



Clayton County Police Department PROCEDURES

Subject VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT, USAGE AND MAINTENANCE		Procedure # B8	
Authorizing Signature 	Effective 03-02-2023	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	Total Pages 11

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use, and maintenance of vehicles that are assigned to employees of the Clayton County Police Department.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) to provide vehicles to eligible employees for the purpose of carrying out official duties. Department vehicles will be assigned in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this policy and all employees with take-home vehicles must adhere to the procedures regarding issuance and general regulations outlined herein. Only the Chief of Police, or authorized designee, can authorize the use of an assigned vehicle for any other purpose(s) not stated herein.

All employees operating a County-owned vehicle will abide by guidelines set forth in the *Clayton County Vehicle & Driver Policy*, which is maintained by the Clayton County Central Services Department, Risk Management Division.

All vehicles, whether assigned permanently or temporarily, must be maintained in working condition. It is the responsibility of the assigned vehicle operator to ensure all deficiencies with vehicles are noted and repaired. Employees with an assigned County vehicle shall be fully responsible for the general maintenance and proper care of the vehicle. Damage to vehicles, including accidents, will be reported immediately to a supervisor and as soon as possible to the Vehicle Maintenance Officer.

III. DEFINITIONS

Assigned Vehicle: A County vehicle designated for the use of an individual employee in the normal performance of their duties which includes vehicles that have been assigned on a temporary, permanent or take-home basis.

Department Vehicle: Any motorized vehicle owned, leased, or utilized by the Clayton County Police Department, excluding personal vehicles owned by employees or volunteers.

Employee: Personnel employed by the Clayton County Police Department, sworn or non-sworn.

Vehicle Maintenance Officer: A designated employee that manages fleet maintenance records and coordinates maintenance of all assigned vehicles.

IV. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- A. Employees with assigned vehicles will be permitted to operate them, while on County-related business, while working a County-funded overtime event, when approved for use in off-duty employment or while attending court. The use of Department vehicles for secondary employment work is prohibited.

See standard operating procedure *B6: Off-Duty/Secondary Employment* regarding use of Department vehicles during off-duty employment.

- B. Employees, when commuting to and from home, shall utilize the shortest, most direct route while operating an assigned vehicle.
- C. Employees are prohibited from using assigned vehicles for any purpose other than official County authorized business, and travel to and from work if permitted.
- D. Employees are prohibited from having passengers in their assigned vehicle unless it is official County-related business. A citizen ride-along must have the appropriate paperwork approved prior to the ride-along.

See standard operating procedure *G1: Community Affairs & Crime Prevention* regarding information for a citizen ride-along and *Appendix G1: C* for the *Release and Hold Harmless/Police Vehicle Form*.

- E. Tobacco Use Prohibited

1. Any and all forms of tobacco use are prohibited in and during the operation of all Department vehicles.
2. Per Clayton County Ordinance 70-103(4), smoking is prohibited in all County-owned vehicles.

- F. Employees on light-duty assignment must adhere to standard operating procedure *C4: Light-Duty Assignments*.

- G. Extended Leave

The following circumstances require the concerned employee to park an assigned vehicle or arrange to have it parked at a Department facility (e.g., headquarters, precincts, Animal Control, etc.).

1. Anytime an employee is on leave, regardless of what type of leave, for a minimum of fifteen (15) consecutive work days;
2. If it is known in advance that an employee will be out of work on sick leave for a minimum of fifteen (15) consecutive work days (e.g., surgery, severe illness, etc.); or

3. If an assigned vehicle is, or may be, subject to any form of damage because of its location.

H. In accordance with departmental policy, uniform officers operating a marked take-home vehicle will wear, at a minimum, their respective duty uniform/attire and equipment, while operating such vehicle, in order to exercise official duties, when needed.

Sworn employees operating an unmarked take-home vehicle will wear, at a minimum, professional attire approved for their duty assignment, and shall have in their possession a valid Georgia driver's license, their badge, Department-issued identification, authorized and/or approved firearm and Department portable radio, in order to exercise official duties, when needed.

