VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT USE POLICY

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VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT USE POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This document sets forth the county policy regarding the use and assignment of county vehicles and equipment and the payment of reimbursement for private vehicles used for official county business.

1.2 This document establishes and defines the methods and qualifying criteria used by the county to meet business transportation needs of elected officials, employees and volunteers.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

As used in this policy, unless the context requires otherwise.

Business Travel
Business travel refers to the actual miles driven while conducting county business, minus commute miles.

Commute Miles
Commute miles refers to the round-trip distance from an employee's residence to their regular place of work.

County Vehicle
A vehicle that is owned, rented, or leased by the county or used by the county through an interagency cooperative agreement.

Elected Official
Elected official refers to the Board of Commissioners, Sheriff, District Attorney and County Auditor.

Employees
Regular (full and part-time) and temporary paid county staff. For the purpose of this policy, does not include elected officials.

Regular Place of Work
The location to which a person is assigned and normally works.

Personal Vehicle
A vehicle, other than a county vehicle, used on county business that is provided by an employee, elected official or a volunteer.

Senior County Management

For the purpose of this policy, Senior County Management refers to the Assistant County Administrator, Department Directors, the Assistant Director of Land Use & Transportation, and the Undersheriff.

Unacceptable Driving Record

1. Having been convicted of one or more of the following offenses within the last three years:
    - Driving while under the influence of intoxicants.
    - Failure to perform duties of driver when personal injury occurs or property is damaged, i.e. hit and run.
    - Reckless driving.
    - Negligent driving.
    - Fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer.
    - Driving with a suspended, revoked or cancelled driver's license.
2. Determined by DMV to be a habitual offender as defined in ORS 809.600.
3. Three traffic convictions within a one-year period.
4. Convicted of any "Traffic Crime" as defined in ORS 801.545, which states "any traffic offense that is punishable by a jail sentence".
5. The provisions of subsections 1 through 4 of this section shall not apply to convictions or citations received by current employees prior to November 1, 2006.

Volunteer

An individual serving at the county's behalf without compensation.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 It is the policy of Washington County to provide for safe, reliable and economical business transportation for elected officials, employees and volunteers through procedures that support the following policy direction.

3.1.1 Transportation and vehicular operations requirements shall be met by using the most economical, safe and reliable methods available.

3.1.2 The county fleet shall be operated in a manner that minimizes the number of vehicles and equipment required to effectively meet business transportation needs.

3.1.3 The county fleet shall be maintained in a mechanically sound condition and operated in a safe and legal manner.

3.1.4 Operators of county vehicles and equipment shall be properly trained and licensed. The extent of the training provided will vary with the operator's experience and the complexity of the vehicle or equipment assigned.

3.1.5 Appropriate economic criteria shall be applied to vehicle and equipment purchase and disposal decisions.

3.1.6 The full cost of all county vehicles and equipment will be identified and allocated to county departments and offices.

3.2 The Support Services Fleet Management Division will maintain and review assignment criteria and requests for classification in order to serve the interests of the county and meet the business transportation needs of employees and volunteers.

3.3 The Support Services Fleet Management Division will monitor reimbursement rates, estimated vehicle costs (EVC), and assignment criteria and recommend modifications as necessary.

3.4 The Support Services Fleet Management Division will develop procedures required to execute this policy. County departments and offices are responsible for distributing and applying these policies and procedures, as appropriate.

3.5 Personal use of county vehicles is prohibited. A personal stop is permissible only when all of the following conditions are met:

1. It occurs between business destinations.
2. It adds limited incidental mileage to the vehicle.
3. It occurs on off-duty time.

3.6 County vehicles are the preferred choice for business transportation. If the use of a county vehicle (Department assigned or County pool vehicles) is not practicable and/or available, Private Mileage Reimbursement (PMR) may be used.

3.7 Elected Officials, employees and volunteers planning to use a county vehicle for out of state travel shall consult with the Risk Management Division prior to travel.

3.8 The County Administrator shall have final authority for administering, interpreting, and applying the terms of this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, determining the appropriate assignment for employees and volunteers eligible in more than one assignment class.

4.0 CLASSIFICATION

4.1 This policy sets forth five (5) methods (classes) of meeting business transportation needs:

1. Department assigned or pool vehicles.
2. Individual work assignment.
3. Individual assignment with work-to-home privileges (not taxable).
4. Private Mileage Reimbursement (PMR).
5. Personal Vehicle Allowance (PVA).

5.0 ASSIGNMENT CRITERIA

5.1 **Department Assigned Vehicles or Pool Vehicles (Class 1).**

5.1.1 Department Assigned Vehicles**.** Consistent with this policy, authorization for the use of vehicles that are assigned to departments shall be provided by the department director or his/her designee, for employee and volunteers within that Department.

