



Carrboro Police Department

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All officers of the Carrboro Police Department may be issued a vehicle. These vehicles are the property of the Town of Carrboro and may be assigned to all sworn law enforcement personnel pending minimal standards set forth by the Police Department.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish guidelines for the proper use, care, and maintenance of all vehicles assigned to the Carrboro Police Department.

II. OPERATION OF TOWN VEHICLES

A. Vehicle assignments

1. An officer is allowed to drive his assigned vehicle no more than 30 miles outside the town limits of Carrboro to his residence. Vehicles are to be driven directly to work and directly to the officer's residence after work. The only deviation from this restriction must be approved by the officer's supervisor or by a member of the administrative staff.
2. If an officer cannot take the vehicle home, it shall be parked at a location designated by the Chief of Police.
3. Individually assigned take-home vehicles are to be parked in locations affording visibility and crime deterrence effect when feasible to do so.



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4. Safety of the vehicles and equipment is to be considered. Parking in hazardous locations is prohibited.
- B. An officer may be allowed to drive his vehicle more than 30 miles outside the Town limits of Carrboro under the following circumstances:
1. The officer is on call;
 2. The officer has police duties to perform after normal work hours on a regular basis; or
 3. The officer is an administrator who supervises members working varied shifts and, as such, he is required to periodically observe the performance of these members.
- In these instances, the Chief of Police must approve such use of the Town vehicle.
- C. Vehicles shall be operated by Police Department officers only, except as necessary by mechanics or other service personnel performing maintenance or other work on the vehicle. For the purpose of this provision, Reserve officers performing duties for and at the request of the Chief of Police shall be considered employees of the Police Department.
 - D. Unless an exception is granted, the operator of a Police Department vehicle shall notify the on-duty supervisor via radio whenever the vehicle is in use (off-duty) and being operated for any purpose. The operator shall provide name/call number to the supervisor and shall provide any other information required by proper radio procedure.
 - E. Police Department vehicles shall be operated at all times in accordance with State traffic laws, County and Town ordinances, and policies and procedures of the Carrboro Police Department. All operators and passengers must wear seat belts and shoulder straps. Arrestees shall be strapped in with seat belts whenever feasible.
 - F. Except under extreme emergencies, keys shall be removed from the ignition and doors locked on any unattended vehicle.



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- G. Officers who are assigned vehicles on a work shift basis shall arrange with their supervisors for the vehicle to be available for use by others when the officer is off-duty or otherwise away from the job.

III. RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS

Town-owned property is to be maintained and stored in a state of operational readiness. Such maintenance is the primary responsibility of the person to which the property is assigned.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR ONE-TO-ONE VEHICLE

An officer is eligible to receive a take-home vehicle after he has been employed with the Department for one full year and provided there are no disciplinary actions pending against the officer. Officers with five or more years of previous law enforcement experience may receive an assigned vehicle sooner after approval by the Division Commander and the Chief of Police.

V. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

- A. The privilege of assignment to a one-to-one vehicle can be revoked at any time by the Chief of Police.
- B. Any officer who has been involved in two or more motor vehicle accidents that are deemed to be the officer's fault within one calendar year may lose the privilege of a take-home vehicle for an amount of time specified by the Chief of Police.
- C. The privilege of assignment to a take-home vehicle can be revoked as part of any disciplinary action taken against any officer.

VI. RESTRICTIONS

- A. *De minimis* stops
 - 1. Operators of vehicles must comply with IRS requirements applicable to take-home vehicles.



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2. “De minimis” (very small or trifling matters) stops en route from residence to workplace for personal business are not prohibited by the IRS. Examples of such stops include buying milk, picking up laundry, cashing a check, etc., while en route.

3. Such stops should be the exception and not the rule.

B. Officers are permitted use of vehicles to and from departmentally authorized off-duty assignments when working such duties.

C. Officers are not to provide vehicular patrol at an off-duty location in the assigned vehicles unless specifically authorized to do so by a Captain or the Chief of Police.

D. As necessary, officers may use the vehicles when making arrests, investigating possible criminal activities or transporting prisoners.

E. The vehicles shall be parked as close as possible to the off-duty locations for visibility, crime deterrence, and security purposes.