I. If an officer, while off-duty and operating an assigned vehicle, finds it necessary to become involved in an incident, the officer shall assume control of the incident until the arrival of an on-duty officer. This does not exempt the off-duty officer from completing any necessary *Supplemental Report(s)* for the continuity of an investigation.

J. While off-duty and operating an assigned vehicle, outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Clayton County, officers should avoid becoming directly involved in enforcement action except in those circumstances where a potential threat to life (e.g., crimes against persons, DUI's, etc.) exists. Officers may render public assistance to a stranded motorist when deemed prudent. Officers shall ensure that Department radio communication capabilities are maintained to the extent feasible.

Other traffic violations, misdemeanors and property type crimes that are not considered urgent or life threatening should not require emergency intervention. If an offense is witnessed by an officer while outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Clayton County, the officer may contact the E911/Communications Center and/or appropriate agency having jurisdiction for any enforcement action if necessary.

K. Parking Regulations at Clayton County Police Department Headquarters

All employees shall adhere to the following procedures:

1. Main Parking Lot: Parking along any curb within the main parking lot is strictly prohibited. Parking is only permitted within marked parking spaces.
2. Rear Loading Dock Area: Parking at the rear loading dock within the area marked "No Parking" is strictly prohibited. Generally, this area is only permitted for deliveries and service vehicles. Parking is only permitted in this area, when use of the loading dock is necessary to load or unload vehicles during official work-related business.

Employees accessing the Evidence & Property Unit will park in the area adjacent to the Aviation Hangar designated for "Evidence & Property Drop Off Only".

3. Rear HVAC Equipment/Generator (surrounded by chain link fence): Parking along the south fence (facing the Aviation Hangar) of the HVAC Equipment/Generator is strictly prohibited. Access to the HVAC Equipment/Generator must be available at all times.
4. Police Headquarters & Aviation Hangar Area: Parking in the area between Police Headquarters and the Aviation Hangar is restricted to only those employees authorized by the Chief of Police.

L. Care & Maintenance

1. If an employee has an assigned vehicle, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they adhere to the maintenance sticker posted in the vehicle. If a cancellation occurs, for any reason, the employee must reschedule to ensure the maintenance for the vehicle is up to date. It is the responsibility of each Shift/Unit Commander to ensure the fleet vehicles are being serviced when scheduled. Periodic maintenance (PM) shall be accomplished as scheduled.
2. Employees with assigned vehicles are responsible for taking their vehicles to any predetermined location for repair, maintenance or other service, when they are directed to do so by the Vehicle Maintenance Officer.
3. Employees with an assigned vehicle are fully responsible for the general maintenance and proper care of such vehicle.
4. It will be the responsibility of the employee that is assigned a vehicle, other than a daily fleet vehicle, to contact the County Fleet Maintenance Department (County Shop) to ensure the vehicle is current with maintenance.
5. Tire pressure and vehicle fluid levels should be checked when the employee fuels the vehicle. When applicable, the employee shall add any necessary fluids and/or air.
6. If a tire goes flat during the operation of any vehicle, the employee should stop the vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so. The employee shall change the tire, if possible, or make arrangements to have the tire changed without delay. Vehicles shall not be operated on a flat tire.
7. If a warning indicator or maintenance required message displays on the vehicle odometer, the employee operating the assigned vehicle will be responsible for taking the vehicle to County Fleet Maintenance (County Shop). If it is a fleet vehicle, the employee will advise their supervisor so arrangements may be made for the required maintenance.
8. It is the responsibility of the employee that is operating any Department vehicle to keep the interior and exterior clean.
9. A *Clayton County Fleet Maintenance Department Vehicle Repair Request Form* will be used for requesting maintenance on all Department vehicles. The form will be completed and left on the vehicle's dashboard so it is visible through the windshield whenever County Fleet Maintenance (County Shop) is closed. During normal business hours, all maintenance requests shall be completed inside the County Shop's Office.
10. Any radio equipment repairs will be done at the County Department of Information Technology (DoIT or Radio Shop). The officer's immediate supervisor will be contacted to obtain permission for radio repairs before the officer leaves their assigned area. It is not necessary to notify the County Shop prior to going to the Radio Shop.
11. If a vehicle is towed, a detailed note or completed *Clayton County Fleet Maintenance Department Vehicle Repair Request Form* will be left on the dashboard, visible through the windshield for County Shop personnel. Either document will clearly state the problem or issue with the vehicle. An email shall also be forwarded to the Vehicle