5.1.2 County Pool Vehicles**.** The Support Services Fleet Management Division shall maintain a pool of vehicles which are available for intermittent use or short-term (less than seven (7) days) assignment to a department or individual. Department supervisory personnel must authorize the use of pool vehicles. Persons using pool vehicles shall complete the required forms for each use of a vehicle.

5.1.3 Pool cars may be assigned for temporary work-to-home use in situations where the vehicle operator is reporting to a temporary work site and such accommodation provides a definable benefit to the county and is compliant with IRS regulations for non-taxable assignments.

5.1.4 Emergency Assignment of County Vehicles. The County Administrator and department directors may temporarily assign an available county vehicle (work-to-home use) during a disaster, inclement weather or other such circumstance for which the elected official, employee or volunteer may need to respond during regular business and/or after hours to work related situations. All other provisions of the Vehicle and Equipment Use policy are applicable.

5.2 **Individual Work Assignment of a County Vehicle (Class 2)**. At the request of a department director or Office Manager, the Support Services Fleet Management Division may authorize the full-time work assignment of a County vehicle to an individual when it is clearly demonstrated that a more efficient use of County resources will result from permanent individual assignment, or when it is an operational requirement of the requesting Department.

5.3 **Individual Assignment With Work-To-Home Use - Not Taxable (Class 3)**. This class includes 1) law enforcement vehicles and 2) situations in which an employee is reporting to a temporary work site. Requests for work-to-home use (Class 3) will be evaluated based on the definable benefit of such assignment to the county and compliance with IRS regulations for non-taxable assignments.

5.3.1 Requests for the assignment of a county vehicle with work-to-home use shall be made by the department director or Office Manager and authorized by the Support Services Fleet Management Division.

5.4 **Private Mileage Reimbursement (Class 4).** The use of a personal vehicle to conduct official county business shall be reimbursed at the established county mileage rate.

5.4.1 Elected officials, employees and volunteers receiving Private Mileage Reimbursement (PMR) shall submit mileage reimbursement forms at least quarterly in the form and manner prescribed by Support Services Finance Division.

5.4.2 Private Mileage Reimbursement is considered full payment (including depreciation, insurance, maintenance, fuel and other operating costs) for personal vehicle use in lieu of a county vehicle.

5.4.3 The Private Mileage Reimbursement rate shall be consistent with the rate established by the IRS; the County Administrator shall approve changes in the county rate.

5.4.4 Daily commute miles (round-trip distance between residence and regular place of work) are not reimbursable. Requests for Private Mileage Reimbursement must take into consideration daily commute miles and business travel miles, whether or not the daily commute actually took place on the specific workday when the business miles were driven.

5.4.4.1 Example 1: Employee A drives directly from residence to Portland International Airport (PDX) for a business trip on Tuesday. The distance from Employee A's residence to PDX is 25 miles. The round trip distance from Employee A's residence to their regular place of work is 20 miles. Since the employee is responsible for 20 daily commute miles, the employee is eligible for 5 miles of Private Mileage Reimbursement for Tuesday's drive to PDX. Employee A returns to PDX on Friday and drives to personal residence (25 miles). Again the employee is responsible for 20 daily commute miles on Friday and is eligible for 5 miles of Private Mileage Reimbursement. For the round trip to the airport, the employee is eligible for 10 miles of Private Mileage Reimbursement.

Example 2: In lieu of commuting to the regular place of work, Employee A attends a number of off-site meetings. At the end of the day, Employee A has driven 15 miles on county business. In this example, the employee is not eligible for Private Mileage Reimbursement because the daily commute mileage (20 miles) was not exceeded. In the same scenario, if Employee A drives 40 miles on County business, the employee is eligible for 20 miles of Private Mileage Reimbursement.

5.5 **Personal Vehicle Allowance (Class 5).** A Personal Vehicle Allowance (PVA) shall be provided to elected officials and senior county management as part of a base benefit plan.

5.5.1 Changes to the Personal Vehicle Allowance (PVA) amount may be approved by the County Administrator with notice and appropriate justification provided to the Board of County Commissioners thirty (30) days prior to the effective date. The Support Services Fleet Management Division shall maintain a list of authorized PVA recipients and provide a monthly statement of such to the Support Services Finance Division for payment.

5.5.2 PVA payments are subject to Federal Income Tax and shall be reported by the County to IRS on Form W-2 as taxable income.

