

**USE & OPERATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

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1. General Policy: The use and operation of motor vehicles owned or hired by the Town of Seekonk shall be governed by this policy. Drivers who are required to have a C.D.L. or any other category of license to operate a motor vehicle must also comply with any applicable Federal, state or local requirements.
  - a) Motor vehicles shall only be operated for official Town business and at the discretion of the appropriate Department Head, who may authorize a driver only after determining that the individual meets the Town's standards for operating the motor vehicle to which they are assigned.
  - b) Motor vehicles shall only be operated by a paid employee or a volunteer of the Town who has been authorized by the appropriate department head, except that motor vehicles may be operated by others hired in connection with repair and maintenance work as directed by the Town.
  - c) All operators of Town vehicles shall possess a valid driver's license of the appropriate class needed for the vehicle being driven. Employees are responsible for notifying their department head if their license is suspended. Employees must forward a copy of their driver's license to their department head on an annual basis. In the event of a license suspension, vehicle use privileges will be suspended and may be terminated. Employees are required to notify their department head of any violations or summonses received while in possession of, or while operating a Town vehicle. Failure to do so may result, in the Town's discretion, in the loss of vehicle use privileges and any other disciplinary action that may be appropriate.
  - d) Any operator of a Town-owned vehicle who is cited for a violation of the motor vehicle laws may be subject to disciplinary action dependent upon the citation received. Disciplinary action may include a written warning, suspension of the right to operate Town-owned or hired motor vehicles for a period of time, permanent loss of right to operate Town-owned or hired motor vehicles, suspension or termination of employment.
  - e) The use of Town-owned or hired motor vehicles for personal use is prohibited unless de minimus or otherwise contractually permitted. The employee's department head shall take corrective action of abuses of this provision.
  - f) An operator shall transport only Town employees or officials in Town-owned or hired vehicles except that persons who are not employees or officials may be transported in connection with official business of the Town, such as: in connection with parades and celebrations as authorized by the Town Administrator; performance of volunteer work for the Town; and, transportation of residents who are participating in official program that are conducted by a Town department.
  - g) All operators and passengers must wear seat belts. No operator shall allow any person to ride in any vehicle unless that person is wearing an individual seat belt.
  - h) No operator of a pickup truck, dump truck, or similar vehicle shall allow any rider to stand in the body of such vehicles while the vehicles are in motion.
  - i) An operator shall not use a hand held cell phone, send or receive text messages, or use comparable hand held or operated device while driving a Town-owned or hired vehicle.
  - j) Any operator who is convicted of operating a Town-owned or hired vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs or convicted of possession of alcohol or drugs shall be terminated from employment. Any employee arrested for driving under the influence, whether operating a Town-owned vehicle or personal vehicle while performing official Town business shall immediately notify his/her department head who shall notify the Town Administrator immediately.
  - k) Employees are responsible for any driving or parking infractions or fines as a result of their use of a Town vehicle. However, parking fines may be reimbursed with approval by the Town

Administrator if those fines occur on official business and under extenuating circumstances. Employees driving on Town business may claim reimbursement for parking fees, tolls, and other costs incurred in the operation of the motor vehicle upon evidence of proper receipts.

2. Assignment of Vehicles:

- a) The Board of Selectmen may designate specific employees and officials to have motor vehicles assigned to them for use in the conduct of their official business. Such employees and officials may also use said vehicles for transportation to and from work, as authorized by the Board of Selectmen, provided that the community of their principal place of residence is within fifteen miles of the Seekonk Town Line.
- b) The Town Administrator may from time to time permit other employees or officials to use vehicles for transportation to and from work on a temporary basis if it is consistent with the needs of the Town. All other vehicles will be assigned on a daily basis by the Department Head and garaged at the appropriate Town facility when not in use.
- c) The Town Administrator may permit the Superintendent of Public Works, Chief of Police, or another department head to assign vehicles, on a temporary basis, to employees who would be responsible for responding to after hour emergency calls, in conformance with this policy including the restrictions under Item 1.
- d) Employees will be required to maintain daily reports of their vehicle usage. These reports will record the operator(s) of each vehicle, the condition of the vehicle at the time of use, and segregate commuting mileage from business-related mileage. The reports will be maintained by each individual department to which the vehicles are assigned, and made available upon request. The Town Administrator may, at the request of a department head, approve an alternative of recording vehicle usage, such as standard logs, that accomplish the desired internal control objectives.

