



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Veronica Kell, *Chairman*
Chaz Sexton-Diranian, *Vice Chairman*
Theresa A. Morse, *Clerk*

R. Eric Slagle, Town Administrator

POLICY #: 01-2023
REPLACE POLICY #: 4-05

TOWN VEHICLE USE POLICY

- Purpose:** To set forth the guidelines under which town vehicles will be authorized to Town personnel and the guidelines under which Town vehicles may be used. This policy is used to supplement additional policies which may exist within each department.
- Policy:** The Townsend Vehicle Use Policy is for all town employees who use a vehicle owned by the town. Town vehicles are not personal vehicles and are not for personal use. Town vehicles should be viewed as belonging to the citizens of the Town and are utilized for the purposes consistent with providing services to those citizens.
- Applicability:** This entire policy applies to all Town of Townsend employees. Employee's whose employment is regulated by individual agreement or collective bargaining agreements are subject only to those portions of this policy that are not specifically regulated by law or agreement. If any provision of this policy violates any governing law or regulation, or if any law or regulation applicable to this policy becomes effective after the effective date of this policy, then this policy shall be deemed changed to be in compliance with such governing law or regulation.

Categories of Municipal Use:

Work Use Only: Vehicle is used at work only and remains at issuing department's location or the Town Garage at the end of the employee's work shift. This applies to personnel whose duties require the use of a town vehicle during their shift.

Work and Commuting Use: Vehicle is used at work and for commuting back and forth to the employee's primary residence after written approval from The Town Administrator and Department Head. This applies to certain personnel whose duties require them to be on-call to regularly respond to work during nights and weekends.

24-Hour Use: Vehicle may be used at all times of the day for professional and personal use due to the 24/7 nature of the employee's duties and only applies to the department's policies and procedures.

Daily Town Hall Vehicle Use: When feasible, Town employees will use a Town vehicle when travelling for Town business in lieu of using their personal vehicle. Use of this vehicle will reduce 'wear and tear' on personal vehicles as well as eliminate insurance and lose of personal vehicle use if there is an accident while driving for Town business.



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town garage. Anyone planning to use this vehicle will need to check the online calendar to verify its availability and schedule the use accordingly.

24 Hour Assignment Use: The assignment of vehicles for 24-hour use will be made in writing by the Town Administrator and will only be considered for employees who require a vehicle for the ordinary and necessary discharge of their job functions. Criteria which will be used in the determination of eligibility for 24-hour vehicle use will include:

- a. A requirement for frequent emergency availability or officially designated as on-call.
- b. Emergency or other valuable equipment contained in the vehicle.
- c. No town facility is available for garaging in a safe and convenient location.

Vehicle use is limited to travel to and from the residence and place of work. The vehicle should be driven over the most direct route considering road and traffic conditions. The vehicle should not be utilized for travel outside a direct commuting route for personal reasons. Whenever a position becomes vacant, the authorization for 24-hour use shall be reevaluated. Also, employees who are assigned municipal vehicles on a 24-hour basis will be given a copy of this policy and will be required to sign a confirmation of receipt and placed in their personnel file.

Please note: If an employee is transporting non-town personnel in a municipal vehicle and is called to an emergency, then the employee will take all reasonable actions necessary to ensure the safety of the passenger for the duration of the emergency.

Change of Authorization: The Town Administrator or Department Head may rescind and/or change an existing vehicle assignment with or without the Selectboard's approval, including 24-hour use and work shift, and use authorization whenever an applicable position becomes 1) vacant; 2) the vehicle is misused; 3) an employee is on administrative leave (paid or unpaid) or, 4) when the position's duties are changed to a significant degree to warrant such reassignment or at the discretion of the Selectboard, Town Administrator, or Department Head.

The Town Administrator may also seek to change or modify the existing authorized use of a municipal vehicle for any incumbent union employee during collective bargaining. For example, if a position's on-call response requirement is infrequent, the Town Administrator may elect to authorize the employee to have work-only use of a municipal vehicle.

