



## Rockingham County Policies & Procedures

### VEHICLE POLICY

<b>Department:</b> Safety and Risk Manager	<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Pages:</b> 6
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<b>Authority Source:</b> County Manager	_____	

**PURPOSE:** TO ESTABLISH CONSISTENT GUIDELINES TO REGULATE THE USE OF COUNTY VEHICLES BY EMPLOYEES IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

**Definition:** "County vehicles" includes County owned vehicles, County leased vehicles and personal vehicles used for County business.

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## **SECTION I. GENERAL POLICY**

The County of Rockingham strives to provide a safe work environment for employees and for the public.

Rockingham County strives to provide efficient and effective oversight in vehicle assignments and maintenance.

Exceptions to this policy must be submitted to and approved by the County Manager or his/her designee.

This policy includes support from management and supervisory personnel in the prevention of accidents and the implementation of this policy.

General vehicle safety operation rules and guidelines are outlined in the Rockingham County Safety Manual and may be further defined and expanded when appropriate by each Department Head.

## **SECTION II. FLEET ADMINISTRATOR'S REPOSIBILITIES**

The Fleet Administrator shall

1. Develop and maintain a comprehensive list of vehicle assignments with the assistance of Department Heads.
2. Have the authority to transfer surplus vehicles among departments to ensure optimum utilization of the County fleet.
3. Be responsible for distributing Preventive Maintenance (PM) schedules and notifying all departments of scheduled PM Service.
4. Develop criteria used to replace a vehicle.
5. Determine when a vehicle will be replaced.
6. Furnish the following information to Department Heads for placement in the glove compartment of each County vehicle:
  - a. Vehicle Registration Information
  - b. In Case of Accident/Insurance Policy Card
  - c. Vehicle Accident Report Form
  - d. Vehicle Mileage Log

## **SECTION III. DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. It shall be the responsibility of all employees driving County vehicles to drive defensively as to prevent accidents in spite of the incorrect actions of others and adverse conditions.
2. Employees shall use County vehicles for official County business only.
3. Employees who qualify to drive County vehicles home will be required to comply with Internal Revenue Service regulations.
4. Employees authorized/assigned to use a County vehicle to perform official duties are permitted to take all authorized breaks and meals within the assigned area. Drivers shall not leave the assigned area to take a break or for meals without prior authorization from their supervisor or Department Head. Employees with assigned take home vehicles going for lunch with other employees shall use a personal vehicle, if available, when not on official County business.

4. Only County employees, County officials, reserve deputy sheriffs and designated volunteers having a valid driver's license are permitted to operate County vehicles. Vehicles shall not be driven by family members or other unauthorized persons.
5. Employees using personally owned vehicles shall have and maintain the proper insurance as required by the State of North Carolina, and must provide the Safety & Risk Manager with a copy of the declaration page of insurance coverage upon request.
6. Applicants shall complete an application which provides information necessary to request a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR).
7. Anyone driving 15 passenger vans shall:
  - a. Complete a Defensive Driver Course and pass a road test.
  - b. Load forward seats first at all times.
  - c. Require passengers to wear seat belts whenever the vehicle is in motion.
  - d. Limit capacity to ten (10) persons (nine passengers and the driver).
  - e. Not store heavy gear or cargo in rear or on top of van.
  - f. Check safety items before operating (fire extinguisher, first aid kit).
  - g. Keep tires properly inflated.
8. County vehicles shall be operated in a safe and courteous manner. County employees operating County vehicles are subject to all state and local traffic laws, and all regulatory signs on public and private property.
9. The use of alcohol or any substance/controlled substance which impairs judgment and driving ability or possession of any illegal substance is absolutely prohibited while driving a County vehicle.
10. Any employee cited for violation of North Carolina State Law or local ordinances, where civil or criminal penalties incur, shall be personally responsible for those penalties.
11. Persons not involved in County business will not be permitted to ride in County vehicles. Transporting family members or private citizens is not permitted. Exceptions may be granted by the County Manager or designee in special situations (ex: out of town conferences).
12. Drivers and passengers shall not smoke in County vehicles. Exceptions may be granted for clients with special needs.
13. Drivers will keep their vehicle appearance both inside and out, reasonably clean as it reflects on the image of the County.
14. The County will assume no responsibility for personal property stored or left in a County vehicle.
15. The employee to whom a car is assigned is responsible for County property stored or left in a County vehicle.

