

## Vehicle Use

### 703.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes a system of accountability to ensure City-owned vehicles are used appropriately. For the purposes of this policy, "City-owned" includes any vehicle owned, leased or rented by the City.

### 703.2 POLICY

The Department provides vehicles for official business use and may assign take-home vehicles based on its determination of operational efficiency, economic impact to the Department, tactical deployments and other considerations.

### 703.3 OPERATION OF DEPARTMENT VEHICLES

1. Employees shall drive Department vehicles in a careful and prudent manner and obey all laws and Department Policies pertaining to such operation.
2. An employee must immediately report to a supervisor any suspension or other loss of driving privileges.
3. Personnel assigned to operate a Department vehicle will be responsible for the proper use and care of that vehicle. Employees will check their assigned vehicles for damage and the presence and functioning of necessary equipment. Any deficiencies shall be reported to the appropriate supervisor.
4. Any employee who, while operating or riding in a Department vehicle, has reason to believe that the vehicle may be in need of inspection or repair from "bottoming out," bumping into an object, scraping, hitting a curb or otherwise subjected to conditions that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the vehicle may be in need of repair, shall immediately report the same to his/her supervisor.
5. Except in emergency field situations or on traffic stops, employees shall not permit the engine of the vehicle to run while the vehicle is unattended with the key in the ignition. Where security may be an issue, vehicles will not be parked unless the key is removed. Vehicles shall not be left running when the temperature is over 32 degrees, unless precipitation is causing ice, snow, or other buildup
6. Employees and all passengers shall use seat belts as required by the Illinois Vehicle Code.
7. Employees should fuel shared vehicles prior to returning them at the end of a shift.
8. Police vehicles will not be used to push or pull other vehicles.
9. Employees will not use their assigned Department vehicles for jumping other cars, except that a police supervisor may use jumper cables for starting another squad car. In doing so, care must be taken to ensure electronic equipment – especially the mobile data computer – is turned off and protected from surges, shorting, etc.

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10. It is the responsibility of Field Supervisors to promote compliance with this Policy.

#### **703.4 USE OF VEHICLES**

City-owned vehicles shall only be used for official business and, when approved, for commuting to allow members to respond to department-related business outside their regular work hours.

Members shall not operate a City-owned vehicle at any time when impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.

Any member operating a vehicle equipped with a two-way communications radio, MDT and/or a GPS device shall ensure the devices are on and set to an audible volume whenever the vehicle is in operation.

##### **703.4.1 MARKED POLICE VEHICLES**

The Urbana Police Department will maintain a fleet of marked vehicles for normal patrol operations. These will normally be uniform in color and insignia designated by the Chief of Police, to include the words "POLICE" or "URBANA POLICE" and appropriate logos variously placed on the cars. Squad cars should be numbered to better facilitate maintenance and record keeping.

Marked squad cars will typically be equipped with roof-mounted light mechanisms to include red and blue flashing or strobe lighting, as well as auxiliary lights (such as alley/takedown lights); spotlights controlled from within; segregated prisoner transport compartments which are lockable by the officers and shield them from the arrestees; radios for local and State Police communications; mobile data computers, video cameras and sirens.

The Patrol Commander will also designate what supplies and additional equipment should be carried within the trunks or passenger compartments for routine law enforcement activities or emergency responses.

The Urbana Police canine officer will normally be assigned a specially outfitted squad car which will bear Urbana Police markings similar to marked squad cars. It will be outfitted with emergency lighting and siren units (internal or external) as determined by the Chief of Police or his designee in order to facilitate the K9 officer's emergency responses and traffic enforcement capabilities. The K9 vehicle will have the appropriate communication systems (radios and computer), similar to other squad cars. Additionally, the car will be outfitted for the dog, as appropriate.

##### **703.4.2 SHIFT ASSIGNED VEHICLES**

Members who use a fleet vehicle as part of their work assignment shall ensure that the vehicle is properly checked out, according to current procedures, prior to taking it into service. If for any reason during the shift the vehicle is exchanged, the member shall ensure that the exchanged vehicle is likewise properly noted.

Members shall be responsible for inspecting the interior and exterior of any assigned vehicle before taking the vehicle into service and at the conclusion of the shift. Any previously unreported damage, mechanical problems, unauthorized contents or other problems with the vehicle shall be promptly reported to a supervisor and documented as appropriate.

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#### 703.4.3 UNSCHEDULED USE OF VEHICLES

Members utilizing a City-owned fleet vehicle for any purpose other than their regularly assigned duties shall first notify the Shift Supervisor of the reason for use and a notation will be made on the vehicle board indicating the operator's name and reason why next to the vehicle number. This section does not apply to members permanently assigned an individual vehicle (e.g., command staff, detectives), who regularly use the vehicle on an unscheduled basis as part of their normal assignment.