All other vehicles should be secured on Town premises at the close of business with no exceptions.



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Reimbursement Expense Form provided by the Accounting Department and submit the same with appropriate supporting documentation and/or receipts in a timely manner.

Insurance: Whenever a new vehicle is purchased and registered, the Town Accountant's office must be notified, and appropriate paperwork completed immediately to add the vehicle to the Town's insurance policy.

Employees who are authorized to use Personal Vehicles for work related travel are required to show proof to their Department Head, on an annual basis, of the following minimum levels of insurance coverage:

Bodily Injury:	\$100,000/\$300,000
Property Damage:	\$50,000

Milage Reports: Employees using a municipal vehicle will be required to keep track of business miles with an Assigned Vehicle Log Form. The milage log will contain the date, business purpose, milage, Personal Use Miles, starting location, and destination.

On a monthly basis the employee will be required to submit the milage log form to the Selectboard's office. All milage reports must be kept up to date and maintained by the employee.

Special Circumstances: This Policy is intended to provide a basic framework governing the use of personal and municipal vehicles in the Town of Townsend, and, as such, cannot contain procedures governing every situation that might arise. Department heads seeking clarification or exemption from the provisions of this policy should contact the Town Administrator who will provide such clarification and may authorize exceptions to the policy under certain mitigating circumstances.

Sanctions: Failure to comply with all provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal of Town vehicle privileges, suspension, and/or termination from Town service.

Governance of Municipal Vehicle Use Policy

- 1) Municipal vehicles may only be used for legitimate municipal business and if applicable, authorized commuting purposes and other approved uses. If commuting use is authorized, then it is limited to travel to and from the employee's principal residence and place of work. The vehicle should be driven *over* the most direct route taking into account road and traffic conditions. Other approved uses shall be authorized by the department head.
- 2) Municipal vehicles other than those designated for 24-hour use are to be used to transport individuals who are engaged in municipal business. Passengers shall be limited to Town



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- 7) Employees (both driver and passengers) must wear seatbelts in vehicles so equipped during operation of the vehicle
- 8) Employees must turn the municipal vehicle ignition off, *remove* keys and lock municipal vehicle when unattended unless the vehicle is being used in the performance of its duties.
- 9) All operators of vehicles that require a CDL license must be tested for drugs and alcohol as provided by US DOT regulations and the town drug/alcohol policy.
- 10) Employees may not operate municipal vehicles under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription drugs or medications that may interfere with *effective* and safe operations.
- 11) Employees may not operate municipal vehicles while texting.
- 12) The town discourages the use of cell phones while operating a municipal vehicle. Town employees will comply with current state law required in use of cell phones in vehicles while operating the said vehicle.
- 13) Smoking and vaping is prohibited in all municipal vehicles.
- 14) Employees who operate municipal vehicles must have a valid motor vehicle license issued by the state of their current residence and may be required to provide proof of valid motor vehicle license once *every* six (6) months.
- 15) All new drivers must allow a motor vehicle record check prior to driving any town owned vehicle. This record check will be done *every* other year thereafter.
Employees will notify the Town Administrator and Department Head if there are any changes in Driver's license status. Any positive drug test may result in the revocation of an employee's privilege to operate municipal vehicles whether it occurred on duty or not. If operating a municipal vehicle is an essential job function, reclassification or termination may result.
- 16) Employees driving municipal vehicles shall obey all applicable traffic and parking regulations, ordinances, and laws.
 - a. Employees who incur parking or other fines in municipal vehicles will generally be personally responsible for payment of such fines unless the payment of such fines is approved by the Town.



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Adopted by the Selectboard after two formal readings in Public Session as per the Selectboard policies and Procedures this 5th day of July 2022

Print Employee Name: _____
Department: _____ Site: _____
Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved Date:

Veronica Kell, Chairman

Chaz Sexton-Diranian, Vice-Chairman

Theresa Morse, Clerk

First Reading: 07/05/2022
Second Reading: 07/05/2022
Adopted: 07/05/2022