

# City of New Haven

## Vehicle Use Policy

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to define and describe the usage parameters related to the operation of City of New Haven vehicles by City employees:

- a) Ensure the safety and well being of City employees
- b) Facilitate the efficient and effective usage of City resources
- c) Minimize liability to the City
- d) Establish standard requirements and procedures for all City of New Haven employees who drive a motor vehicle including over the road equipment in the course of City business. In this Policy, the term vehicle shall be defined as any motor vehicle including over the road equipment.

**Issuing Authority:** The Chief Administrative Officer is the issuing authority for this policy.

**Enforcement Authority:** Daily administration and enforcement is the responsibility of all Coordinators and Department heads.

### Policy

#### **Section 1. General Vehicle Policy**

This policy applies to all employees who operate City vehicles of any type on either a regular or occasional basis. The City reserves the right to deny any employee the use of a City vehicle and may choose not to indemnify any employee who fails to adhere to the policies and procedures contained in this document. Furthermore, any City employee that does not adhere to this policy and corresponding procedures may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- 1) The employee must have written authorization from his/her Department Head to operate a City vehicle of any type. The Department Head shall submit to the Risk Management Program Coordinator and Human Resources copies of the Vehicle Use Policy sign off form for each authorized employee along with copies of their driver's license. Additionally, the Department Head shall submit an annual listing of authorized drivers to Corporation Counsel along with copies of their drivers' licenses.
- 2) In order to be authorized to operate a City vehicle, an operator must be an employee of the City of New Haven and must possess a valid State of Connecticut Driver's License. This license must be the appropriate license for the equipment to be operated. Corporation Counsel shall maintain a file with photocopies of employee Driver's licenses.
- 3) In the event an employee's drivers license is suspended for any reason, that employee shall promptly notify the department head with written notice within one working day and a copy of that notice shall be forwarded by the supervisor to Corporation Counsel. The employee shall not operate a City vehicle during the term of the stipulated suspension.

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- 4) The driver and all occupants must wear seat belts at all times when operating any City vehicles, including over the road equipment.
- 5) The driver must obey all traffic laws at all times. It is incumbent upon all operators of City vehicles to follow all motor vehicle laws, rules of the road, and operate the vehicle in a safe and courteous manner. The City shall provide mandatory driver safety courses to all authorized drivers. These courses shall provide employees with an overview of the concepts of safe driving. Authorized drivers must attend these courses when scheduled in order to have continued permission to drive.
- 6) The use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any drugs or substances that may affect the employee's ability to drive safely are prohibited.
- 7) Vehicles shall be operated only by the employee who has been assigned the use of a city vehicle in accordance with the procedures established by their Department Head.
- 8) In the event of a motor vehicle accident, whether a City vehicle or an authorized personal vehicle, it is the driver's responsibility to immediately notify police, their immediate supervisor, and ensure that a Police Accident Report is completed at the scene. The driver's immediate supervisor is to notify Corporation Counsel and their Department Head immediately. The Public Liability Investigator will determine if investigators from the Corporation Counsel will be notified in order to take photographs of property damage and the accident scene.
  - a) In addition, if the accident occurred in a City vehicle, a Motor Vehicle Accident Report must be completed by the employee and their supervisor. The report is then to be submitted to the appropriate Department Head who will forward a copy to the Public Liability Investigator immediately for all accidents regardless of the amount of damage. Accident procedures and forms shall be located in the vehicle glove box at all times. These packages are available from the police, fire and public works garages. Failure to report an accident in accordance with this provision will result in immediate revocation of driving privileges. In addition, failure to report accidents in accordance with the above requirements may result in claims being charged to the department budget.
  - b) It is the responsibility of all city employees to report all vehicular infractions issued against them while operating a City vehicle to their Department Head, who will then forward copies to the Risk Manager Program Coordinator and Corporation Counsel. Failure to report an infraction in accordance with this provision will result in immediate suspension or revocation of driving privileges. Payment of any fines or legal costs associated with vehicular infractions incurred while operating a City vehicle shall be the sole responsibility of the driver.