Maintenance Officer to include the vehicle information, requested repair, and correct mileage. The vehicle will be parked along the north fenced area inside the perimeter of the County Shop. Vehicles needing repair will not be left outside the fenced perimeter.

M. Spare Vehicles & Keys

1. Officers may use spare fleet vehicles at an approved part-time job that potentially involves the use of law enforcement powers when they are approved by a supervisor. Officers who require a spare fleet vehicle will notify a concerned, on-duty supervisor for authorization. The spare fleet vehicle should be from the precinct where the job is located, if possible. Officers will utilize, complete, and sign the appropriate *CCPD Vehicle Sign-In/Out Log Sheet* at the precinct or other location, when obtaining a spare fleet vehicle.

Spare fleet vehicles are for use only during the concerned employee's part-time job assignment hours. They will not be taken to any employee's residence, unless specifically authorized by a concerned, on-duty supervisor. The officer will ensure that the spare fleet vehicle is refueled and cleaned before returning it back to the precinct.

2. For lock outs, spare keys may be obtained for Department vehicles. Spare keys are maintained at headquarters in a lock box, but must be signed out using the *CCPD Spare Key Sign-Out Log Sheet* before accessing. The spare key for the lock box is maintained in the Central Watch Office. It is the responsibility of the GCIC Terminal Operator to maintain the spare key and ensure that any employee needing a spare key documents all of the required information on such form.

The Vehicle Maintenance Officer has immediate access to the *CCPD's Spare Key Sign-Out Log Sheet* and is able to view each spare key entry on such form. The Vehicle Maintenance Officer will forward the original *CCPD Spare Key Sign-Out Log Sheet* to the Logistics & Operations Unit's Administrative Assistant for central filing in the Chief's File Room.

See *Appendix C* of this procedure for the *CCPD Spare Key Sign-Out Log Sheet*.

3. If an employee loses the key(s) to their Department vehicle, notification must be made immediately to the concerned Shift/Unit Commander. The employee will then notify the Vehicle Maintenance Officer via County email, of the lost key(s). The employee will send the information regarding the lost key via County email to Police.Vehicles@claytoncountyga.gov.

In the event that the employee loses the fuel key belonging to their Department vehicle, they must fill out the *Clayton County Transportation & Development Fuel Key & Vehicle Key Replacement Policy Form*. Once the form has been completed, the employee will send the form via County email to Police.Vehicles@claytoncountyga.gov.

The employee will be notified when the form has been approved and is ready to be picked up.

See *Appendix B* of this procedure for the *Clayton County Transportation & Development Fuel Key & Vehicle Key Replacement Policy Form*.

N. Vehicle Equipment

Only items necessary for the performance of an employee's duties will be maintained in the vehicle. Vehicles assigned to the Department and operated by sworn employees will have the following equipment.

