

SECTION SIXTEEN

VEHICLE POLICY

1. County Vehicle Policy

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1. COUNTY OF LAKE VEHICLE POLICY

Purpose

The County of Lake Vehicle Policy is divided into four parts: Part "A" addresses the rules governing the use of County owned Vehicles and is adopted or amended by ordinance, as required by Government Code Section 25305; Part "B" addresses miscellaneous items relating to the use of County owned vehicles which are not required to be adopted by ordinance; Part "C" addresses the maintenance of County owned vehicles and Part "D" addresses the assignment of County-owned pursuit vehicles to Deputy Sheriffs. Parts B, C and D are adopted or amended by motion of the Board.

Application

This policy shall apply to all County owned vehicles registered in the name of "County of Lake," including those vehicles purchased by the Road Fund, special districts governed by the Board of Supervisors, or any other special funding source.

Part A - Rules and Regulations Governing Use of County Owned Vehicles

1. Official Use. County owned automobiles are provided for official use only. "Official Use" is defined as directly connected with the employee's assigned duties in the County service. The following situations are not considered official County business and are not permissible uses of County vehicles:

- A. Personal errands or personal business, except as permitted below.
- B. Allowing riders other than County employees or persons associated with official County business.

Recognizing the inconvenience of being left without a personal vehicle, employees who are required to take a vehicle home as the result of being assigned to "Standby" are allowed to use the County vehicle for the limited purpose of conducting necessary personal business. Necessary personal business includes acquiring meals, attending medical appointments, using rest room facilities and similar necessary activities.

Employees assigned to use County vehicles during work hours may be allowed to use the County vehicle for the limited purposes of acquiring meals during a lunchbreak, if they are required to be in the field during the lunchbreak, and for using rest room facilities. It is not the intent of this ordinance to allow employees to use a County vehicle to acquire a meal when an employee has a personal vehicle available.

2. Eligible departments. All Departments are authorized to use County vehicles in the performance of official County duties. Department heads shall take steps to ensure that employees are, in fact, on official County business when using County vehicles.

3. Eligible drivers. (Amended by Board of Supervisors 11/5/96)

An acceptable DMV driving record must be on file for all persons (i.e. permanent, extra help, volunteers) with the applicable department head or Risk Management prior to driving a County vehicle. A DMV printout can be ordered from Risk Management free of charge subject to a possible 14 day waiting period. Faster service can be obtained by the prospective driver at the local DMV office for a small fee which will be borne only by permanent and extra help employees.

A guideline for an acceptable record can be described as follows:

- A. Three moving violations in the past three years should be considered borderline, depending on the nature of the citations.
- B. Two DUI/Reckless driving citations are considered non-acceptable.
- C. A person receiving three minor moving citations in three years should be warned but allowed to continue driving.

The Risk Management Department is charged with the responsibility of maintaining current DMV records for all County drivers.

Fines and penalties levied for violation of State, County or City laws and ordinances for which the driver is responsible shall be paid by the driver. Persons who are not County employees shall not be allowed to drive a County owned vehicle, unless another written policy, adopted by the Board of Supervisors, specifically allows such use (see Policy for Volunteer service).

4. Permanent, regular work hours assignment. Upon the request of a department head, the Administrative Director may permanently assign a County pool vehicle to a County department and/or employee. A department head requesting such permanent assignment shall submit sufficient justification to the Administrative Director. Vehicles may be authorized for permanent assignment to a department if any one of the following conditions exist:

- A. The vehicle has special fittings and/or carries special equipment applicable to a single department or a single job classification. Special fittings and equipment shall include, but are not limited to, such items as red lights, sirens, undercover car radios and fittings, utility bodies and other specialized equipment. However, portable equipment, including mobile radios, shall not be covered under the terms of this sub-section.
- B. The use of the vehicle requires an average of twenty-four (24) working hours out of each forty (40) hour work week and accumulates a minimum of 900 miles per month on official County business.
- C. The need for the vehicle is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Administrative Director.

The Administrative Director shall periodically review such permanent assignments and determine, based upon whether or not each permanent assignment is still meeting the conditions above, whether or not each assignment shall continue.

