

TITLE: Vehicle Usage
----------------------

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the appropriate use of city vehicles. This policy applies to all departments in the city, unless a department has more stringent guidelines (with written permission of the City Manager.)

II. POLICY STATEMENT

All City vehicles are leased or owned and provide to employees to enable the provision of safe, efficient and essential services to the citizens of Avondale.

III. POLICY PROVISIONS

A. Responsibility

1. All personnel driving City vehicles shall:
  - a. Have a valid State of Arizona Driver's License with the appropriate license classification for the type of vehicle they are operating.
  - b. Acquire a complete knowledge and understanding of vehicular operations.
  - c. Obtain all necessary approvals and complete all required city vehicle driving courses before operating a city vehicle.
  - d. If a city employee should lose their driver's license for any reason, that employee should notify their supervisor at the beginning of their next working shift.
2. The responsibility for assuring complete compliance with the provisions of this regulation rests with the Department Director, supervisors at all levels, and the individual employee involved. Department Directors will also designate all take home vehicles. Take-home city vehicle assignments must be reviewed and approved based on established and documented performance measures clearly indicating the public benefits derived from any authorized take-home assignment.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. The use of City vehicles shall be restricted to official business, subject to the following guidelines:
  1. Transporting of Passengers shall be limited to City employees, persons in advisory capacity to the City, persons participating in approved City programs (such as the Ride-Along program), and other agency representatives on City business.

2. Employees assigned a vehicle for use during their normal workday schedule must exercise discretion in its use. City Vehicles should not be used for personal business.
  3. Alcoholic beverages shall not be consumed or transported in City vehicle nor shall any City employee have consumed any alcohol or any other controlled substance (as defined by the City's Drug Free Work Environment Policy) while operating a city vehicle.
  4. It is inappropriate for a City Vehicle to be parked in front of certain types of businesses, such as a liquor store or bar, unless the vehicle is being used to conduct official city business, such as an inspection. Considerable discretion should be exercised when using the vehicle for the purposes noted in this paragraph.
- B. Department Directors may assign vehicles for overnight use:
1. To employees who are frequently required to use a City vehicle at night, during the weekend, or if they have substantial emergency responsibilities. This does not include employees whose homes are outside city limits unless the City's emergency response or other important City business would be greatly facilitated.
  2. In situations where the conduct of City business can be facilitated by overnight use of a City vehicle by an employee who normally does not keep a City vehicle overnight.
  3. To any number of employees rotating a specific assignment and vehicle at night or on weekends.
  4. All employees making overnight trips with a City vehicle must have prior approval from their Department Director.
- C. Take Home Vehicles
1. Take Home vehicles may be assigned to those employees who respond to emergencies that require immediate response to protect life or property or if the employee needs specialized equipment or a special vehicle to perform work outside an employee's normally scheduled workday (on-call).
  2. Authorization – Take-home vehicle authorizations are not transferable and must be re-justified annually. Any work assignment changes that increase or decrease the number of vehicles approved for each program (cost center) effectively invalidates previously authorized take-home vehicle authority – supervisors must re-justify the take-home authorization with their Department Director. The justification should include the following:

- a. The category of assignment, i.e., long-term, on-call, etc.
  - b. Explanation of vehicle usage and nature of any personal use to be authorized, i.e., commuting, qualified non-personal-use, etc.
  - c. Narrative describing how the specific work assignment meets the policies and criteria for a take-home vehicle.
  - d. Additional data demonstrating the actual number and nature of emergency responses, if emergency response is being used as justification, along with an explanation as to why alternative forms of transportation cannot be used to respond to the emergencies or pick up city-owned assigned vehicles at designated parking area.
  - e. Calculation of savings to the City, if economic justification is used. In addition, there must be an explanation as to why alternative forms of transportation cannot be used to respond to the emergencies or pick up city-owned assigned vehicles at designated parking area.
  - f. Explanation of special vehicle characteristics required to fulfill the work assignment's business purpose, i.e., van, pickup, large capacity, special equipment, etc.
  - g. Designation by Field Operations as to appropriate class of vehicle for the intended use and concurrence with the request.
  - h. Approval by the requesting department's Upper Level Management.
3. Categories of Assignment
- a. Long Term Assignment – The authorization of assigned take-home vehicles may be granted for a period of not more than twelve months, unless re-assignment is approved. Emergency response assignments should be supported by data demonstrating the actual number and nature of emergency responses in the prior year, and estimates of future emergency responses. In addition, there must be an explanation as to why an employee cannot use alternative forms of transportation to respond to the emergencies or pick up city-owned assigned vehicles at the designated parking area.
  - b. Requirement to Respond – “On-Call” – Employees must be on call when taking a city-owned vehicle home and must have primary responsibility to respond to calls. Employees are required to leave word as to where they may be reached at any given time and be available to willingly respond to and/or report to work when called.
  - c. Special Public Safety Programs – Employees who are assigned to public safety programs may be allowed an assigned take-home vehicle, provided it is a fully marked vehicle used for the special public safety programs.
  - d. Rotating Assignment – Vehicles may be assigned as take-home to a specific division, without being assigned to a specific employee when several division employees share the on-call responsibility. It is the responsibility of the division to track the take-home vehicle assignments. Take-home vehicles assigned by division must meet the following conditions:
    - i. Division employees share the requirement to respond “On-Call” on a rotating basis.

- ii. The assigned take-home vehicle is marked and/or equipped to facilitate response (i.e. lights, sirens, specialized equipment).
- iii. The employee(s) participating in the rotating assignment must reside within reasonable distance of anticipated response location. Reasonable distance is defined as: the employee's home address is within 10 miles of City of Avondale boundaries.

D. City vehicles shall be operated in a responsible, safe manner, as outlined below:

1. Seatbelts shall be worn by all employees or passengers using a City vehicle and the vehicle shall not be operated until all vehicle occupants have buckled their seat belts.
2. Employees shall not utilize cellular phones to converse or text while operating a City vehicle. If you need to use your cellular phone for any reason, you should pull the vehicle to a safe location to utilize the cellular phone.
3. City vehicles shall be driven in compliance with motor vehicle laws.
4. All employees who operate a City vehicle shall become familiar with policies and procedures relating to the reporting of accidents. Employees involved in an accident may be required to submit to a test for drugs or alcohol (including possible urine or blood screenings). Such tests would be conducted in accordance with City regulations.
5. Employees operating City vehicles are responsible for keeping them clean and litter free. Employees assigned to a specific City vehicle on a regular basis are also responsible for ensuring the vehicle is in good working order at all times. Any known defects or malfunctions of a City vehicle are to be reported promptly to Field Operations.
6. The responsibility for pooled vehicles must be shared by all users. Anyone using a pooled vehicle must adhere to all of the instructions above and ensure that the fuel is filled whenever the fuel level is at  $\frac{1}{4}$  tank or below. All pooled vehicles and keys must be checked out and returned at the designated Department location.
7. Routine maintenance and repair of City vehicles will be supervised through Field Operations.

E. Traffic Violations

1. Any employee who receives a ticket from a traffic violation including photo radar tickets while driving a City of Avondale vehicle is personally responsible. Employee should promptly report the incident to their supervisor and payment of fines related to the citation received while using a City vehicle will be the employee's responsibility. Under no circumstances are these citations to be paid

for by the use City funds. All moving traffic citations shall be reported within 24 hours to the appropriate Department Director.

2. Any traffic violation that could potentially impact your ability to continue to perform the essential functions of your job (i.e. suspended driver's license, DUI, excessive speeding tickets) shall be reported within 24 hours to the appropriate Department Director. Violations for not reporting traffic citations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
3. Employees who receive traffic violations will be reviewed and if the offense is repeated employees may face disciplinary actions up to and including termination.
4. Public Safety employees will be exempt from paying the ticket if they were responding to an emergency and documentation is provided to substantiate the emergency.

#### V. EXEMPTIONS

- A. Public safety employees acting under department policy are exempted from certain aspects of this regulation as outlined in their respective Department's policy.
- B. Employees who have any questions regarding this policy should contact Human Resources.

#### VI. APPROVAL



---

David Fitzhugh, City Manager

October 13, 2014

---

Date of City Manager's Approval