1. Vehicles, except for motorcycles, will have a trunk-mounted fire extinguisher and first aid kit. First aid supplies can be obtained through the Vehicle Maintenance Officer. Fire extinguishers that are discharged can be exchanged at County Fleet Maintenance (County Shop). Supervisors may request first aid kits replacements from the Vehicle Maintenance Officer.
2. Marked patrol vehicles will generally have roof-mounted blue/red lights. In addition, marked patrol vehicles will be equipped with a public address system, siren, mobile radio and spotlight.
3. At the discretion of the concerned Division Commander, unmarked police vehicles assigned to sworn officers will be equipped with interior-mounted emergency lights and/or siren and mobile radio.
4. Optional items may be requested such as traffic cones, road flares, hazardous material bags and evidence collection bags and materials. If the officer/supervisor has a need for optional equipment (e.g., traffic cones, traffic detour signs needed for a safety checkpoint, etc.), the officer/supervisor will notify their chain of command so that they may requisition the items needed.
5. In-Car Cameras (ICCs) may be installed in some Department vehicles. All video/audio equipment will be maintained by the Department of Information Technology (DoIT/Radio Shop). The exception to this is equipment that is under warranty/contract to be repaired elsewhere. Officers shall inspect the equipment at the beginning of each shift. Any malfunctions will be reported to the supervisor conducting vehicle inspections. If a malfunction occurs during the shift, the officer will contact their immediate supervisor and advise them of the situation.

O. Vehicle Modifications Regulations & Restrictions

1. Regarding assigned vehicles, employees shall refrain from:
 - a. Making anything, but minor adjustments without proper authorization;
 - b. Altering the body, general design, appearance, markings, mechanical systems or electrical systems;
 - c. Making any repairs or having any repairs made to the vehicle other than at an authorized vehicle maintenance facility; and
 - d. Using fuel, oil, lubricant, or other liquid additives in the vehicle other than those issued at authorized motor pool fuel depots.
2. Vehicle Modifications
 - a. No bumper stickers, decals, magnets, novelty plates, or other accessories will be affixed to either the interior or exterior of the vehicle without prior authorization from the Chief of Police, or authorized designee.

- b. Loose and/or unsecured items are not allowed in Department vehicles, as they can become a projectile during a vehicle accident.
- c. Before adding window tint to any Department vehicle, a request memorandum must be completed and forwarded to the Chief of Police for prior authorization. The window tint shall not exceed the legal tint limit, unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police, or authorized designee. See OCGA 40-8-73.1 for further on window tint. **The assigned vehicle operator will pay for all necessary parts, materials, components and labor related to the installation. Officers are not guaranteed to keep the assigned vehicle after paying for the window tint.**
- d. If modifications are needed, a request in the form of *Inter-Office Memorandum* shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the Logistics & Operations Unit Commander.

P. Inspections

1. Inspections of Vehicles Assigned to the Uniform Division

- a. Every vehicle in operation will be inspected by its assigned operator prior to operation. This includes the use of spare vehicles. The inspection(s) will be directly supervised and documented. Inspections shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Interior & exterior check for damage;
 - 2) Interior check for and removal of disposable waste or garbage and cleanliness of vehicle;
 - 3) Interior check for lost and/or misplaced evidence, weapons and/or contraband;
 - 4) Check operation and condition of applicable equipment (e.g., in-car camera and microphone, all standard lights, emergency lights and siren, mobile radio, etc.);
 - 5) Check of internal fluids;
 - 6) Check of all regular and emergency lights; and
 - 7) Tire pressure.

2. Inspection of Vehicles *Not* Assigned to the Uniform Division

- a. Vehicles not assigned to the Uniform Division will be inspected monthly. The inspection will be directly supervised and documented by a Shift and/or Unit Commander, or other designated supervisor.
- b. Inspections shall include all applicable checks and examinations as required for Uniform Division vehicles.
- c. A detailed *Incident Report* of all damage shall be completed to include photos. A copy of the *Incident Report* will be forwarded to the Vehicle Maintenance Officer by the reporting officer's direct Supervisor.

Q. Fueling of Police Vehicles

1. Department vehicles have an assigned fuel key that shall be used anytime a vehicle is fueled at one of the County fuel depot locations. A fuel key is required to obtain fuel. Instructions are printed on the computer panel that controls fuel distribution.

Vehicles are to be fueled utilizing the fuel key assigned to that vehicle. The only exception to this rule is when a malfunction occurs, or a fuel key has been lost, and authorization to use another vehicle's fuel key or equipment is granted by the concerned Shift/Unit Commander. If this occurs, the Vehicle Maintenance Officer will be notified via email of the situation.

