

APPENDIX "A"

CITY OF VERO BEACH

VEHICLE USAGE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

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

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all City owned 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. (Police vehicles are covered by the Police Operating Policies.) Where appropriate, this policy applies to the operation of privately owned vehicles used while performing official City duties.

3. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 3.1. Except as detailed in 3.2, only City employees are authorized to operate City vehicles. Persons volunteering services to the City are considered employees of the City for purposes of this policy and may operate City 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 business.
- 3.2. Employees of other public entities may operate City vehicles under the specific approval of the department head as long as such operation is essential in conducting City business. Department heads granting permission for non-City employees to operate City vehicles are responsible for insuring that the driver is properly licensed, trained and qualified to operate the vehicle.
- 3.3. Intentional abuse, moving violations, reckless operation, or negligent actions while operating any City vehicle may result in the suspension of the employee's driving privileges and is grounds for further disciplinary action.

- 3.4 Employees shall obey all City, County, State and Federal laws while operating City vehicles and any time personal vehicles are used on official City business.
 - 3.5 City-owned vehicles are to be used only for official City business and shall not be used by employees for personal reasons.
 - 3.6 Upon approval by the department head, City vehicles may be used to transport employees to an appropriate restaurant during scheduled lunch breaks.
 - 3.7 Only persons being transported in connection with official City business shall be passengers in any City vehicle.
 - 3.8 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.
 - 3.9 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.
 - 3.10 The driver shall not operate any vehicle when normal vision is obstructed.
 - 3.11 Alcoholic beverages shall not be transported or placed in any City vehicle.
 - 3.12 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. Requirements of 3.12 are not applicable to vehicles parked to perform a brief job related function as long as the vehicle is in constant view of the operator.
 - 3.13 The City will not be responsible for any personal property left in City owned vehicles unless the personal property is a required by the City to be maintained in the vehicle.
4. PRE-OPERATION INSPECTION
- 4.1 An employee who operates a City vehicle, regardless of frequency, is responsible for the proper care and operation of that vehicle.

4.2 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.

4.3 Pre-operation Inspection for All Vehicles That Require a Commercial Driver License.

In addition to the requirements of 4.2 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 the Vehicle Condition Report (Attachment 4) 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.

- 4.4 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-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.

5. OPERATOR'S LICENSE

- 5.1 A valid Florida vehicle operator's license must be in the employee's possession at all times while operating a City-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 of the driver's possession.
- 5.2 Any employee who operates a vehicle in the performance of official City duties and whose operator's license is suspended or revoked shall immediately report this fact to the appropriate department head.

6. TAKE HOME VEHICLES

- 6.1 The decision regarding assignment of City 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 Manager review. Examples of situations warranting a City vehicle to be taken home include the following:
- A. Managerial employees whose personal use of a City owned vehicle is consistent with the requirements of the position.

- B. Employees who are subject to 24 hour call out or have job responsibilities requiring highly irregular work hours.
- C. 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.
- D. To prepare for a post-disaster response in order to plan an effective and efficient recovery.

6.2 City 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.

6.3 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.

7. OUT OF TOWN TRAVEL AND MEETING ATTENDANCE

With department head approval an employee may take a City 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 vehicle only for travel necessary to accomplish official City business.

8. TRAILERS AND TOWING

8.1 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.

8.2 The driver shall insure that the trailer or other towed equipment is supplied with proper lighting including brake lights, turn signals, and running lights.

8.3 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.

9. LEASED/RENTED VEHICLES

- 9.1 When it is necessary for a City employee to use a rental vehicle for City business, the employee shall utilize a City approved leasing agency. If a City approved leasing agency is not available, the employee's department shall purchase optional comprehensive/collision damage coverage through the leasing agency at the time the vehicle is rented.
- 9.2 Long term leases (longer than 30 days) may be insured under the City's self-insurance program through the League of Cities upon written approval from the League of Cities Risk Management Division.

10. PARKED VEHICLES

- 10.1 Any vehicle left unattended shall be legally parked in a designated parking space. Vehicles responding to emergency situations or those parked on job sites shall be parked with due regard to safety and security considerations.
- 10.2 City vehicles not taken home shall be secured in City parking lots during non-duty hours. 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.

11. ACCIDENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 11.1 Any accident involving a City owned, rented or leased vehicle or privately owned vehicle used in the performance of City duties shall be reported as follows:
- (1) Summon medical care for any injured parties.
 - (2) Notify appropriate law enforcement authorities.
 - (3) Notify employee's immediate supervisor.
- 11.2 The supervisor shall immediately notify Risk Management.
- 11.3 The supervisor shall be responsible for initiating the departmental investigation of the accident, completing all required City reports and recommending any follow-up preventative actions.
- 11.4 When the City 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.

12. 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.

13. PERSONALLY OWNED VEHICLES USED FOR CITY BUSINESS

13.1 The City's Self-Insurance program provides limited coverage for employees while operating personally owned vehicles to conduct City business. This coverage is limited to protection from claims made against the City and the employee while serving in the course of employment. The coverage provided by the City's Self-Insurance Program is subject to the statutory limitations provided by Section 768.28, Florida Statutes.

13.2 The Self-Insurance Program will not provide coverage for physical damage to an employee's privately owned vehicle. Employees who use personally owned vehicles for City business should confirm that their personal auto insurance policy provides coverage for this use.

13.3 Employees who receive a monthly vehicle allowance 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 \$50,000 per occurrence. Annual verification of minimum coverage will be requested.

14. USE OF SAFETY RESTRAINTS

14.1 All City vehicles must be equipped with seat belts and all occupants of City vehicles must properly wear seat belts any time the vehicle is in motion.

14.2 The operator of construction, excavation and other off road equipment shall use the occupant restraint system any time the vehicle is in operation.

14.3 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.

15. MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVING RECORD REVIEW

Employees whose job requires the use of a City or privately owned vehicle are expected to maintain driving records that reflect the practice of safe driving habits both on and off the job. The City shall use the State of Florida individual driving record and corresponding point system to monitor the risks associated with operating vehicles while in the City's employ.

- 15.1 The Risk Management Division 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 vehicle.
- 15.2 An accumulation of eight or more points in the previous 12 month period or an accumulation of 12 or more points in the previous 18 month period shall be cause for disciplinary action up to and including suspension of City driving privileges. The Risk Manager shall advise the employee's department head and Human Resources Director when a driving record meets this threshold.
- 15.3 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 driving privileges.
- 15.4 An employee whose driver license has been suspended for any reason shall not be allowed to operate any over-the-road City vehicles.
- 15.5 Employees who have obtained temporary driving permits or hardship licenses shall not be permitted to operate over-the-road City or privately owned vehicles in the performance of official City duties.
- 15.6 An employee who has been determined to be "at fault" in two or more accidents within a 24 month period while driving a City or privately owned vehicle in the performance of official City business shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension of City driving privileges.
- 15.7 Temporary or permanent suspension of City driving privileges shall be considered loss of a job required prerequisite for employees whose position requires operation of an over-the-road vehicle.
- 15.8 If an employee has had City driving privileges suspended, the City 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 or coworkers, loss of City 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.