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 CHAPTER ~~11~~⁹: VEHICLE USE

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POLICY 11.1: VEHICLE USE

A. INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to and regulates the use of all vehicles owned by the District, and prescribes their proper use under routine and emergency conditions.

B. POLICY

The use of vehicles creates special responsibilities for officers and employees of the District. Vehicle operators have the responsibility to operate vehicles in a safe, lawful and skillful manner, and shall at all times give the highest priority to the safety and welfare of the general public. Operators shall obey all laws and District policies pertaining to operation of District vehicles.

[NOTE: If the District operates emergency vehicles the following paragraph should be included:]

Legal constraints for the operation of emergency vehicles are provided in the Oregon Revised Statutes. All officers and employees of the District will operate emergency vehicles in accordance with these statutes. Operators shall familiarize themselves with ORS 820.300 - 820.320, with particular attention to ORS 820.300 (2) (a) and (b).

C. QUALIFICATION AND LICENSURE

No person shall operate a District vehicle unless he or she is qualified and authorized to do so, and possesses a valid Oregon driver's license with the proper license classification.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers and employees [and volunteers] assigned to operate District vehicles are responsible for the operation, care and condition of such motor vehicles, and for their cleanliness.

E. SEAT BELTS

Every operator and passenger riding in a District vehicle shall utilize his or her respective seat belt[s] while the vehicle is in motion. It is the responsibility of the operator to assure that all passengers utilize seat belts.

F. IDENTIFICATION

All vehicles owned by the District shall bear external identification indicating that they are property of the District.

G. OPERATION BY CIVILIANS

Only District officers, employees [and volunteers] shall be permitted to drive District-owned vehicles, except for purposes of mechanical maintenance or technical evaluation.

H. TRANSPORTATION OF CIVILIANS PROHIBITED; EXCEPTIONS

Operators of District vehicles shall not transport civilians or other unauthorized persons in or on District vehicles except as authorized by a superior officer, in an official capacity, or as provided in this Policy.

1. Staff Vehicles. Civilians are not permitted to travel in District staff vehicles, except when such civilians are:
 - a. Accompanying a District employee to an official District function located outside District's boundaries.
 - b. Directly involved in the transaction of District business.
 - c. Transported in the course of District response to a public assistance call.

[If the District operates emergency vehicles, include the following Section 2.]

2. Emergency Vehicles. Only District employees or volunteers shall be allowed in or on the District's emergency vehicles. Civilians are not permitted to be in or on District emergency vehicles, except when such civilians are:
 - a. Directly involved with an alarm or emergency.
 - b. Participating in an authorized ride-along program with proper forms recorded.
 - c. Acting as mutual-aid personnel.
 - d. Participating in a scheduled and approved public relations program.

I. PERSONAL USE PROHIBITED

District vehicles shall be used only in the course of official District business, and not for personal business or

private gain. However, an "On Duty" officer will be allowed limited personal use.

J. USE OF STAFF VEHICLES

Staff vehicles are to be used only for the following purposes:

1. Transportation to and from District business.
2. Transportation to and from approved schools, seminars and meetings.
3. Other District business as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

K. VEHICLE USE OUTSIDE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

District-owned vehicles are not to leave the District other than on official District business, for maintenance purposes or as approved in advance by the Chief Executive Officer.

L. ASSIGNMENT

Assignment of vehicles shall be done by the chief executive officer with the approval of the Board. Employees must be cognizant of their high visibility, and the potential damage to the public trust if misuse occurs. Violation of this policy or any misuse of District vehicles shall result in disciplinary action being taken.

M. RADIO USE

Unless authorized by a supervisor, operators assigned to a District vehicle equipped with a radio shall maintain the radio on the appropriate frequency, and shall not turn the radio off while operating the vehicle except when responding to situations involving explosive devices believed to be electrically or electronically activated.

N. SIGNS AND DECALS

Employees are prohibited from applying or placing any signs, decals, posters, insignia, bumper stickers, window stickers or any other items on District vehicles, unless authorized to do so by the Chief Executive Officer.

O. APPROPRIATE VEHICULAR SPEED

When practical, all travel in District vehicles shall be at the designated road speed or less. When traffic conditions make

such speeds impractical, the vehicle shall be operated in accordance with the general flow of traffic.

P. VEHICLE OPERATION CODES

District vehicles shall be operated in strict conformance with all the provisions of the categorical designations set forth below:

1. Non-Emergency. Assignments which are not urgent. Units on such calls shall comply with all traffic laws.

[If the District operates emergency vehicles, include the following Sections 2 and 3.]

2. Emergency. Emergency assignments where there is a danger or threat of danger to life or property. These calls require all practical haste. Response to these calls shall be made with the emergency light and siren in operation at all times. Traffic control devices should be observed to the extent the operator is unsure that all traffic has yielded the right-of-way. Lights and siren must be employed when the operator chooses to take advantage of the exemptions granted to an emergency vehicle, such as proceeding past a red signal or exceeding the speed limit. No vehicle shall be operated in excess of the safe speed for the conditions present or shall endanger persons or property. Operators must remember that the use of any emergency equipment does not relieve them of the responsibility for the consequences of such operation.
3. Exemptions. Exemption from certain provisions of the Traffic Code does not relieve the operator of an emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due care for the safety of all persons using the roads, nor do the exemptions protect them from the consequences of exercising such privileges. See ORS 820.300(2) (a-b).

Q. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING ACCIDENTS

When any District vehicle is involved in an accident resulting in property damage or injury to any person, the following procedures shall be observed:

1. The operator shall: Immediately report such fact to the Dispatcher and to the operator's supervisor;

remain at the scene until a police report is made in the case of a fatality, injury, extensive damage, or damage that renders a vehicle inoperative; and not move any vehicle until authorized by a supervisor unless nonremoval creates an undue hazard. In those cases where the vehicle(s) suffer only minor damage, citizens should not be delayed any longer than is necessary to exchange the required information. The operator shall also: Promptly complete an individual accident report; and file any other reports as requested by the operator's supervisor.

2. The operator's supervisor shall: Respond to the scene, and insure that a police investigation is conducted; submit independent reports and complete all forms as appropriate; and report all findings and conclusions to the Chief Executive Officer.

R. MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES

Operators shall be responsible for the proper maintenance of any vehicle assigned to them. This service shall include fuel, oil, water, tire check, wash windshield, and clean the interior of the vehicle of debris and clutter. All vehicles shall have routine maintenance as required, including lubrication, oil and filter changes, tire changes, and other preventive maintenance measures. The operator shall complete the necessary maintenance forms and documents in a timely manner.

S. REPAIR OF VEHICLES

When a vehicle is found to be inoperative or unsafe to use due to damage, mechanical failure, or normal wear, the operator to which the vehicle is assigned shall submit (on the proper District forms) a report on the condition of the vehicle to the operator's supervisor as soon as time permits. No officer or employee [or volunteer] shall attempt to repair any District vehicle unless authorized by a supervisor.

T. USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES

All officers and employees shall have the specific advance approval of the Chief Executive Officer before using their own or other privately owned vehicle for District business. The District provides liability insurance for officers and employees [and volunteers] for the acts in which they become involved. However, officers and employees [and volunteers] must be advised that they must provide coverage for privately owned vehicles. Personal vehicles used for District business must be in good repair. Campers and motorcycles shall not be used when conducting

investigations or representing the District. When responding to an emergency in a private vehicle, all traffic laws shall be complied with.