2. Employees will fuel fleet vehicles before the end of each tour of duty; exceptions are only authorized at the discretion of a concerned supervisor.
3. Employees will fuel other assigned vehicles adequately pertaining to the specific role of the employee and use of the assigned vehicle (e.g., on-call employees will maintain a full tank of fuel, etc.).

R. General Operation of Department Vehicles

Due to the nature of police work and the required response to emergency situations, unusual wear and tear will naturally occur to components of police vehicles that do not occur to privately-owned vehicles. In order to minimize the wear and tear, the following guidelines shall be followed:

1. Under normal circumstances, quick starts and stops should be avoided.
2. When practical, turn off the engine, rather than idling for long periods of time, to minimize unnecessary engine wear. The vehicle shall not be left idling while at functions such as, training, court, ceremonies, sit down eat establishments, etc.
3. In some situations, it is permissible to leave a vehicle running; these may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. While using emergency equipment at an accident scene or traffic stop or to direct traffic;
 - b. Leaving a detainee in a vehicle during extreme hot or cold weather;
 - c. Leaving a police dog inside a canine vehicle;
 - d. Utilizing vehicle video/audio recording equipment during an investigation; and
 - e. For any other purpose deemed necessary by a concerned supervisor.
4. If the engine must be idling for a specific purpose, if applicable, the hood should be raised slightly to avoid overheating.
5. During periods of snow and ice, chains may be installed on police vehicles to aid traction. Vehicles equipped with chains should not be operated over thirty (30) miles per hour (MPH).
 - a. If during a tour of duty, a chain breaks, the vehicle should be stopped as soon as possible and the chain removed if possible. A broken chain will slap against the fender well, causing damage to the vehicle.

- b. In the event a chain cannot be removed on the road, a supervisor should be notified immediately of the situation and appropriate action taken.
6. When a Department vehicle is parked and running and the officer of such vehicle is not in the immediate area, and no other officer is available to standby with the vehicle and circumstances permit, the key will be removed from the ignition and all doors will be locked.
7. Officers shall at all times drive the vehicle with reasonable prudence in order to maintain the highest degree of operational efficiency. An officer may stop any police vehicle, which is being operated contrary to Department policy. The Shift and/or Unit Commander will be notified and will have the duty of notifying the concerned Division Commander. If corrective action cannot be taken immediately, a supervisor will, depending on the circumstances, have the concerned employee drive the Department vehicle and/or follow them to headquarters, where the vehicle shall be parked until necessary action is taken by the Division Commander, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief, or Chief of Police.
8. Willful negligence on the part of employees in the care and operation of the vehicle, and/or failure to follow any regulations pertaining to an assigned vehicle, will be cause for the vehicle to be taken from the concerned employee, in addition to any other appropriate disciplinary action.

S. Use of Toll Facilities

In performing its law enforcement duties, the Clayton County Police Department may have a need to utilize one (1) or more toll facilities operated by the Georgia State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA).

1. SRTA agrees to allow authorized Clayton County Police Department law enforcement officers operating an official Department vehicle to be exempt from toll payment on a Toll Facility, when such officer is on official law enforcement business, commuting to or from work in accordance with policy, and while in compliance with any posted occupancy requirement for toll road use, as long as such vehicle is equipped with an assigned Peach Pass.
2. Each Peach Pass issued is assigned to a specific vehicle, therefore the Department shall ensure that each Peach Pass provided is properly affixed to the Department vehicle to which SRTA assigned such Peach Pass. Only Department vehicles equipped with an assigned Peach Pass shall be exempt from tolls.
3. Distribution of the SRTA Peach Passes to authorized personnel will be coordinated and administered by the Logistics & Operations Unit/Vehicle Maintenance Officer.
4. Any personnel violating these provisions will be responsible for all toll fees and penalties incurred and may be subject to disciplinary action.