5. Temporary, overnight authorization. On certain limited occasions, department heads may authorize the temporary use (less than twenty-four hours) of an assigned vehicle during hours other than the regular working hours of the employee. Such an authorization may allow for the overnight storage of a County vehicle at an employee's residence if any one of the following conditions exist:
- A. An employee is departing on or returning from an authorized out-of-County trip and the employee's home is en-route to the destination of the trip or the trip will begin or end at a time of day when Central Garage is closed.
  - B. An employee is required to attend a meeting on official County business after normal working hours.
  - C. An employee is working in a remote location and reports directly from home to such place of work. This includes an employee who works in several locations without one designated place for commencing regular working hours.
  - D. An employee is in an established stand-by status at home, or at another location, responding to emergency calls relating to the loss of life or property.
  - E. The overall net County cost is less than if the employee is reimbursed for use of his private vehicle for miles traveled on official County business.
  - F. The employee is a Board-appointed department head who:
    - i. Is responsible for supervising staff who work at several remote locations throughout the county; and
    - ii. Is required before or after normal work hours to respond to calls which require unscheduled travel to remote locations; and
    - iii. Travels to remote locations before or after normal work hours to meet with County officials and/or supervise and evaluate the work of subordinate staff; and
    - iv. Resides within 2 miles of his/her regular place of work where the County vehicle would otherwise be parked overnight.

Under no circumstances shall a County vehicle authorized to be driven home overnight pursuant to this section be used for personal, non-County business purposes either during or after normal work hours.

6. Permanent, overnight authorization. Upon the request of a department head, the Board of Supervisors may authorize an employee to take a County vehicle home at night on a permanent, daily basis. In order to apply for such approval the department head must submit an application to the Board of Supervisors and clearly demonstrate that at least one of the conditions in Section 5(C), 5(D), 5(E) or 5(F) above, exists.

Under no circumstances shall a County vehicle authorized to be driven home overnight pursuant to this section be used for personal, non-County business purposes either during or after normal work hours.

7. Procedure regarding permanent, regular work hours assignment and permanent, overnight authorization. A request for each permanent, regular work hours assignment and/or permanent, overnight authorization shall be in writing, signed by the department head, and shall contain the following information:
- A. The type of request: permanent, regular work hours assignment or permanent, overnight authorization.
  - B. The justification for the request in terms of Section 4 or 5 above.
  - C. The requested effective dates of the assignment or authorization.
  - D. The title of the position or positions of the drivers and the general function for which the vehicle will be used.
8. Vehicle operation. All vehicles shall be operated in a safe and courteous manner in accordance with law and such safe driving rules as may be promulgated by the Board of Supervisors, department head or other appropriate authority.
9. Penalty. Violation of these rules and regulations shall be grounds for disciplinary action pursuant to the "County of Lake Revised Personnel Rules" and memoranda of understanding.

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(Ordinance No. 2057, 12/17/91; Revised 7/21/98 by Ordinance No. 2437)

Part B - Miscellaneous Items Relating to Use of County Vehicles

1. Obtaining a pool vehicle. Pool vehicles must be obtained from properly authorized Central Garage personnel. The employee drawing a pool vehicle will provide such information as required by the Central Garage and will retain a mileage sign-out sheet issued along with the vehicle. Upon completion of the trip, the completed mileage sign-out sheet shall be returned to the Central Garage along with the pool vehicle. Employees shall not retain keys or vehicles during the working day after use, even though additional trips are contemplated later in the same day.

If a pool vehicle is required outside of regular working hours, the keys and the mileage sign-out sheet should be drawn during the last open hours of the Central Garage. Likewise, the keys and vehicle should be returned during the first regular open hours the next working day after the trip. The Central Garage is open from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on County holidays.

2. Credit cards. Gasoline will be provided by Central Garage; however, in cases of out-of-County travel, the Central Garage Equipment Maintenance Supervisor may authorize the use of a gasoline credit card and issue said card for the purchase of gasoline from commercial sources. When a vehicle is returned to the Central Garage, the gasoline credit card shall be immediately returned to Central Garage. The user shall be responsible for the proper use and safe keeping of the credit card in his possession.
3. Emergencies. Central Garage shall be notified immediately in cases of automotive breakdown or emergency.
4. Use of privately owned vehicles on County business. The County offers employees the option of using a County owned vehicle for authorized business or be reimbursed on a mileage basis for travel performed. The mileage reimbursement is intended to provide for the expense of fuel, tires, depreciation and general maintenance including the cost of material damage (fire, theft, comprehensive, collision) insurance. Consequently, the cost of repairs for windshields, fenders, etc., must be borne by the vehicle owner or that person's insurer, whatever the case may be. (Sections 1 through 4, Board of Supervisors Action 12/3/91)
5. Rental of vehicles while on County business. Subject to prior authorization by the department head, and in accordance with the County's Vehicle Policy, employees who have a need to rent a vehicle while on County business shall purchase the following insurance coverages which will be offered by the rental car company:
  1. Loss Damage Waiver: Covers damage to the rental car
  2. Additional Liability Insurance: Provides coverage for bodily injury and property damage.

Although it is likely that the rental car company will solicit the purchase of these coverages in addition to other types of insurance, employees are only authorized to purchase these two coverages. In the absence of such a solicitation, it is the employee's responsibility to request the purchase of these two coverages.