3. Vehicle Cleanliness: Vehicles are to be washed as needed. Each driver shall assure that interiors are maintained in a presentable condition and are free of debris at the end of each day.

4. Reporting Vehicle Accidents: In the event that any employee operating a Town owned vehicle is involved in a motor vehicle accident, the following procedure will be observed at all times:

- a) Report the accident immediately to the police in the city or town the accident occurs in. If in Seekonk, contact Seekonk Dispatch. If you are not in Seekonk, use a telephone and dial 911. When reporting the accident, provide the following information:
  - (1) You are in a Town of Seekonk vehicle.
  - (2) Your exact location.
  - (3) Whether or not you, any passenger(s), or the operator(s) of the other vehicle(s) may be injured.
- b) Do not move the vehicle(s) unless directed to do so by a police officer or if the present location of the vehicle will cause further risk of accident.
- c) If you are able to do so, retrieve a copy of the vehicle registration from the Town of Seekonk vehicle along with your driver's license and make them available to the investigating police officer. **DO NOT SIMPLY EXCHANGE PAPERS WITH THE OTHER OPERATOR(S).** Every vehicle accident involving a Town of Seekonk vehicle **MUST** be investigated by a police officer.
- d) Contact your department head immediately after contacting Seekonk Dispatch or other local police department and advise him/her of the accident. If necessary, request his/her response.
- e) Prior to police arriving on scene, be sure to obtain and make a record of the make/model/color/license plate of the other vehicle(s) involved.

- f) If the vehicle is to be towed from the scene, obtain all information as to the name of the tow company and the location of where the vehicle is being towed. If there is another vehicle being towed, obtain the same information for that vehicle.
  - g) Upon return to duty or earlier if directed by a supervisor the driver of the vehicle and each passenger of the vehicle must complete and submit to the appropriate department head (1) an accident report for Town files and insurance purposes, and (2) a first report of injury.
  - h) If so directed by a supervisor, you may also be required to complete an incident report on the accident.
  - i) As soon as practical after receiving notice of a motor vehicle accident or an incident that results in significant damage to a Town vehicle the department head shall notify the Town Administrator and the Finance Director, and prepare and submit insurance claims as directed.
5. Vehicle Registrations: Vehicle Maintenance Staff shall ensure that a copy of a motor vehicle's registration is placed inside every vehicle. Vehicle Maintenance Staff will maintain the originals of those registrations.
6. Municipal Vehicle Parking:
- a) All municipal vehicles shall be parked in accordance with posted parking regulations at all times.
  - b) Operators of municipal vehicles are to park ONLY in marked spaces. Fire Lanes, end of aisles, and the side(s) of the building are not authorized spots.
7. Fuel Conservation: Municipal vehicles shall not be allowed to idle unattended for extended periods, unless the idle is necessary at an emergency scene or in winter conditions.
8. Mileage Reimbursement Rate – Private Vehicle Usage: Employees may use their own vehicles for official business, but only with the prior approval of their department head or Town Administrator, and only when a Town vehicle is not available. The Town reimbursement rate for employees who use their personal vehicles for official use shall be equivalent to the IRS rate in affect on July 1st of the given fiscal year, when such use is documented on an official reimbursement form.
9. Departmental Regulations: A department head that has jurisdiction over motor vehicles may promulgate, with the approval of the Town Administrator, supplementary regulations and procedures regarding authorized use and maintenance of vehicles under their control.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen:

  
 Clerk

07/14/2010  
 date

I have received a copy of the administrative policy Use & Operation of Motor Vehicles.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
 date

Employee Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_