

Use of Town Property, Equipment and Vehicles

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1.0 POLICY

In keeping with the Town of Carolina Beach's core value of stewardship, Town equipment, materials, tools, supplies and vehicles shall not be available for personal use and are not to be removed from Town property except in the conduct of official Town business. The Town limits the use of Town vehicles for purposes other than Town business and limits the reimbursement for business use of private vehicles. Town and privately owned vehicles being operated for Town business will be operated in accordance with all safety and legal requirements.

2.0 PURPOSE

The Town must operate a very diverse fleet of vehicles to provide its wide range of services to the citizens. In order to do this in the most economical manner possible and in keeping with the Town's core value of stewardship of resources, the Town has a number of rules and processes for determining appropriate use of public vehicles and the public use of private vehicles. This policy establishes procedures regarding the assignment of vehicles, the off-duty use of Town vehicles and employee reimbursements for business use of their private vehicles.

All offices, desks, files, lockers, computers, cell phones, uniforms, etc... owned or leased by the town are considered Town property and are provided to the employee for the employee's use during his term of employment. The Town reserves the right to inspect all areas and articles that are on or in Town property. Any information or article which an employee considers private and/or personal should not be kept on Town property.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy covers all employees.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Full Time Assigned Vehicle (FTV) - A Town automobile or truck designated for the use of an individual employee in the normal performance of his duties but not authorized for take-home use.
- 4.2 Mileage Reimbursement - A per mile rate to compensate employees of incidental, non-routine, or extraordinary use of a privately owned vehicle on official business, based on actual logged miles.
- 4.3 Take-Home Vehicle - A Town automobile or truck designated for the use of an individual employee in the normal performance of his duties including the commute from home to work.

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL RULES

- 5.1 All Town property issued to the employee shall be returned to the employee's supervisor immediately upon termination of employment.

- 5.2 The Town should make available to employees all the tools necessary to safely perform all aspects of the employee's assigned job tasks. For this reason, employees should not be allowed to bring in tools or other employee owned pieces of equipment for use on Town property. In no case will the Town be responsible for the damage, theft or breakage of an employee owned tool or piece of equipment.
- 5.3 Under no circumstances may an employee operate a Town vehicle or use town equipment while under the influence of any substance that might impair the employee's ability to operate the vehicle safely.
- 5.4 Full time vehicle assignments will be based on actual, demonstrated and compelling need in the conduct of official business.
- 5.5 Department Directors and authorized vehicle operators are responsible for adhering to policy and procedures pertinent to the utilization of vehicles in the conduct of official business including:
 - A. Ensuring compliance with Town rules and regulations with regard to the operation of vehicles as set out by these policies
 - B. Ensuring that employees maintain the proper operator license and comply with all Federal, State, and local laws relating to the operation of motor vehicles
 - C. Ensuring that employees comply with Town insurance requirements for using privately owned vehicles in the conduct of official business
 - D. Ensuring the proper authority has been obtained prior to operating a vehicle on Town business, outside the Town limits or for intermittent overnight custody
 - E. Complying with Town rules and regulations relative to the care and maintenance of vehicles
 - F. Ensuring that employees report vehicle accidents to supervisors and local law enforcement, and
 - G. Ensuring that employees enter the correct mileage when fueling.
- 5.6 Take-Home Vehicles

For an employee to be authorized the take-home use of a Town vehicle, one of the following tests must be met:

Test 1: (All conditions must be met). The employee is:

 - a. Subject to frequent after-hours emergency callback or other unscheduled work, and
 - b. Such unscheduled work involves the first response to a real or present threat to life or property requiring an immediate response, and
 - c. A specialized vehicle, tools, or equipment are required for the performance of emergency duties.

Test 2: (All conditions must be met). The employee is:

 - a. Subject to frequent after-hours callback, and
 - b. Such call back arrangements are to locations other than the employee's normal duty station, and
 - c. A special vehicle, tools or equipment are required to perform after-hours assignments, and
 - d. An unacceptable delay in the response would result from the employee's return to the normal duty station to retrieve the needed equipment.

Test two is the category normally reserved for emergency maintenance response situations where a group of employees share formal on-call responsibilities on a rotational basis, typically for a week at a time. In such cases, the use of the take-home vehicle is for the period of on-call assignment only.

Test 3: Sworn police personnel required to use an individually assigned vehicle during their normal tour of duty may use the vehicle for commuting purposes. While not on duty during such commutes, officers are expected to take action on incidents they may encounter. Any time spent responding to such incidents or callback return to work is work time and shall be reported as soon as practical.

Department Directors will determine reasonable schedules and vehicle assignments for rotational, on-call coverage. For other purposes, the Town Manager's Office, at the written request of the Department Director, will authorize full-time take-home vehicles based on the criteria described above.

No personal use of take-home vehicles is permitted. For the purposes of this policy, the daily commute to and from the employee's duty station and normal meal periods within duty hours are considered official use.

No passengers may be transported in take-home vehicles except as required for official duties or as approved by the Department Director.

E. Take-home vehicles may not be used for commuting travel outside of New Hanover or Brunswick Counties.

- 5.7 Mileage Reimbursement - Mileage reimbursement may be authorized by the Department Director for an employee who must utilize his personal vehicle to conduct Town business and who receives no other form of allowance.
 - A. Commuting mileage to respond to an after-hours, call-back or unscheduled return to work is considered official Town business.
 - B. Claims for mileage reimbursement shall be made in accordance with current Travel Expense Reimbursement procedures.
 - C. The standard rate of mileage reimbursement will be the rate approved by Council and published by the Finance Department
- 5.8 Department Directors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and will take corrective action up to and including suspension or dismissal against employees who misuse Town of Carolina Beach vehicles.

6.0 PROCEDURES

- 6.1 Take-Home Vehicles
 - A. Department Directors will determine reasonable schedules and vehicle assignments for rotational, on-call coverage and will inform the impacted employees of the assignments and conditions for a take-home vehicle.
 - B. Other than for rotation emergency on-call purposes, the Town Manager's Office will authorize full-time take-home vehicles based on the criteria described in Section 5.6 above. A Department Director who wants to assign a permanent take-home vehicle not already authorized should submit the request in writing to the Town Manager's Office with sufficient documentation of the rationale.
- 6.2 Mileage Reimbursement
 - A. The Finance Director will establish the mileage reimbursement rate, subject to Council approval, and adjust it periodically based upon the mileage rate determined by the U.S. General Services Administration.
 - B. An employee who needs to use his private vehicle for Town business purposes must obtain prior approval of his Department Director or designee.
 - C. To file for mileage reimbursement, the employee must file a reimbursement request in accordance with the Town of Carolina Beach Travel Policy.

7.0 APPENDIX, APPENDICES

None