## SECTION IV. ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

Department Heads will be responsible for assigning vehicles based on one or more of the following criteria:

1. Vehicle is required for the protection of lives and property of the citizens of Rockingham County and/or protection of County owned/occupied property,
2. Employee is subject to call 24 hours per day and weekends in performance of duties described above,
3. Requirement of County marked vehicle that is essential to the performance of job responsibilities,
4. Job regularly requires employee to go directly from his/her home to a work site (and from work site to home) without first going to his/her standard work location and requires use of a County vehicle, or
5. Employee is required to drive a minimum of 12,000 miles per year on County business excluding to and from home mileage, or vehicle carrying equipment/tools is required.

Department Heads' assignment of vehicles will fall under one of the following five options.

1. **Departmental Motor Pool Vehicles**  
The combined activities of employees in certain departments meet the requirements for assigned vehicles. If so, pool vehicles are assigned and are available for use in those departments. The Department Head or designee shall make these vehicles available to employees who do not have a permanently assigned vehicle.
2. **Central Services Pool Vehicles**  
Vehicles are assigned to Central Services for employees in departments that do not have vehicles assigned to them or when departments with assigned vehicles do not have vehicles available that meet their needs. This pool serves needs for occasional and temporary transportation for official County business.
3. **Individual Assignment Vehicles**  
Vehicles are assigned to individuals at the start of their work period. These employees require vehicular transportation in the performance of their daily assigned duties and responsibilities. The assignment may be of a permanent nature or for a specified time period. These vehicles are not driven home unless approved by the County Manager.
4. **Take Home Vehicles**  
The County Manager authorizes take home vehicles. County owned vehicles are not to be driven to homes outside of the County unless authorized by the County Manager. In cases where employees have take home privileges and live outside the County, arrangements may be made to park the vehicle in a public place within the County. The following employees will be authorized to drive County vehicles to their homes:
  - a. Animal Control Officer
  - b. Code Enforcement Officer
  - c. EMS Operations Supervisor
  - d. Emergency Services Director

- e. Environmental & Engineering Services Director
- f. Environmental Health on-call personnel
- g. Fire Marshal personnel
- h. Maintenance Supervisor and one (1) on-call Maintenance personnel
- i. Planning & Building Inspectors
- j. Public Health Nurses & Public Health Social Workers on-call or who make home visits
- k. Sheriff and Deputies (Jailers excluded)
- l. Solid Waste Enforcement Officer
- m. Water & Sewer on-call personnel
- n. Other emergency personnel approved by the County Manager.

All assignments of take home vehicles shall be reviewed by the County Manager or designee annually beginning January 1, 2007. The following conditions shall be considered:

- a. Requirements of the job,
- b. Productivity, and
- c. Cost to County.

5. Privately Owned Vehicles

Employees using personal vehicles for official County business will be reimbursed at the County's current mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service or rate approved by the County.