5.5.3 Recipients of PVA shall be restricted from using a county vehicle except as approved by the County Administrator.

5.5.4 PVA shall be considered full payment (including depreciation, insurance, maintenance, fuel and other operating costs) for personal vehicle use in lieu of a county vehicle.

5.5.5 Approved business travel beyond a 100-mile radius of the assigned duty station may be reimbursed at the Private Mileage Reimbursement (PMR) rate for all business miles traveled.

5.5.6 PVA may be adjusted to account for situations whereby regular business miles driven on the county's behalf exceed the amount covered by the allowance. The County Administrator will evaluate PVA adjustments on a case by case basis. Adjustments will be calculated by multiplying estimated miles driven by the Private Mileage Reimbursement Rate (IRS Rate) and a tax factor. In no circumstance should a PVA recipient subsidize the county for business related travel.

6.0 FEDERAL INCOME TAX

6.1 Personal Vehicle Allowance shall be reported to the IRS in accordance with applicable Federal Regulations.

6.2 Elected Officials, employees and volunteers who receive a reimbursement and/or allowance for private vehicle use are advised to discuss tax issues with their individual tax consultants.

7.0 INSURANCE

7.1 The county's cost for vehicle and equipment insurance shall be billed to departments and offices through the monthly fleet expense billing.

7.2 Recipients of Personal Vehicle Allowance shall carry adequate personal vehicle liability insurance as required under Oregon law.

7.3 Recipients of Personal Vehicle Allowance shall immediately notify the Risk Management Division of any change in insurance that affects compliance with this policy.

7.4 Drivers using a personal vehicle for county business shall carry adequate personal vehicle liability insurance as required under Oregon law.

8.0 OPERATOR LICENSING

8.1 Employees and volunteers operating a vehicle on county business shall possess a license valid to drive in Oregon and maintain an acceptable driving record.

8.2 Operators of vehicles or equipment requiring a special class license and/or endorsement, shall possess the same prior to operating such vehicles or equipment.

8.3 Employees and volunteers who operate any vehicle for county business are responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor of any restrictions, limitations, or other change in their driving status. Notification is required immediately upon the earlier of the occurrence of an event causing the restriction, the imposition of a limitation or change in driving status or the receipt of notification thereof. Failure to do so may result in a disciplinary action for the employee or dismissal of the volunteer.

8.4 Elected officials operating a vehicle on county business shall possess a license valid to drive in Oregon and immediately notify the County Administrator of a suspension, revocation, or cancellation of their license.

8.5 Applicants for positions in job classifications that require a license valid to drive in Oregon will be required to provide their driver's license number to the county for use in verifying the validity of their license and the acceptability of their driving record. An applicant for a position in a job classification that requires a license valid to drive in Oregon found to have an invalid license or unacceptable driving record will be removed from further consideration for employment with the county.

8.6 Employees in job classifications where driving is not required, but may be an incidental part of the job, may choose whether or not to provide their driver's license number to the county. If the employee chooses not to provide a driver's license number, does not have a license valid to drive in Oregon, or provides a driver's license number and is found to have an invalid license or unacceptable driving record, the employee will be designated a "non-driver" and may not drive any vehicle for any reason on county business. Notice of "non-driver" status will be given to the employee and to the employee's supervisor.

8.7 Employees in job classifications where a license valid to drive in Oregon is required or who choose to voluntarily provide their driver's license number under subsection 8.6 will have their driving records verified through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Support Services, Risk Management Division will notify the employee's supervisor in the event that:

8.7.1 An employee's driving record is unacceptable;

8.7.2 An entry on the employee's driving record indicates it was employment related;

8.7.3 An employee's driver's license has been or is scheduled to be suspended, revoked or cancelled by DMV.

8.8 Suspension, revocation or cancellation of an employee's driver's license when a driver's license is required for the employee's job classification or when the employee operates any vehicle as an incidental part of their job duties, may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

8.9 Prior to being assigned to operate county vehicles and/or equipment, employees and volunteers shall receive proper training/instructions from their department. The extent of the training provided will vary with the operator's experience and the complexity of the vehicle or equipment assigned.

9.0 SAFETY

9.1 Operators of and passengers in any vehicle and/or equipment operated on county business shall wear seat belts.

9.2 Operators of county vehicles and equipment shall exercise all reasonable caution and care while operating county vehicles and equipment. Violations shall result in actions consistent with county Personnel Rules.

9.3 Illegal Drugs: No person shall operate any vehicle or equipment on county business while under the influence of, or in possession of, any illegal drug, except for the transportation of such drugs that have been confiscated as evidence.