Notwithstanding the County's Vehicle Policy and subject to compliance with the policy above, the employee's spouse will be allowed to ride in and drive the rented vehicle as long as the spouse is a listed driver on the rental agreement.

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(Pursuant to Risk Management Memo 4/15/99)

Part C - Acquisition and Maintenance of County Vehicles

1. Ownership. All vehicles shall be registered in the name of "County of Lake" and shall be maintained by the Central Garage for the use and benefit of all departments of County Government.
2. County seals on County-owned vehicles. Official County identification seals shall be placed on all County-owned vehicles, including vehicles owned by special districts governed by the Board of Supervisors. This policy may be waived by formal vote of the Board of Supervisors in those instances where the existence of an identification seal on a County vehicle would interfere with or impede an employee's ability to carry out his or her official duties.
3. Cost of operation and replacement. The actual cost of operating and maintaining the Central Garage and replacing its vehicles shall be borne by all using departments. Such costs shall be based upon the operating cost per vehicle mile and anticipated replacement cost.
4. Maintenance and service.
  - A. **Central garage vehicles:** The Central Garage shall provide all maintenance, gasoline, oil, and parts required for County-owned vehicles assigned to the Central Garage. The Central Garage Equipment Maintenance Supervisor shall be responsible for establishing vehicle maintenance programs for all vehicles and shall have authority, subject to approval by the Purchasing Agent, to order services or repairs which the Central Garage is not able to provide. He shall also have authority to determine which vehicles may be assigned on a day-to-day basis to the using department and its employees.
  - B. **Department owned vehicles:** (Adopted by the Board 5/18/99)  
It is required that Central Garage be utilized for repair, routine servicing and safety inspections of all department owned vehicles within the following parameters:
    1. All repairs
    2. Routine servicing of vehicles at regular intervals based on manufacturer's recommendations. Currently, Central Garage services all non-pursuit vehicles every 7,500 miles and all pursuit vehicles every 3,000 miles.
    3. Safety inspection on all vehicles at a minimum of every three months. If sufficient mileage is being incurred, this can be performed as part of the 7,500 and 3,000 mile service.
    4. Servicing and safety inspections on all vehicles prior to being placed in to service.

Exceptions:

1. Servicing, repair and safety inspections of Sheriff vehicles stationed in the south shore area can be outsourced.
2. Servicing and safety inspection of Social Service vehicles stationed in the south shore area can be outsourced.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that department owned vehicles are properly maintained and receive periodic safety inspections both for the safety of the driver and public as well as to reduce the County's liability exposure.

5. Vehicle replacement. The Heavy Equipment and Fleet Maintenance Supervisor shall annually, after consulting with using departments, recommend the replacement of all vehicles which in his judgement are no longer safe or economical to operate. The general policy that will be followed on vehicles is as follows:

As general policy, County vehicles shall not be replaced until after having accumulated 130,000 miles for general pool and specialty vehicles and 120,000 miles for Sheriff pursuit vehicles. Vehicles with less accumulated miles may be replaced if deemed by the Heavy Equipment and Fleet Supervisor as being unsafe or no longer economical to operate. Vehicle replacement shall not occur automatically or be based solely on mileage accumulation but shall also be based on the overall condition of the vehicle and a determination by the Heavy Equipment and Fleet Maintenance Supervisor that the vehicle is either unsafe or no longer economical to operate. (Amendment Approved 5/11/10)

6. Sport Utility and 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles. The County, in general, will not purchase or otherwise acquire sport utility or 4-wheel drive vehicles for use by County departments. The Board of Supervisors may approve exceptions to this policy on a case by case basis, if the applicable department head can clearly demonstrate and justify a need for sport utility or 4-wheel drive vehicle in lieu of a standard vehicle. All such exceptions must be approved by vote of the Board during an official Board meeting.

7. Fuel Economy. When determining the type and model of vehicle to be purchased, fuel economy shall always be taken into consideration. The County shall not purchase any vehicle which, due to poor fuel economy, is subject to a "gas guzzler tax." This policy may be waived by the Board of Supervisors, on a case by case basis.

The vehicle specifications used for purchase of general pool vehicles shall address fuel economy. Except for pursuit vehicles and trucks, no vehicles (sedans) with less than a 20/28 city/highway miles per gallon rating by the federal EPA, shall be purchased by the County. Departments are encouraged to purchase and utilize hybrid vehicles to the extent which is practical (if hybrid vehicles are available which otherwise meet the

department's needs in terms of size, capacity, comparable purchase price to non-hybrid vehicles, etc.)

