

Assigned Vehicle Program

709.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes a system of accountability to ensure City-owned vehicles are used appropriately. This policy shall not be construed to create or imply any contractual obligation by the City of Richmond to provide assigned vehicles. Participation in the Assigned Vehicle Program is a privilege, not an automatic fringe benefit or right. Permission to participate in this program may be withdrawn at any time. The longevity of the Assigned Vehicle Program depends largely on the program's long-term cost effectiveness.

709.2 ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

Vehicles are assigned by the Fleet Manager based on the employee's job requirements and on what vehicles are available at the time of the assignment.

When the Fleet Manager receives notice of a change of assignment for an employee, the Fleet Manager will send the employee an email indicating their assigned vehicle number and effective date of the assignment. This email and the accompanying Assigned Vehicle Agreement form will be generated whenever a change is made to the employee's vehicle assignment. A copy of the email will be sent to the employee's chain of command. The Assigned Vehicle Agreement form will be maintained by the Fleet Manager. Seniority will be taken into consideration when issuing new vehicles, however, the Chief of Police or his/ her designee will have the ultimate authority on how vehicles are assigned based on department needs. Probationary employees will not be eligible to participate in the Assigned Vehicle Program.

Pool cars shall not be taken home without permission from the Fleet Manager, or on-duty Watch Commander if the Fleet Manager is not available. If an employee must leave their assigned vehicle overnight for maintenance, the employee must make other arrangements for transportation to and from work until their assigned vehicle is returned.

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709.3 USE OF ASSIGNED VEHICLES

City-owned vehicles shall only be used for work-related purposes and shall not be used for personal errands, or transports unless special circumstances exist and the employee's supervisor gives authorization. Assigned vehicles may be used for travel related to a work assignment as follows:

- (a) Sworn employees living within 60 miles of Richmond city limits will be allowed to take an assigned vehicle home.
- (b) Exceptions to the 60-mile rule may be made with the approval of the Chief of Police.
- (c) Probationary employees are not eligible to participate in the Assigned Vehicle Program.
- (d) Those employees who are eligible to take their cars home based on the above criteria shall provide off-street parking for the police vehicle. The address where the vehicle will be parked when not in use shall be current on the Assigned Vehicle Agreement form.
- (e) Employees who live more than 60 miles away may choose to park it in the secured lot of a local police or fire department. The address must be provided and current on the Assigned Vehicle Agreement form. Written proof of permission from that agency may be required.
- (f) All rules of the road shall be obeyed unless exigent circumstances warrant an emergency response. Policy Manual 310 Response to Emergency Calls shall be adhered to in these circumstances.

709.4 ENFORCEMENT ACTION

When driving an assigned vehicle to and from work outside of the jurisdiction of the Richmond Police Department or while off-duty, an officer should not initiate enforcement actions except in those circumstances where a potential threat to life or serious property damage exists (see the Off-Duty Law Enforcement Actions and Law Enforcement Authority policies). All off-duty action shall be immediately reported to the on-duty Watch Commander, or as soon as practicable.

Officers may render public assistance when it is deemed prudent (e.g., to a stranded motorist).

Officers driving take-home vehicles shall be armed, appropriately attired and carry their department-issued identification. Officers should also ensure that department radio communication capabilities are maintained to the extent feasible.

709.5 REPORTING

Any off-duty officer who engages in any law enforcement activity, regardless of jurisdiction, shall notify the Watch Commander as soon as practicable. The Watch Commander shall determine whether a report should be filed by the employee. Officers should cooperate fully with the agency having jurisdiction in providing statements or reports as requested or as appropriate.

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When an employee is on vacation, leave, or out of the area in excess of one week, the vehicle shall be stored in a secure garage at the employee's residence or at the police facility.

Vehicles not in use or under the immediate control of the employee shall be locked. All firearms, Tasers, and other weapons shall be removed from the vehicle when the officer goes off duty. All firearms shall be stored in accordance with the Firearms policy. Use of an assigned vehicle for any other purposes shall be at the discretion of the Chief of Police. When a vehicle is assigned to an employee, an Assigned Vehicle Agreement form specifying the parameters for the vehicle's use and parking requirements shall be signed by the employee. The Chief of Police reserves the right to restrict an officer from taking a city-owned car home at any time.