V. VEHICLE ASSIGNMENTS

A. Fleet Vehicle Assignment

Employees may have vehicles assigned to them, on a temporary or permanent basis. The purpose of this program is to give the community a greater sense of police presence.

1. Employees may be assigned vehicles on short-term and/or on a daily basis, when applicable or as needed (e.g., patrol assignments, etc.), at the discretion of the concerned Shift/Unit Commander.

Employees may be assigned vehicles for long-term and/or on a permanent basis, at the discretion of the concerned Precinct Captain, Division Commander or authorized designee.

2. Employees are prohibited from changing vehicle assignments, on short-term and/or on a daily basis, unless approved to do so by a concerned supervisor. If approved, the vehicle assignment change shall be documented on the Shift/Unit Master Daily Roster.

If a long-term and/or permanent vehicle assignment is changed, the concerned Precinct Captain, Division Commander, or authorized designee, will immediately notify the Vehicle Maintenance Officer in writing, using the *Assigned Vehicle Memo*. Emailing the memo is acceptable.

B. Take-Home Vehicle Program

1. The Department's take home vehicle program is a privilege extended to authorized, designated and/or certified personnel of the Department. Before sworn-employees are authorized or eligible to participate in the take-home vehicle program, they must meet the following minimum eligibility criteria for consideration to receive and maintain an assigned take-home vehicle:

- a. Successful completion of the Field Training Program after hire;
- b. Be in good standing with the Department, having received no more than a total of three (3) days suspension during a twenty-four (24) month span; or
- c. Resides within Clayton County, or resides within thirty (30) driving miles of the Clayton County boundary line.

2. If approved by the Chief of Police, employees must complete the *Memorandum of Understanding/Assigned Take-Home Vehicle Form*.

See *Appendix A* of this procedure for the *Memorandum of Understanding Assigned/Take-Home Vehicle Form*.

3. With approval from the Chief of Police, take-home vehicles will be assigned at the discretion of the concerned Division Commander, and may be based on vehicle availability, needs of the Department, and duty assignments considered a priority within the concerned division.

4. Reasons that could be considered for the withdrawal, suspension or revocation of take-home vehicle privileges, may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Needs of the Department, such as vehicle availability;
- b. Intentional abuse of privilege;
- c. Assigned officer is on a light duty assignment;
- d. Assigned officer is on administrative duty assignment due to internal action, such as they are the subject of an internal investigation;

- e. Chargeable motor vehicle accident in a Department vehicle, if gross negligence is determined to be a factor;
- f. Number of preventable/at-fault motor vehicle accidents occurring in a twenty-four (24) month period;
- g. Receiving a *Uniform Traffic Citation (UTC)* for a traffic offense while operating a Department vehicle;
- h. Committing an act that violates public trust;
 - i. Unauthorized modifications that cause extensive damage to a Department vehicle;
 - j. Substandard care and maintenance of a Department vehicle; or
 - k. At any time at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

VI. SPECIAL PURPOSE POLICE VEHICLES

- A. Special purpose vehicles will only be operated by trained employees.
- B. The Department performs many special functions that often require officer transportation needs that go beyond the traditional patrol car. Some of the special functions performed by the Department, which go beyond regular patrol duties, include traffic enforcement, detainee transportation, special operations response, critical incident response, etc.
- C. No officer will operate any special purpose vehicle or the equipment thereon unless they have been trained in its operation. This includes, but is not limited to, Motorcycles, All-terrain vehicles, Mobile Command, Special Weapons & Tactics (SWAT), Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD), K-9, Crime Scene Investigations (CSI), and Underwater Search & Recovery Team (USRT or DIVE Team) vehicles. No special purpose vehicle will be operated without the proper class operator's license.
- D. It will be the responsibility of the Commander, or authorized designee, of each specialized unit, to ensure each vehicle receives the required and periodic maintenance (PM).

VII. CANCELLATION

This directive amends and supersedes the following standard operating procedure: *B8: Vehicle Usage and Maintenance*, dated August 29, 2022.