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TAKE-HOME VEHICLES	05/08	
Amends	Rescinds	
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This policy is for Department use only and shall not apply in any criminal or civil proceedings. The Department policy should not be construed as a creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive will be the basis for Department administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to outline procedures concerning Department take-home vehicles.

II. POLICY

The Department retains the right, as owner, to determine how vehicles are used, the personnel authorized to operate, maintenance, and the manner in which vehicles are assigned. In addition the Department reserves the right to inspect any vehicle and its content at any time.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Eligibility and Issuance

1. Officers may be assigned a take-home vehicle when they have successfully completed the Field Training and Evaluation Program. Assignment of a vehicle is a privilege and not a bona-fide employee benefit and specific conditions will be placed on all employees regarding the use, issuance and retention of Department owned vehicles.
2. Vehicle assignment is at the discretion of the Assistant Chief or his designee.
3. Officers must demonstrate that their primary residence is within a 15 statute mile radius of the geographic center of Roanoke County unless otherwise approved by the Chief of Police.
4. An officer's primary residence will be determined by a specific numerical and street address and the place where the person has established a fixed and principal home to which the person, whenever temporarily absent, intends to return.
5. Employees seeking to reside outside the 15 mile radius will request written authorization from the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police retains the final

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authority in determining an acceptable response time for personnel who request to live outside the 15 mile radius.

B. Utilization

1. The use of police vehicles off-duty is intended to provide an increased visible law enforcement presence and additional resources within the County of Roanoke. While operating those vehicles, employees will avoid actions which could be perceived as improper or unsafe. Vehicles will be operated according to all applicable state laws.
2. Officers are expected to maintain a high professional standard while operating vehicles off-duty and will use discretion in the clothing worn while operating any police vehicle. Off-duty dress, while operating a Department vehicle will be appropriate to effectively perform a police function while at the same time presenting a favorable image to the public.
3. Officers may utilize the take-home vehicle to conduct personal business within the geographic boundaries of the County of Roanoke during off-duty hours. Prudent discretion is advised while conducting these activities.
4. Officers residing outside of the geographic boundaries of the County of Roanoke will not utilize the take-home vehicle for personal business.
5. Officers may use the take-home vehicle to travel to and from secondary police related employment. Officers will obtain approval from their supervisor when the vehicle will be used in other than a fixed-post capacity during any non-Department scheduled activity.
6. Officers are prohibited from utilizing the take-home vehicle to travel to and from any secondary non-law enforcement employment, or to facilitate any non-enforcement secondary employment.
7. When operating the take-home vehicle, officers will monitor the appropriate police radio channel and will notify the Emergency Communications Center when responding to a call for service or when conducting police business.
8. Officers and passengers will wear a safety belt at all times while vehicles are in operation.
9. While operating a vehicle off-duty, at a minimum, officers will carry the following equipment to answer critical calls for service:
 - a. Department issued handgun,
 - b. official police identification and credentials,
 - c. handcuffs,
 - d. flashlight, and

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- e. current traffic summons and report forms.

C. Answering Calls While Off-duty

1. While operating a vehicle off-duty, officers are expected to provide the necessary professional assistance or service to individuals or officers in need.
2. In addition, the following regulations will govern officers operation of a police vehicle off-duty:
 - a. Priority Calls – Response is required to any life-threatening call for service if, after assessing probable response time, the off-duty officer expects to arrive before other dispatched units.
 - b. Routine Calls – Officers will relay their location and response status to the shift supervisor who may authorize their response to a routine call.
 - c. Traffic Violations – Officers may stop and cite motorists for traffic violations.
 - d. Motorist Assistance – Officers are expected to offer assistance/aid to any motorist in need. Officers need only remain at the scene until appropriate aid is rendered or relieved by on-duty personnel.
3. Off-duty officers, who go in service to respond to assist motorists, handle calls or provide service, will be compensated for time spent. Officers are required to document their time and notify the Emergency Communications Center of their activity.
4. While on-scene of a police incident, off-duty officers are not required to assume the role as the primary unit. Officers who anticipate being on-scene for an extended period of time will notify the on-duty supervisor of their status.
5. Any off-duty use of a vehicle which compromises the professional image of the Department may be considered cause for revoking the take-home vehicle privilege.

