



Vehicle Use Policy

I. ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF VEHICLES

- A. The county may allow qualified and authorized employees to use its vehicles for business purposes. The county alone has the discretion to assign or reassign vehicles to be operated by employees or employees within certain employment classifications. Use of a county vehicle is not part of the compensation for any employment classification nor should the use of a vehicle be used as an inducement for employment.
- B. All county vehicles are county property and are subject to search by the county at any time. No employee using a county vehicle should have any expectation that the assignment or authorized use of a vehicle gives the employee any type of personal rights in the vehicle, including any privacy rights or rights to store non-business items in the vehicle. Additionally, county vehicles may be reassigned solely at the discretion of the county.
- C. Any person operating a county vehicle shall be familiar with and obey all laws, ordinances, regulations, and rules, whether national, state, or local, governing vehicle operations in the place they are operating the vehicle.
- D. A county vehicle may be used **only** by the county employee to whom it is assigned or a county employee who is authorized to operate that county vehicle. Employees authorized to use a county vehicle may not authorize or permit any other person to use the vehicle, including family members, friends, or any other county employees.
- E. No employee may place any decals, bumper stickers, or other information on a county vehicle without permission from the County. Additionally, no employee may remove or in any way tamper with, deface, or destroy any county information, safety information, or any other information placed in or on the vehicle by the county.

II. PERSONAL USE OF COUNTY VEHICLES

- A. An employee may use county vehicles **only** for county purposes. Personal business or non-county-related business should not be performed using a county

vehicle unless specifically authorized by an employee's supervisors, managers, or department directors.

- B. Employees who are assigned a county vehicle will be held responsible for any accidents or damage when using the vehicle for non-county-related purposes. The county does not provide automobile liability insurance coverage for any accidents, claims, demands, suits, or damages occurring or arising out of a non-county-related use of a county vehicle or for the operation of a county vehicle in a manner that otherwise violates this policy.
- C. Occasionally, because of the nature of an employee's duties (such as the necessity to be able to respond promptly to emergencies with the right equipment), an employee may be permitted to use a vehicle for personal purposes. In such circumstances, an employee must have explicit written authority to use his or her vehicle for personal use. Additionally, an employee shall be required to show proof of insurance covering the personal use of the county vehicle. Any such insurance policy must provide at a minimum liability limits of \$100,000/\$300,000/\$100,000.

III. EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

An employee operating a county vehicle shall be a minimum of 21 years of age, unless otherwise approved by a specific department.

- A. Before an employee may operate a county vehicle, he or she shall be subject to a background check and shall not, during the last 36 months:
 - 1. been convicted of a felony;
 - 2. been convicted of sale, handling, or use of drugs;
 - 3. had automobile insurance cancelled, declined, or not renewed;
 - 4. been convicted of an alcohol or drug-related offense while driving;
 - 5. been convicted of three or more speeding violations or one or more other serious violations; and,
 - 6. been involved in two or more automobile accidents for which the employee was at fault.
- B. An employee must maintain a valid driver's license issued in the state of residence for the ~~class of~~ vehicle being operated. Additionally, any employee driving vehicles in a class that requires additional medical certifications or specialized driver's licenses or endorsements, such as commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) must obtain and maintain those certifications and licenses to operate those vehicles.

- C. In the event the license of an employee who is authorized or assigned to drive a county vehicle is suspended or revoked or otherwise rendered invalid, the employee shall (i) immediately cease operation of any vehicle and (ii) report the suspension, revocation, or invalidity to his or her supervisor. An employee also shall **immediately** report to his or her supervisor (iii) any arrest or conviction for driving under the influence or reckless driving, (iv) any citations related to his or her driving during the scope of employment, and (v) any traffic accidents that occurred during the scope of employment. The failure of an employee to follow these procedures exactly shall be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

IV. SEAT BELTS

When driving or riding in a county vehicle, an employee must use his or her seat belt and must assure that all other passengers are also wearing seat belts. Transporting more passengers than available seat belts is prohibited.

V. USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC HAND-HELD DEVICES.

Employees are prohibited from using cell phones to talk, text, or email while operating the vehicle. Except in cases of emergency, no call should be made while operating a county vehicle. Employees are discouraged from using handheld devices and any functions thereof while conducting county affairs and operating a vehicle. Employees are expected to utilize the functions of a cell phone before and after driving and to pull over if the need is so great that a cell phone call or other function must be used while in transit. If an employee must use a cell phone or other hand-held device while operating a vehicle because of an urgent or emergent need, an employee must use voice-enabled functions if available.

VI. OTHER CONDUCT

- A. An employee operating any county vehicle shall exercise reasonable care at all times, obey all traffic laws, and shall be a courteous and responsible driver.
- B. No employee who has consumed (a) **any** alcohol of any amount eight hours before driving, (b) **any** illegal drug, or (c) any prescribed or over-the-counter medication that may interfere in the operation of a vehicle in any way, may operate a county vehicle.
- C. Employees must use, park, store, and operate county vehicles in a way that avoids damage, neglect, theft, or harm. This includes the duty to operate the vehicle in a reasonable way, paying attention to vehicle warning lights, to notice unusual sounds coming from or unusual performance of the vehicle, and to not drive in a negligent or reckless manner. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect that would inhibit safe operation during current and foreseeable weather and lighting conditions.

- D. An employee may not use a vehicle to pull or haul personal trailers. Any permitted hauling for county purposes should be done in accordance with the vehicles designed load capacities and only in a way that will avoid damage to the vehicle. Additionally, all loads must be properly secured according to the vehicle and/or trailer manufacturer's specifications and guidelines.
- E. Using County vehicles, fuel, or credit cards for personal use or gain is strictly prohibited and will be criminally prosecuted. If an employee is assigned a county credit card, the employee must submit a copy of any receipt for fuel or other maintenance items to the County as soon as possible and in accordance with county reimbursement policies and procedures. An employee is required to report any error in the usage of fuel or credit cards to his or her supervisor or to the County Fleet Manager within 48 hours. Any mistaken personal charges must be reimbursed to the county immediately and an employee may still be subject to disciplinary action if circumstances warrant.
- F. Before permitting any maintenance on any county vehicle, an employee must obtain prior approval from his or her supervisor.
- G. No employee may smoke or vape in a county vehicle.

VII. ACCIDENTS

- A. All accidents must be immediately reported to an employee's supervisor and County Safety Manager.
- B. If an accident occurs while an employee is operating a county vehicle, and the employee caused or contributed to the accident, the employee may be disciplined up to and including termination.
- C. Any employee involved in any way with an accident may be subject to a drug and alcohol test as detailed in the Carbon County Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.
- D. In the event of an accident, an employee shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 1. Call the police and obtain a copy of the police report.
 - 2. Do not admit to negligence or liability.
 - 3. Do not attempt settlement, regardless of how minor.
 - 4. Get the name, address, and phone number of any other person involved and any witnesses if possible.
 - 5. Exchange vehicle identification, insurance company name, and policy numbers with the other driver.

6. Take relevant photographs of the scene of the accident if possible.
7. Complete the accident report.
8. Turn all information over to your supervisor and Safety Manager within 24 hours.

VIII. TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

- A. Fines for parking or moving violations, towing storage, or impoundment are the personal responsibility of the assigned operator.
- B. Because motor vehicle violations, even for operation of personal vehicles, may affect a driver's licensing or insurability status, any employee authorized to operate a county vehicle must report **all** moving violations to his or her supervisor immediately. Failure to report violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action, including revoking of driver privileges and possible termination of employment.