9.4 Alcoholic Beverages: No person shall operate any vehicle or equipment on county business within four (4) hours of having consumed an alcoholic beverage or while legally under the influence of alcohol. County vehicles shall not be used to transport alcoholic beverages under any circumstances, except for the transportation of such beverages that have been confiscated as evidence, or used in intoxication detection training conducted by law enforcement personnel.

9.5 Prescription and Over-the-counter Drugs: No person shall operate any vehicle or equipment on county business if taking any medications that may impair or impact their ability to operate a vehicle safely. Employees and volunteers taking medications that may impact or impair their ability to safely operate a vehicle and/or equipment shall immediately notify their manager and/or supervisor.

10.0 CORRECTIVE ACTION

10.1 Operators of county vehicles and equipment shall exercise reasonable care and caution while driving, and comply with provisions of this policy. Corrective actions for violation of this policy are the responsibility of the employee or volunteer's immediate supervisor and department director. Significant or repeated violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination consistent with applicable Personnel Rules for employees and the reassignment or dismissal of volunteers.

10.2 Citations:

10.2.1 Any employee or volunteer acting on county business, whether or not operating a county vehicle, who receives a traffic citation, shall immediately advise their supervisor.

10.2.2 Any employee acting on county business, whether or not operating a county vehicle, who is cited and convicted of any traffic violation may be disciplined in accordance with Personnel Rules. In cases where driving is a job requirement, this may result in an inability to perform assigned work if it causes the employee to have an unacceptable driving record.

10.2.3 All costs associated with any citation are the exclusive responsibility of the vehicle operator.

10.3 Accidents:

10.3.1 Employees and volunteers involved in any vehicle accident, regardless of the nature or severity, involving a county vehicle will follow procedures a, b, and c. Elected officials involved in an accident, involving a county vehicle will follow procedures b and c.

a. Notify immediate supervisor.

b. Within 48 hours submit to the Risk Management Division a Vehicle Accident Report and present all county-owned vehicles involved to the Fleet Management Division staff to determine the estimated cost of accident damage repair.

c. Within 72 hours the employee shall file State DMV Accident Report if any of the following conditions are met:
- Damage to any vehicle is over $1,500;
- Any vehicle is towed from the scene as a result of damages from the accident;
- Any injury or death resulted from the accident;
- Damages to any one person's property <u>other than a vehicle involved in this accident</u> is over $1,500; or
- The employee is the owner of the vehicle involved in a reportable accident and the driver fails to report the accident.

10.3.2 Any employee involved in a motor vehicle accident, regardless of the nature or severity, while on county business may be subject to disciplinary action. Accidents shall be investigated by the employee's department and findings submitted to the Risk Management Division for review.

10.3.3 Making false statements on vehicle accident reports is strictly prohibited and could result in disciplinary or legal action.

11.0 VEHICLE OPERATIONS

11.1 Operators of county vehicles and equipment shall obey the traffic laws, operator licensing requirements, vehicle dimension and weight limits and vehicle equipment requirements of the Oregon Vehicle Code.

11.2 Smoking is prohibited in all county vehicles and equipment.

11.3 Passengers and Animals: Passengers in any county vehicle are permitted only when their presence serves an official county business function. Transportation of animals is prohibited except for the following:

11.3.1 Live animals are permitted to be transported in Sheriff's Office vehicles as necessary during the conduct of official police business.

11.3.2 Animals are permitted to be transported in Animal Control vehicles in the specialized containment structures designed to transport such animals.

11.3.3 Deceased animals are permitted to be transported in trucks and trailers for purposes of disposal of such animal remains done in a manner consistent with the county's established standards for such activity.

11.4 Vehicle and equipment operators are responsible for reporting mechanical problems to department supervisors. County departments and offices are responsible for reporting any and all vehicle and equipment mechanical problems to Support Services Fleet Management as soon as possible. Vehicle operators are also responsible for returning their assigned vehicles to the Support Services Fleet Management facility for scheduled service when notified of service due.

11.5 County vehicles shall have county logos and numbers applied in a standard format by Support Services Fleet Management Division. The application of non-conforming stickers, decals and logos is prohibited. Any exceptions require written approval of the Fleet Manager or the County Administrator.

11.6 Vehicle operators shall be responsible for fueling vehicles. Complete instructions are included in the Fleet User Guide located on Horizons.

11.7 County vehicle and equipment operators shall be responsible for checking oil and water levels, tire pressure and condition while fueling, or not less than once per month. Operators shall maintain the cleanliness of county vehicles and equipment.

11.8 Parking fees associated with county business are reimbursable upon receipt of proper documentation. Parking tickets are the responsibility of the driver receiving the ticket and should be resolved in a timely manner.

11.9 Any modification to county vehicles must be pre-approved and completed by the Fleet Management Division.