D. Transporting Passengers While Off-duty

1. Officers will be responsible for passengers' appearance and conduct while operating a vehicle off-duty. Transport of passengers while off-duty is limited to the geographic boundaries of the County of Roanoke. Prior approval will be obtained from an Assistant Chief before transporting any passenger(s) outside of the County of Roanoke.
2. Occupant safety will be first priority in both vehicle operation and response to

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calls for service. Officers will leave any passenger(s) at a secure location prior to responding to a call.

E. Civilian Use of Police Vehicles

1. Civilian employees, when authorized, may be issued a Department vehicle not normally recognized as a police vehicle while conducting Department business.
2. When vehicles as described above are unavailable, the civilian employee will drive their personal vehicle and will be compensated for mileage at the current rate established by the County of Roanoke Finance Department.

F. Parking and Storage

1. Officers residing within the 15 mile radius will park the take-home vehicle at their primary residence when it is not in use.
2. Employees who receive authorization to reside outside the 15 mile radius will be assigned a vehicle for use while performing official Roanoke County Police business. During times the vehicle is not in use for official Roanoke County Police business it will be stored at the Department.
3. Department vehicles will be returned and stored at the Department when the following conditions exist:
 - a. vacation or days off when an officer's residence will be vacant for more than 72 hours and the vehicle cannot be garaged or parked in a driveway,
 - b. the officer is assigned to light-duty,
 - c. suspension from duty,
 - d. maternity, paternity or extended sick leave, and/or
 - e. as a result of a administrative action.
4. When a vehicle is parked, out of service, or the officer is not within the immediate vicinity, officers will ensure the contents of the vehicle are locked and secured and all weapons, portable radios, and/or police identification are removed from the passenger compartment.

G. Maintenance

1. Officers are responsible for the preventative maintenance, emergency and non-emergency repairs, and the interior and exterior appearance of their take-home vehicle.

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2. Officers will make appointments for scheduled maintenance at the required intervals through the Roanoke County Garage or Radio Shop. Only the Roanoke County Garage will work on Department vehicles unless precluded by an emergency, prior agreement, or warranty service.
3. The Roanoke County Radio Shop is responsible for any repairs or upgrades to the radio equipment and emergency lighting.
4. Officers needing emergency repairs (when practical) will contact the on-call mechanic from the Roanoke County Garage through the Emergency Communications Center. Flat tires are not an emergency and will be changed by the officer.
5. In the event a Department vehicle is taken out of service, the Emergency Communications Center should contact a wrecker service that will tow the vehicle to the Roanoke County Garage. It is the responsibility of the officer or the on-duty supervisor to properly secure the vehicle at the garage.
6. Any additions, alterations or upgrades of the internal or external design and/or equipment must be first be approved by an Assistant Chief.

H. Damage to Vehicle

1. Damage to any Department owned vehicle will be reported upon immediate discovery to the on-duty shift supervisor.
2. When a damaged Department vehicle is in need of repair, officers are responsible for:
 - a. contacting the garage to obtain a repair facility,
 - b. taking the vehicle to the selected repair facilities for an estimate(s),
 - c. submitting the repair estimate(s), to the Roanoke County Garage,
 - d. forwarding all paperwork associated with the repair to the Services Sergeant, and
 - e. facilitating the repair as expeditious as possible.

I. Operation During Inclement Weather

1. The Department has four wheel drive vehicles available to support the Department's response during times of inclement weather.
2. Four wheel drive vehicles may be pooled during times of inclement weather to

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ensure primary delivery of police services and the transportation of critical personnel to and from the work site.

3. Deviation from the standard response protocol to calls for service is expected during times of inclement weather when there is a heightened potential of risk to the citizens, officers and equipment.
4. Priority I calls and traffic crashes involving injury will be handled without modification. Any other deviation from the standard response to calls will be the responsibility of the shift supervisor.
5. Each Assistant Chief is responsible for ensuring critical police services can be provided by using resources within their Divisions.
6. Officers may provide travel to and from work for critical personnel who reside within the geographic boundaries of the County of Roanoke. Officers will receive approval from the shift supervisor prior to traveling beyond the geographic boundaries of the County of Roanoke to transport critical personnel.

End of General Order 3.1.7

5th Edition CALEA Reference

22.2.5 41.3.3