709.6 ASSIGNED VEHICLE EQUIPMENT

No modifications, additions, or deletions of any equipment shall be made to the vehicle without written permission from the Fleet Manager.

The Department will provide a standardized inventory of vehicle supplies. Employees assigned to a vehicle shall be responsible for restocking the vehicle as necessary from equipment and supply reserves maintained by the department.

Employees should not remove equipment, including the spare tire, from one vehicle and attach it to another vehicle unless there is an emergency need, and a supervisor approves. An email should be sent to the Fleet Manager advising them of the equipment removal at the first opportunity so that it can be replaced. The department Fleet Manager is the only personnel authorized to remove or replace equipment, conduct maintenance, or install new equipment.

709.7 VEHICLES SUBJECT TO INSPECTION

All City owned vehicles are subject to inspection and/or search at any time by any supervisor. No employee assigned to, or operating such vehicle shall be entitled to any expectation of privacy with respect to the vehicle.

Supervisors shall, at a minimum, perform bi-monthly inspections of vehicles assigned to employees under their command to ensure vehicles are being properly maintained (cleanliness, damage, scheduled maintenance).

709.8 KEYS

Members approved to operate marked patrol vehicles should be issued a copy of the key as part of their initial equipment distribution. Members who are assigned a specific vehicle should be issued keys for that vehicle. The loss of a key shall be promptly reported in writing through the member's chain of command.

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709.9 ALCOHOL

Members who have consumed alcohol are prohibited from operating any department vehicle unless it is required by the duty assignment (e.g., task force, undercover work). Regardless of the assignment, members may not violate state law regarding vehicle operation while intoxicated.

709.10 MAINTENANCE

- (a) Each employee is responsible for the cleanliness (exterior and interior) and overall maintenance of their assigned vehicle.
- (b) Employees shall make daily inspections of their assigned vehicle for service/maintenance requirements and damage.
- (c) An employee whose assigned vehicle is not operable at their home shall immediately contact the on-duty Watch Commander.
- (d) Supervisors shall, at a minimum, perform bi-monthly inspections of vehicles assigned to employees under their command to ensure the vehicles are being maintained in accordance with policy.
- (e) Routine maintenance and oil changes shall be done in accordance with the Fleet schedule. The vehicles will normally be serviced at the corporation yard.
- (f) When leaving a vehicle for maintenance, the employee will complete a service request form available in the lineup room.

709.11 DAMAGE, ABUSE AND MISUSE

When any department vehicle is involved in a traffic collision or otherwise incurs damage, the involved member shall promptly notify a supervisor. Any traffic collision report shall be filed with the agency having jurisdiction (see the Traffic Collision Reporting policy).

Damage to any department vehicle that was not caused by a traffic collision shall be immediately reported during the shift in which the damage was discovered, documented in memorandum format, and forwarded to the Watch Commander. An administrative investigation should be initiated to determine if there has been any vehicle abuse or misuse.

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709.12 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

When any department vehicle is involved in a traffic collision, Policy 501 Traffic Collision Reporting, shall apply. In addition, if the employee is found to be the party at-fault, the following point system shall apply. Exceptions may be made if the employee is serving in an on-call status and specialty positions that necessitate an assigned vehicle:

- a) 8+ points = loss of Assigned Vehicle Program privileges for one month
- b) 12+ points = loss of Assigned Vehicle Program privileges for three months
- c) 18+ points = loss of Assigned Vehicle Program privileges for six months
- d) 27+ points = loss of Assigned Vehicle Program privileges for one calendar year

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709.13 TOLL ROAD USAGE

Law enforcement vehicles are not routinely exempted from incurring toll road charges.

To avoid unnecessary toll road charges, all members operating department vehicles on a toll road shall adhere to the following:

- (a) Members operating department vehicles for any reason other than in response to an emergency or official police duties shall pay the appropriate toll charge or utilize the appropriate toll way transponder. Members may submit a request for reimbursement from the City for any toll fees incurred in the course of official business.
- (b) Participation in the Assigned Vehicle Program requires members to provide proof that their vehicle is placed on their personal Fastrak account.
- (c) Members passing through a toll plaza or booth during a response to an emergency shall notify, in writing, the appropriate Division Commander within five working days explaining the circumstances.

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