

DEPARTMENTAL GENERAL ORDER 19-012

ST. LOUIS COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

M-2  
April 24, 2019

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Personal Use of Department Vehicle  
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USE OF **DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY POOL VEHICLES**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy concerning the use of Department vehicles.

II. POLICY

**All Department Employees shall use vehicles safely and in accordance with all laws and other policies.** The Board of Police Commissioners and the Chief of Police shall have **ultimate responsibility for the selection**, issuance, and maintenance of **Department** vehicles.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Employee- Any employee of the Department or any member of the agency/entity who is operationally attached to this Department, to include Reserve Officers and members of the Office of the Chaplains.
- B. Department-Owned Vehicle – Marked or unmarked Department vehicles, to include vehicles leased by St. Louis County.
- C. County-Owned Vehicle- County pool vehicles.

IV. GENERAL

**All employees shall abide by the following general set of responsibilities when utilizing any type of Department or County-owned vehicle.**

A. Restrictions

- 1. **Employees** who have been assigned a vehicle shall not utilize the vehicle in a manner which would adversely reflect on the Department or its members. For this reason, police vehicles will not be used in conjunction with secondary employment or any actions pertaining to monetary gain without written authorization from the Chief of Police.
- 2. Employees shall not allow unauthorized individuals to operate **Department** or **County-owned** pool vehicles.

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3. Employees while on-duty or off-duty shall not operate a Department Vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. For purposes of this Order, an employee will be considered to be under the influence of alcohol if there is a reasonable belief that the employee's blood alcohol content is 0.04 or greater. (Per Article 23.5 of the Conduct and Discipline Manual).

**B. Use of Vehicles**

**1. Patrol and Take-Home Vehicles**

- a. The cleanliness and other necessary maintenance of **Department-owned** vehicles shall be the responsibility of the assigned employee.
- b. **The assigned employee is responsible for maintaining valid license plates on vehicles which have state license plates. Inspections required for license plate renewal shall be obtained by the employee, with any accompanying paperwork submitted to the Vehicle and Supply Unit at least 30 calendar days prior to the first day of the month in which the license plates expire.**
- c. **Employees** assigned unmarked vehicles shall monitor the police radio and respond to serious incidents as related to their area of responsibility and authority.
- d. **Employees participating in the Countywide Resident Officer Program shall refer to General Order 041, *Countywide Resident Officer Program*.**

**2. Parking**

- a. When a **vehicle is parked out of the sight of any employee**, the vehicle's engine shall be turned off, **the windows raised (conveyance units excluded)**, the keys removed, and the vehicle locked and secured. Off-street parking should be utilized when available.
- b. **Vehicles with automatic engine kill switches or gear lock system may be left running in appropriate situations (e.g. canine vehicles).**
- c. **Upon exiting their vehicles to answer calls for service or on-view investigations, employees shall leave the vehicle light bar flashers, four-way hazard lights or parking lights activated on their marked Department vehicle if blocking a roadway or along a shoulder of a roadway.**
- d. **Upon exiting their vehicles to conduct an investigation, unmarked or investigative units (including all units assigned to DCI) shall leave the light bar flasher and four-way hazard lights on at the employee's discretion.**
- e. **In the event an employee must exit the vehicle quickly and is unable to immediately secure the vehicle (e.g. foot pursuit), the employee should notify and request another employee to secure the vehicle as soon as possible.**

**C. Vehicle Equipment**

***Departmental General Order 19-012, "Use of Department and County Pool Vehicles"***

- 1. All vehicles owned, leased, or rented by the Department that require equipment to be stored within the vehicle, such as flares, first-aid kits, etc. shall have equipment identified on an inventory/inspection list.**
  - a. At least monthly, the vehicle shall be inspected to ensure the presence and operational readiness of all stored equipment.**
  - b. The person inspecting such a vehicle is responsible for replenishing any missing or damaged equipment or informing the person designated by the commander/supervisor to replenish supplies.**
- 2. Missing/damaged vehicle equipment not attributed to a vehicle accident or damaged/used operationally shall be reported immediately to a supervisor and documented in an Inter-Office Memorandum directed to the Commanding Officer of the employee who discovered the missing/damaged vehicle equipment.**
  - a. If the loss is likely the result of criminal activity, a police report shall be written by the appropriate local law enforcement agency.**
  - b. The notified supervisor shall submit the employee's memorandum accompanied with an ATS and any applicable police reports to the Division Commanding Officer with a recommendation for repair or replacement of the property.**
  - c. If there is evidence of misconduct, the notified supervisor shall refer to General Order 005 for further.**
  - d. If approved, the Commanding Officer will forward the request for repair or replacement to the Vehicle and Supply Unit, who will forward a copy to the Risk Management Office.**
  - e. A record of the vehicle damage or missing/damaged vehicle equipment shall be maintained in the vehicle file and control logs within the work element.**

