operate any over-the-road City/County vehicles.
- Employees who have obtained temporary driving permits or hardship licenses shall not be permitted to operate over-the-road City/County or privately owned vehicles in the performance of official City/County duties.
- An employee who has been determined to be "at fault" in two or more accidents within a 24 month period while driving a City/County or privately owned vehicle in the performance of official City/County business shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension of City/County driving privileges.
- Temporary or permanent suspension of City/County driving privileges shall be considered loss of a job required prerequisite for employees whose position requires operation of an over-the-road vehicle.
- If an employee has had City/County driving privileges suspended, the City/County will attempt to arrange for the employee to perform the essential functions of the job. If such accommodation is not possible or creates an unreasonable hardship for the City/County or coworkers, loss of City/County driving privileges shall be considered just cause for reassignment to a position that does not require operation of a vehicle at a pay rate commensurate with that position. If no such position is open, the employee shall be placed on lay off status.

VEHICLE REPLACEMENT POLICY

- Vehicles in the City/County fleet should be replaced based upon the following schedule.
 - Passenger Autos
 - Trucks