(Approved by Board of Supervisors July 6, 2004)

Part D - Assignment of County-Owned Pursuit Vehicles to Deputy Sheriffs (Adopted by Board action 8/12/97)

1. Pursuit vehicles may be permanently assigned by the Sheriff to his deputies when he determines there is a sufficient number of vehicles for this purpose and it is in the best interest of the Department to make such assignments. The Sheriff may make permanent assignments of some pursuit vehicles and use additional pursuit vehicles as "pool" vehicles to be shared by two or more members. The following rules apply to the use of permanently assigned pursuit vehicles:
  - a. All vehicles shall be kept in a safe operating condition. It will be the responsibility of the deputy sheriff to check his/her vehicle daily to ensure a safe condition of the vehicle and related safety equipment. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
    - (1) Check oil prior to going on duty -- add if necessary.
    - (2) Check coolant level prior to going on duty -- add if necessary.
    - (3) Check tire pressure daily -- add air if necessary.
    - (4) Report any vehicle problems to your supervisor and/or Central Garage as soon as possible and arrange for the necessary repairs.
  - b. It is the responsibility of the deputy sheriff to keep his/her vehicle clean.
  - c. It is the responsibility of the deputy sheriff to ensure that all necessary equipment in the vehicle is in good working order and is checked daily to assure proper operation.
  - d. It is the responsibility of the deputy sheriff to transport the vehicle to Central Garage for scheduled maintenance and repairs. This can be done personally, through volunteers or the deputy's supervisor.
  - e. Departmental employees, volunteers and Central Garage employees are the only authorized persons allowed to operate pursuit vehicles. With the exception of prisoners, other employees, victim and witness transport, and assisting citizens, no passengers will be allowed in pursuit vehicles without permission of a supervisor. Under no circumstances shall employees allow members of their families or others not associated with official County business to ride in or operate pursuit vehicles.
  - f. Deputies shall be in uniform when operating pursuit vehicles. Other attire may be worn, if approved by the deputy's supervisor. Additionally, the deputy must possess proper Sheriff's Department identification and an authorized weapon when operating a pursuit vehicle.

- g. The communications radio shall be on at all times when pursuit vehicles are operated. The deputy shall notify Central Dispatch that he/she is in service prior to leaving his/her residence.
  - h. Deputies will take necessary enforcement action when a violation is observed while operating a pursuit vehicle.
  - i. PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED VEHICLES SHALL NOT BE USED FOR PERSONAL BUSINESS.
  - j. PURSUIT VEHICLES THAT ARE TAKEN HOME BY DEPUTIES SHALL BE PARKED IN A SAFE LOCATION WHICH IS VISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC WHEN THE DEPUTY IS OFF DUTY.
  - k. Deputies who live outside of Lake County who have a permanently assigned pursuit vehicle, must leave that vehicle at Central Garage or other location designated by the Sheriff. Such vehicles may not be driven to the deputy's out-of-County residence.
  - l. Deputies may drive permanently assigned vehicles to and from work assignments, while working, to training events, and when making court appearances.
  - m. Deputies shall not drive a pursuit vehicle with alcohol in their systems.
2. The Board of Supervisors shall review this policy periodically and may terminate this policy and the permanent assignment of pursuit vehicles at any time financial consideration or other factors result in a determination by the Board that it would be in the County's best interest to do so.
  3. The Sheriff may also terminate implementation of this policy upon his own authority at any time.
  4. The Sheriff and the Department of Public Works shall provide the Board of Supervisors with a report of the actual financial impact and other impacts of this policy within six months of its implementation, and thereafter shall report to the Board at least annually.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that I have received, read and understand the County's Vehicle Policy.

I understand it is one of the obligations of my employment that I comply with the provisions of this policy and the applicable laws of the State of California.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

2. VEHICLE COLLISION AND DRIVER NEGLIGENCE REPAIR POLICY

(Memo adopted by the Board of Supervisors on 3/17/98)

A. Vehicle collision repair

Mileage charges paid by user Departments to Central Garage through Object Code 29.51 do not include funding for vehicle collision insurance coverage. The County has a \$10,000 deductible on County Vehicles, therefore major repair costs which are incurred as a result of collisions shall be the responsibility of the department to whom the vehicle was assigned when it was damaged.

Based on experience the major repair costs threshold has been established at \$500. Therefore any collision related repair exceeding \$500 but less than \$10,000 shall be the responsibility of the user department.

B. Major Repairs necessitated by Driver Negligence:

The Central Garage budget is predicated upon providing routine maintenance, fuel, tires, and repairs for pool vehicles. The mileage charges are established based on recovering these routine costs from user Departments. Occasionally vehicles suffer major damage necessitating costly repairs due to driver negligence. This policy establishes that the user Department is financially responsible for the negligent actions of their employees while operating Central Garage pool vehicles. Where there is clear evidence of driver negligence resulting in mechanical damage to a Central Garage vehicle for which the repair will exceed \$500, the user Department will be responsible for all costs in excess of the first \$500. The final determination of driver negligence shall be that of the Public Works Director.