**V. PROCEDURES**

**A. Request for Temporary Use of Department-Owned Vehicle**

**The following process shall apply to those employees who are assigned to divisions other than the Division of Patrol:**

- 1. The employee must be in possession of a valid driver's or commercial license when operating a Department-owned vehicle.**
- 2. Prior to using a Department-owned vehicle, the operator/employee shall conduct an inspection of the vehicle to ensure compliance with Department policy and maintenance of equipment.**
- 3. The request for vehicle usage must be related to Department business and approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Some examples of official Department business during the employee's assigned tour of duty include:**
  - a. Attending training or meetings outside of the City of St. Louis or counties of St. Louis, St. Charles and Jefferson; or**

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- b. Driving to and from court appearances; **or**
- c. Driving to and from the Prosecuting Attorney's or County Counselor's Office for a warrant application, **trial preparation meeting, or similar**; or
- d. Other special circumstances approved by the Chief of Police.

**B. County Pool Vehicles**

1. Employee Assigned in the Clayton Area

**If an employee is not already assigned a vehicle for business use, and is assigned in the Clayton area, the following shall occur:**

- a. **A request shall be made to the employee's supervisor.**
- b. If no Department vehicle is available, the supervisor shall request a County Government pool vehicle. To reserve a pool vehicle, call **314-615-8745**.
- c. If no County Government pool vehicle is available, or if the supervisor has determined pool vehicle use is not feasible, the employee may be allowed to use his or her personal vehicle. Reimbursement for use of a personal vehicle while on official business may be requested as indicated later in this **policy**.

2. Employee Assigned Outside of the Clayton Area

**If an employee is not already assigned a vehicle for business use, and is assigned outside the Clayton area, the following shall occur:**

- a. A request shall be made to the on-duty supervisor by the employee for a Department vehicle.
- b. If no Department vehicle is available, or if the supervisor has determined that the Department vehicle use is not feasible, the employee may choose to use his or her personal vehicle or request the use of a County Government pool vehicle. Reimbursement for use of a personal vehicle in relation to official business may be requested as indicated later in the **policy**. Use of a County Government pool vehicle shall be coordinated through the employee's supervisor.

**VI. USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE**

A. Mileage Reimbursement

- 1. Employees who, after following the above procedures, have used their personal vehicle for official business, may request reimbursement of related expenses in the following manner:
  - a. Employees shall complete the **form entitled** "Mileage Reimbursement Request" (St. Louis County Government Form FM-TR04), **by** following the instructions **listed** on the reverse side.
  - b. Employees shall present the reimbursement form to their immediate supervisor for verification and initialing **within the pay period of the vehicle use**.

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- c. The immediate supervisor shall then forward the signed form to the Fiscal Services Unit for processing.**
  - 2. Reimbursement for appropriate parking and toll fees shall be made from the petty cash fund.**
    - a. Employees shall present the parking receipt to their immediate supervisor for verification and initialing within the pay period of the costs/fees.**
    - b. The employee shall then present the signed receipt to the Fiscal Services Unit for reimbursement.**
  - 3. If reimbursement is being requested and a Training-Travel Request form F-298T was completed, refer to General Order 046. *Training and Travel Guidelines* for further.**

VII. EXCEPTIONS

The Chief of Police may authorize employees who are assigned **Department-owned** vehicles **the ability to utilize the vehicles** for personal use while off duty. Personal use is restricted to St. Louis County and the City of St. Louis, unless otherwise **authorized** by the Chief of Police.

Adopted by Command Staff

By order of:

JB:mw

COLONEL JON M. BELMAR  
Chief of Police

Approved at the regular Board meeting of April 24, 2019.

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MR. ROLAND J. CORVINGTON  
COMMISSIONER  
Chairman

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MS. LAURIE L. WESTFALL  
COMMISSIONER  
Secretary

Distribution  
All Department Personnel

CALEA Reference  
22.3.4; 33.1.3