F. Adverse weather conditions may occasionally dictate use of the vehicles while working an outdoor “post.” This must be cleared by the on-duty supervisor.

G. Officers may use a cell phone while operating a Town owned police vehicle while their vehicle is in motion if the vehicle is equipped with a hands-free system and can be done so safely. If the vehicle is not equipped with a hands-free system the officer shall pull off the roadway or into a safe location prior to receiving or placing a cell phone call from their police vehicle.

VII. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION

A. Each officer is responsible for the cleanliness of his assigned vehicle. Once a vehicle is assigned to an officer, he can no longer utilize the services of the contracted car wash at the Town’s expense. If officers do not have access to car wash facilities at their residence, they should use the car wash bay at Public Works while on-duty. Overtime shall not be approved for cleaning the vehicle off-duty. In addition, officers shall not be reimbursed if they choose to have their



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individually assigned vehicles washed, waxed, or cleaned by someone else.
Unauthorized persons may not drive Town vehicles.

- B. These vehicles are a direct reflection of the Carrboro Police Department and the Town of Carrboro; therefore, they must be maintained in an exceptional manner. Any officer who does not maintain a clean and neat vehicle shall lose the privilege of assignment to a take-home vehicle.
- C. When possible, maintenance and vehicle care shall be done while on-duty.
- D. While on-duty, officers issued assigned vehicles shall take them to Public Works for repairs and preventive maintenance. Officers must take the vehicle to Public Works for all repairs and maintenance. The only person authorized to send the vehicle to a local dealer for warranty work is the Fleet Manager. If a unit must go to the factory dealer for warranty work, then the officer shall attempt to see that the vehicle is transported there and back during his shift. Overtime shall not be given for maintenance unless authorized in advance by the officer's immediate supervisor.
- E. Any vehicle that is unsafe or in need of mechanical repairs shall immediately be reported to the supervisor, Department Quartermaster, and Fleet Maintenance. In no event shall an unsafe vehicle be used operationally.
- F. Officers shall not undertake any mechanical work on their own and shall not alter or otherwise tamper with any of the vehicle's safety features. Officers shall not install any equipment in their vehicles that requires altering the vehicle's appearance unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee commander in charge of fleet maintenance.
- G. Officers shall search their vehicles at the beginning and end of their shifts for weapons, evidence, contraband, or other property left by prisoners or others.
- H. Officers shall search their vehicles at the beginning and end of their shifts for damage. Any damage observed shall be reported immediately to the supervisor. Any damage reported after the vehicle has been inspected and placed into service shall be considered to have occurred during the officers' tour of duty.
- I. Supervisors must conduct periodic and unannounced inspections of take-home



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vehicles assigned to officers under their direct supervision. Supervisors must inform Administrative officers of any policy violations and/or damage to take-home vehicles or Department vehicles.

VIII. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE FOR SHARED/SPARE VEHICLES

- A. At the end of each tour of duty, it is the responsibility of each officer operating a shared vehicle to check his vehicle for trash, damage, etc., and to take the appropriate action concerning same (i.e. cleaning or reporting) to the shift supervisor.
- B. At the beginning of each tour of duty, it is the responsibility of each officer operating a vehicle to check the vehicle to which he is assigned and to note any new damage, trash, etc. Any damage should be reported to the shift supervisor immediately.
- C. It is the responsibility of each shift supervisor to see that vehicle checks are made as required above.
- D. The officer operating a vehicle shall remedy any mechanical deficiencies that he can. All other deficiencies and any malfunctions or damages shall immediately be reported to the shift supervisor. The shift supervisor shall ensure that this information is passed on to the mechanics at Town of Carrboro Public Works as soon as possible.

IX. CONSERVATION OF FUEL

The following fuel conservation guidelines shall be implemented and adhered to by all personnel within the Carrboro Police Department:

- A. Each officer operating a Town vehicle must ensure that the vehicle is in proper operating condition at all times. The officer shall consult with the appropriate Public Works personnel to schedule the following routine maintenance:
 1. Proper tune-ups at regularly scheduled intervals;
 2. Proper tire inflation;



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3. Front-end alignment;
4. Oil change at regularly scheduled intervals;
5. Clean air filters; and
6. Proper brakes.

