



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

8.3 VEHICLE USE POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe, efficient, and sustainable use of City vehicles and personal vehicles used for City business. It establishes guidelines for safety, accountability, environmental responsibility, and compliance with applicable laws.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, interns, fellows, and contracted employees of the City of Providence who operate or use City-owned or leased vehicles, or who use personal vehicles for City business.

Definitions

City Vehicle: Any motorized car, truck, or equipment owned or leased by the City requiring a valid driver's license or certification to operate.

Authorized Driver or Operator: An individual approved by their department and the City to operate a City vehicle.

Telematics Equipment: GPS, AI dash cameras, or monitoring devices in City vehicles.

Policy

City vehicles are identified as cars, trucks, and other motorized equipment which are owned or leased by the City of Providence, which require the operator to possess a state issued driver's license. Employees who are required to maintain a commercial driver's license (CDL) must also comply with the City's Commercial Motor Vehicle Policy and Program.

1. Authorization and Licensing

A. **All applicable employees**

1. Employees who may operate a City vehicle must submit a copy of a valid license upon hire to the Department of People and Culture (DPC).
2. Employees are required to maintain a valid driver's license in good standing
3. Employees are expected to report any suspension, revocation and/or changes in driver's license status, including both commercial and non-commercial driver's license(s), immediately to their supervisor and the DPC.
4. DPC is responsible for maintaining a copy of driver's license
5. DPC may periodically conduct validation checks.

B. **Commercial Drivers**

1. Employees required to hold a CDL must comply with federal and state CDL standards, including drug and alcohol testing.
2. Drivers are required to have in their possession a valid driver's license while operating a City vehicle or driving for business purposes.

2. Vehicle Reservations and Authority to Use

A. **Assignment**



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1. Vehicles are either assigned to departments by the Department of Public Property, or acquired, maintained, and assigned by the department through which it is utilized for service. (E.G., Providence Water manages its own fleet of vehicles.)
 2. For individuals who do not operate vehicles as a part of their ordinary and customary duties, complete a formal request in writing to the Department of Public Property with the approval of the requesting department's director.
 1. Vehicles are only issued to authorized operators
 2. Requests should include the information about the operator, duration of use, vehicle type where applicable, and reason for the request
 3. Following approval of the reservation request by public property, it will be the responsibility of the requesting department to pick up the corresponding keys and gas card from Public Property, or other designated staff in other City facilities.
 4. Departments are then responsible for the security of assigned keys and assigning vehicles to department staff.
- B. Reservations Outside of Working Hours**
1. If a vehicle reservation begins prior to the start of the normal workday, keys and other associated items must be obtained from the Department of Public Property on the business day prior.
 2. If a vehicle reservation ends after the conclusion of normal work hours, it must be parked in its designated City parking spot and keys as well as other associated items must be returned to Public Property at the start of the next business day.
- 3. Use and Operation**
- A. All vehicle use shall have the authorization of management. Only authorized employees shall operate or ride inside a City vehicle, with the exception of vehicles (passenger vans or busses) designed to transport groups of people.
- B. City vehicles are for conducting City business only. Except in the most extreme emergency, City vehicles shall never be used for personal reasons. City vehicles shall never be used for the purpose of transportation to places of personal recreation or entertainment.
- C. Geographic Limitations**
1. City vehicles may not be used outside of the geographical boundaries of the City of Providence, be used for commuting, or taken home by an employee unless they have the approval of the director of their department and/or the Department of Public Property.
 2. Exceptions to this standard are limited to vehicles being used strictly for the purpose of conducting business and performing work on behalf of a City department.
 3. In the absence of the Public Property Director, or the department director, the Chief Operating Officer can approve such use.
 4. When necessary, in the course of City business, a City vehicle may be used outside of the geographical boundaries of Providence, i.e., to pick up supplies or engage in mutual aid of another municipality.
- D. Driver Safety and Technology**
1. **Standard of Conduct**
Employees shall be mindful that their driving and parking habits are under constant observation. Employees should strive to be exemplary and not use a City vehicle in a manner which reflects unfavorably upon the City or violates the public's trust.



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2. **Hands-free Operation**

Use of handheld mobile phones (City or personal) while operating a City vehicle, whether the vehicle is in motion or stopped at a traffic light, is strictly prohibited.

3. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Answering or making telephone calls
2. Engaging in phone conversations
3. Reading or responding to email or text messaging
4. Using the internet

4. If communication is necessary, employees are required to drive safely out of the flow of traffic and stop the vehicle before using a mobile phone or another mobile device, to include tablets.

5. In case of an emergency, you may use a handheld mobile device to contact law enforcement officials or other emergency services. If it is not possible to pull off the road, the conversation should be as short as necessary to communicate the nature of the emergency.

E. **Smoking and Vaping**

1. Using tobacco products is prohibited in all City-owned or leased vehicles.

2. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Cigarettes
2. e-cigarettes
3. Smoking pipes and other smoking apparatus
4. Chewing tobacco

F. **Eating, Drinking, and Drug Use**

1. Eating is prohibited while operating a City vehicle.

2. Employees may not operate City owned vehicles or personal vehicles being used for work-related travel under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any controlled substances.

G. **Seatbelts and Harnesses**

1. Drivers and passengers in City vehicles must always wear seat belts and shoulder harnesses in compliance with Rhode Island General Laws.