## **SECTION V. DRIVING REQUIREMENTS**

1. Every employee assigned a driving position or an employee who will be required to drive on County time is required to complete a driving course within two (2) months of their assignment. Periodic courses scheduled with educational facilities, law enforcement units, insurance groups, etc., shall be made available to county vehicle operators.
2. Drivers of vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds or a vehicle carrying sixteen (16) passengers or more must have a valid Commercial Class B license with a passenger endorsement or Commercial Drivers License (CDL) if they drive vehicles which require a CDL.
3. Driving histories may be obtained for prospective new employees who may be required to operate a county vehicle. If a position requires an operator's license, then the possession of a valid North Carolina driver's license will be required.
4. Driving histories of employees operating county vehicles may be obtained in order to confirm or deny a possible license suspension, revocation or conviction (s) for accidents and/or motor vehicle violations.
5. Any employee whose position requires use of a vehicle who receives a motor vehicle violation which may result in the suspension or revocation of his/her license must immediately inform his/her department/agency head.
6. Should an employee have his/her license suspended or revoked, or receive points on his/her license for convictions and/or motor vehicle violations, he/she may be terminated, demoted, or placed in an available non-driving position for a (specified) period of time until the license has been reinstated and/or until the accumulated points for the convictions have been reduced. The personnel action shall be taken by the employee's supervisor and filed in the employee's

personnel file. Documentation shall be presented to the department head to ensure that the license has been reinstated.

7. An employee who has been convicted of causing an accident and/or motor vehicle violation(s) resulting in an accumulation of six (6) or more points during a three (3) year period shall not be permitted to drive a county vehicle until the points have been reduced or removed from the driver's history.
8. An applicant and/or employee having received a driving while impaired (DWI) conviction shall be prohibited from operating a county vehicle for that period of time that his/her license is revoked.
9. An applicant and/or employee who has a limited driving privilege shall be unable to drive a county vehicle until his/her unrestricted license has been reinstated.
10. Failure of an employee to inform their department/agency head of the suspension, revocation, and/or convictions of accidents and/or motor vehicle violations resulting in six (6) or more points assessed on the license, will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with the Personnel Policy.
11. The employee's supervisor retains the authority to determine whether, in his/her professional judgment, it is appropriate for the employee to operate a county vehicle.

## **SECTION VI. MAINTENANCE**

1. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring proper use of vehicles, proper display of County seals, proper and timely inspections, preventive maintenance, and that necessary repairs are done in a timely manner for all vehicles assigned to their department.
2. All County vehicles shall be maintained in conformity with the vehicle manufacturer's suggested schedule. The schedule will be provided by the designated Fleet Administrator.
3. All PM's, inspections and repairs shall be performed by contractors from the approved Vehicle Maintenance Vendors list.
4. The vehicle driver is responsible for ensuring the cleanliness and appropriate physical appearance of their assigned vehicle. Department Heads shall designate a person to be responsible for pool vehicles. This requirement includes:
  - a. The exterior of the vehicle shall be clean in appearance, consistent with weather and working conditions. Frequency of scheduled washes will vary according to conditions under which the vehicle is used.
  - b. The interior of the vehicle shall be kept clean and orderly. Daily removal of litter is necessary. Accumulation of trash will not be permitted.
5. Gas keys and or cards for County fuel sites in the County are issued for each vehicle. The gas card/key will stay with the vehicle, not the driver. The Department Head or designee shall distribute gas cards/keys as needed. Gas cards/keys are for County owned/leased vehicles only and not personal vehicles used for County business.
6. Department Heads and other supervising personnel shall periodically inspect department vehicles for cleanliness in adherence to this policy.

## **SECTION VII. ACCIDENT REPORTING**

Any accident, involving a County vehicle, **regardless of the extent of the damage**, is to be investigated by a police officer with jurisdiction in the area. Accidents must also be reported immediately to your supervisor and to the Safety & Risk Manager. The Safety and Risk Manager will investigate and complete a report on all accidents. The Department Head will provide a written statement on how to prevent future accidents from occurring. Both of these reports will be provided to the County Manager.

## **SECTION VIII. ACCIDENT REVIEW BOARD**

The Accident Review Board is a panel that looks into vehicle accidents to decide whether they could have been prevented and to make recommendations for corrective action. This program applies to all County employees with the exception of the Sheriff's Office personnel. All the Sheriff's Office accidents will be handled by the Sheriff's Office internal Accident Review Board.

The Safety & Risk Manager shall be the Chairperson of the Review Board. The Accident Review Board shall review all accidents that occur in County vehicles and/or equipment where property damage, personal injury or death occurs.