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- 9) Except for employees who have restricted or unrestricted use of an assigned vehicle the use of City vehicles for personal business is prohibited.
- 10) The Public Liability Investigator will establish and maintain a tracking system to monitor employee driving records and make recommendations regarding employee's eligibility to drive. The City reserves the right to verify an employee's driving record through the Department of Motor Vehicles, on a random basis.
- 11) The transportation of Hazardous Materials must be in accordance with Department of Transportation regulations and approved in writing by the appropriate Department Head. Shipping through approved carriers whenever possible is recommended. If flammable liquid must be transported, it must be transported in accordance with all federal, state and local regulations.
- 12) Firearms are not allowed in a City vehicle at any time except as permitted by the City Weapons Policy.
- 13) Non-employees, off duty employees, unauthorized persons and animals are not permitted in City vehicles at any time, without the express permission of the driver's supervisor.
- 14) Hitchhikers are prohibited in City vehicles at any time.

### **Section 2. Vehicles and Equipment Pools Available for Employee Use**

There are a variety of citywide and departmental vehicle and equipment pools for work-related use. Individual departments shall establish departmental procedures for access and use of the pool vehicles.

#### *1) Department Pool Vehicle and Daily Assignments from Department Equipment Pools:*

Vehicles in this category shall be operated by the employee who has signed out the use of the vehicle. All employees should present their valid and appropriate Connecticut driver's license when picking-up a pool vehicle. Vehicles shall be garaged at the work site.

#### *2) Downtown Car Pool:*

Vehicles in this category may be signed out at one of several Coordinators' offices. Each office will be responsible for maintaining a sign out log with the employee's name, department, time taken, time returned, starting and ending mileage and vehicle number. City pool vehicles are to be returned to the lot from which they were removed, the parking brake set and the vehicle locked. Immediately thereafter, employees shall return the pool vehicle keys to the issuing coordinator's office and complete the car pool log by entering the starting and ending mileage from the vehicle's odometer, at the time returned. A vehicle inspection report must be returned with the vehicle keys at the end of each employee's use. The employee is to note any damage or mechanical problems. Failure of the employee to complete this form may result in the employee

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being held responsible for any damage discovered on the previously assigned vehicle. Coordinators will forward a copy of the form to the Fleet Manager. If there is an urgent problem with the vehicle, the Fleet Manager must be contacted immediately at (946-8329). Pool vehicles must be returned to the lot with a minimum of one-half tank of fuel. Pool vehicles are to be refueled at the Public Works garage at 34 Middletown Avenue. Drivers must report to the garage office to get fuel.

### 3) *On-call Emergency/Overnight Use:*

City vehicles may be assigned by Department Heads for overnight use to an employee for work related activities on an on-call basis. Personal use of City vehicles is prohibited. Vehicles may be garaged overnight at the employee's residence when employee is officially on-call only.

### **Section 3. Vehicle Assignments for Exclusive Use**

The Chief Administrative Officer may assign vehicles to employees for exclusive use. The Chief Administrative Officer shall maintain a list and review all exclusive use assignments. Mileage commuting to and from work, must be reported and reimbursed monthly by the employee as prescribed by the Department of Finance at rates established by the United States Internal Revenue Service unless otherwise specified in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

#### 1) *Assigned Vehicle for Employee's Unrestricted Use:*

City vehicle usage is not restricted in this category. Vehicles may be garaged at the employee's residence. Only the Mayor has unrestricted use of a City vehicle.

#### 2) *Assigned Vehicle for the Employee's Restricted Use:*

City vehicles may be assigned to employees who need to respond, at any time, to work related appointments and emergencies. These employees have 24-hour use of their assigned vehicles and may garage them at their residences overnight due to the duties of their positions. Under no circumstances shall such vehicles be taken outside of the State of Connecticut.

#### 3) *Assigned Vehicle / Work Related Use Only:*

City vehicles may be assigned to the employees in this category to allow them to respond to work related activities as required. Vehicles may be garaged overnight at the employee's residence.

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Issuing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Previously Revised: 8/98 4/00 12/09

A copy of this policy is available for review at the Department of Human Resources, and on the City's computer network at N:\POLICIES or on the City's website at <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/HumanResources/Policies.asp>