Officers shall “think conservation” by maintaining a vehicle in peak operating condition at all times in order that fuel consumption can be reduced.

- B. Officers shall reduce vehicle idling time. Long idle time while at calls, while working traffic, or while parked wastes fuel. The engine shall be turned off whenever possible.
- C. Officers shall drive at or below posted speed limits at all times except in the answering of emergency calls. Vehicles must be operated in accordance with the Carrboro Police Department Vehicle Operations Policy.
- D. When possible, officers may pick up and transport more than one prisoner to the magistrate’s office to reduce trips; however, officers SHALL NOT sacrifice personal safety for fuel economy. Officers shall practice safe driving and fuel economy at all times by avoiding fast starts and sudden stops.
- E. Officers may utilize phones in the field as much as possible as some calls for service can be taken entirely by phone in the field.
- F. Officers shall eliminate all unnecessary weight from vehicles.
- G. Officers on patrol shall park and shut off the engine for 15 minutes each hour. During this 15 minute shut-off time, the officer is encouraged to visit business establishments, observe school districts, potential trouble spots, or do reports. Compliance with this policy is very important to conserve fuel and to promote public relations.
- H. Officers working a traffic checkpoint shall not leave the motor continuously idling for long periods of time.



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- I. Police vehicles that are designated for canine officers are not subject to these idling requirements when the idling is for the health and welfare of the police canine.

X. PASSENGER SAFETY

- A. Unauthorized passengers such as hitchhikers, family, friends, or other parties not directly related to Town business, are not allowed in Town vehicles per Town Administrative Policy.
- B. Officers are not allowed ride-along passengers in their vehicles unless it has been previously approved by a supervisor or an officer of the administrative staff.
- C. Officers shall be observant and practice proper safe driving procedures at all times. Officers' principal concerns shall be the safety of all vehicle occupants. Officers shall require passengers to wear and properly secure their seat belts.
- D. Under no circumstances shall any officer, when transporting any person, respond to any call with said person in his vehicle. Officers doing so are in direct violation of policy and may face disciplinary action. "Persons" shall include prisoners, stranded motorists, victims of domestic violence, or any other individual, other than another law enforcement officer or an authorized ride-along passenger. Officers must remember they do not have authority to make any decision that would expose any unauthorized person to a hazardous situation.
- E. When accompanied by any rider, civilian or sworn, it shall be the obligation of the officer accompanied to supervise and control the actions and conduct of the rider and to ensure that the regulations of this Department and the laws of the State are observed at all times.

XI. COLLISIONS INVOLVING TOWN VEHICLES

- A. When any officer operating a Town vehicle becomes involved in any type of collision involving property damage, personal injury, or damage to a police vehicle or to a private citizen's vehicle, the supervisor on-duty shall be immediately notified. The supervisor on-duty shall proceed to the scene and conduct a collision investigation if the collision has occurred within the Carrboro



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Town limits on private property or a public vehicular area. If an accident occurs on a street or highway inside the Town limits then the NCSHP shall be contacted to investigate the collision.

- B. If the collision occurs on a street or highway or public vehicular area outside of the Carrboro jurisdiction, the NCSHP or the original agency with jurisdiction shall be called to investigate the collision. The supervisor on-duty must still be notified of accidents originating outside the Carrboro jurisdiction.
- C. Photographs must be taken if at all possible by the supervisor and attached with the wreck report.
- D. Other than with appropriate supervisory personnel of the Carrboro Police Department, the supervisor and members involved are not to discuss at any time who is or may be at fault. All discussions and opinion statements are prohibited.
- E. The NCSHP shall be requested to investigate any collision involving a member of the Department resulting in any person's serious bodily injury or death.
- F. An officer involved in a collision involving a Town vehicle must complete the town accident form per Town policy.

XII. OPTING OUT OF A TAKE-HOME VEHICLE

Any officer may opt out of the take-home vehicle program. If an officer chooses to opt out of the program, his vehicle shall be assigned to the next person in line and that officer shall be assigned to drive a vehicle from the spare vehicle pool.