2. Drivers and passengers shall put on their seat belts before starting the vehicle.

H. **AI Dash-Cameras / GPS monitoring**

1. Global positioning systems (GPS) and telematics devices are installed in City-owned and leased vehicles to monitor location, speed, idling, and compliance with operating laws and safety events.

2. Vehicle monitoring is intended to help the City better deploy and utilize vehicles, improve safety and operational efficiency, as well as reduce maintenance and fuel costs.

3. Employees are prohibited from tampering with this equipment.

I. **Tickets and Penalties**

1. The City will hold drivers personally liable for any penalties incurred as a result of a moving violation, civil violation, and/or administrative penalty (such as, red light and school zone camera violations)

2. Parking tickets are the responsibility of the driver to receive the ticket and must be resolved promptly.

3. Drivers must report all tickets and penalties to their supervisor within one business day.



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4. Environmental & Sustainability Standards

A. **Idling**

1. No vehicle shall idle for more than twenty (20) minutes in an eight (8) hour workday.
2. Vehicles in use for snow removal purposes are exempt from this requirement.
3. No vehicle shall be left unattended while idle.

B. **Gas Purchases and Refueling**

1. Gas purchases must be completed using the gas card provided at the time of vehicle check-out.
2. Gas cards are specific to vehicle registration and are not interchangeable.
3. Drivers are responsible for entering the accurate odometer mileage into the fuel card system with each refuel.
4. Vehicles should be fueled at Fleet Masters, located at 9 Hylestead Street, Providence, RI, with either regular unleaded gasoline or diesel fuel as needed for the vehicle being utilized.
5. Employees who are granted use of City vehicles must refuel prior to returning the vehicle to its designated parking spot if the vehicle's fuel gauge reads one-fourth (1/4) of a tank of fuel or less.
6. If refueling is necessary at another location due to distance, the employee utilizing the vehicle must refuel using the fuel card at one of the service stations where it is accepted. The logos to these stations are on the back of the card.
7. While a City vehicle is in the care of an employee, they are also responsible for the physical security of that vehicle's assigned fuel card.
8. Fuel cards and mileage logs are to be secured in the vehicle's glovebox.

5. Vehicle Condition & Maintenance

- #### A.
- The weekly maintenance checklist must be updated with the current mileage for the vehicle as maintenance checks and services are performed.

B. **Onboard Equipment**

1. City trucks (non-CDL) and vans should always have a first aid kit on board.
2. As required by law, commercial motor vehicles should have on board the following equipment:
 1. An appropriate first aid kit
 2. Fire extinguisher
 3. Three reflective triangles
 4. Wheel chocks

C. **Pre/Post Trip Inspections**

1. Drivers shall follow the standardized pre/post trip inspection procedures established by the Department of Public Property.
2. Forms documenting that these inspections have taken place are in every vehicle.
3. Both the pre- and post-inspections are due to Public Property and your department at the conclusion of use and must be returned with keys and the assigned gas card.
4. Drivers are responsible for reporting vehicle defects and maintenance needs on the pre/before or post/after-trip inspection form submitted to public property as appropriate.
5. Vehicles with safety deficiencies are to be removed from service for repairs.
6. Vandalism of City vehicles will be reported to law enforcement.



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6. **Weather**

If impending adverse weather could make roads unsafe, Public Property may make the determination to not assign certain vehicles or cancel reservations with notice.

7. **Loss of Keys or Gas Cards**

- A. Employees are responsible for the safekeeping of vehicle keys and gas cards. It is never acceptable to attempt to enter a City vehicle forcibly.
- B. In the event a key is lost, stolen, locked in a vehicle, or malfunctioning, employees are to contact their supervisor or Public Property.
- C. Employees must also report immediately the loss of a City gas card assigned to them.

8. **Accident & Incident Reporting**

- A. Any accident involving a City vehicle, trailer, or mobile equipment, regardless of the extent of the damage, is to be reported to a police officer within the jurisdiction, as well as department management as soon as possible.
- B. This provision also applies to personal vehicles when in use for City business.
- C. Following an accident, employees must complete and submit to their supervisor and the Department of Public Property a Vehicle Incident Report. This provision also applies to personal vehicles in use for City business.
- D. For city vehicles, blank forms must be always kept in the vehicle with a copy of the Vehicle/Equipment Incident Reporting Policy.
 1. The Vehicle Incident Report Form is also available at <http://www.providenceri.gov/hr/forms/>.
 2. Please refer to the Vehicle/Equipment Incident Reporting Policy for more information.
 3. Employees with a CDL should also refer to the Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver Policy and Program for additional requirements.

9. **Compliance**

All city employees are expected to comply with the rules, terms and procedures established by this policy at all times. Noncompliance will result in progressive discipline, up to and including revocation of vehicle privileges or termination.

Related Policies:

Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy
Personal Use of City Equipment
City Hall Parking
Uniform Policy
Code of Conduct
Vehicle / Equipment Incident Report Policy
Driver's License Verification Policy

Other Related Information:

Local 1033 [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)
<http://www.providenceri.gov/hr/forms/>



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Policy History:

Policy Issue Date: July 2022

Last Revision Date: February 2026

Policy Effective Date: March 2026

Policy Update/Review Summary: This policy complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. This policy will be reviewed biennially and updated as necessary to ensure continued compliance with applicable laws and best practices. Employees will be notified of any changes.