#### 703.4.4 UNMARKED VEHICLES

The Department utilizes some vehicles not configured as above. Plain cars used by first line supervisors should at least be equipped with a siren and strobes or flashing interior-mounted lights for emergency responses and traffic stops. Likewise, they should have radios and mobile data computers capable of communicating with the same entities that marked units can reach. The Patrol Commander will designate any additional equipment patrol supervisors should routinely transport in order to facilitate patrol officers' response to various events.

Plain cars leased by or assigned to Investigation Division personnel or for administrative use may have less equipment and capabilities than Patrol marked or unmarked vehicles and shall be used in accordance with those limitations.

Except for use by the assigned member, unmarked units shall not be used without first obtaining approval from the supervisor of the unit to which the vehicle is assigned.

#### 703.4.5 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION VEHICLES

Criminal Investigations Division vehicle use is restricted to investigative personnel during their assigned work hours unless approved by an Criminal Investigations Division supervisor. After-hours use of Criminal Investigations Division vehicles by members not assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division shall only be granted by a supervisor and the CID Commander.

#### 703.4.6 AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS

Members operating City-owned marked vehicles shall not permit persons other than City members or persons required to be conveyed in the performance of duty, or as otherwise authorized, to ride as a passenger in their vehicle.

#### 703.4.7 PARKING

Except when responding to an emergency or other urgent official business requires otherwise, members driving City-owned vehicles should obey all parking regulations at all times.

City-owned vehicles should be parked in their assigned areas. Members shall not park privately owned vehicles in any area assigned to a City-owned vehicle or in any other areas of the parking lot that are not designated as a parking space.

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#### **703.4.8 INSPECTIONS**

The interior of any vehicle that has been used to transport any person other than a member should be inspected prior to placing another person in the vehicle and again after the person is removed. This is to ensure that unauthorized or personal items have not been left in the vehicle.

When transporting any suspect, prisoner or arrestee the transporting officer shall search all areas of the vehicle that are accessible by the person before and after the person is transported.

#### **703.4.9 PRIVACY**

All City-owned vehicles are subject to inspection and/or search at any time by a supervisor without notice and without cause. No member assigned to or operating such vehicle shall be entitled to any expectation of privacy with respect to the vehicle or its contents.

#### **703.5 ASSIGNED VEHICLE**

Members who have been assigned a take-home vehicle may use the vehicle to commute to the workplace and for department-related business.

Members are cautioned that under federal and local tax rules, personal use of a City-owned vehicle may create an income tax liability to the member. Members should address questions regarding tax consequences to their tax adviser.

The assignment of vehicles is at the discretion of the Chief of Police. Assigned vehicles may be changed at any time and/or permission to take home a vehicle may be withdrawn at any time.

#### **703.6 KEYS AND SECURITY**

All uniformed field members approved to operate marked patrol vehicles should be issued a copy of the unit key as part of their initial equipment distribution upon hiring.

Members assigned a permanent vehicle should be issued keys for their assigned vehicle.

The loss of any key shall be promptly reported in writing through the member's chain of command.

#### **703.7 ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS**

When driving an assigned vehicle to and from work outside of the jurisdiction of the Urbana Police Department, an officer should avoid becoming directly involved in enforcement actions except in those circumstances where a potential threat to life or serious property damage exists (see the Off-Duty Law Enforcement Actions Policy and the Law Enforcement Authority Policy).

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

Officers shall, at all times while driving a marked City-owned vehicle, 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.

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#### **703.8 MAINTENANCE**

Members are responsible for the cleanliness (exterior and interior) and overall maintenance of their assigned vehicles.

Members shall make daily inspections of their assigned vehicles for service/maintenance requirements and damage.

Supervisors shall make, at a minimum, monthly inspections of vehicles assigned to members under their command to ensure the vehicles are being maintained in accordance with policy.

The Police Department Fleet Manager will help facilitate preventive maintenance of police vehicles (except those assigned to or leased by the Investigations Division) by coordinating with Public Works or whatever subcontractor the Department uses. Likewise, the Fleet Manager will coordinate annual detailing, if appropriate. The entity doing the mechanical work will keep records of this.

##### **703.8.1 ACCESSORIES AND/OR MODIFICATIONS**

No modifications, additions or removal of any equipment or accessories shall be made to the vehicle without written permission from the Division Commander.

#### **703.9 VEHICLE DAMAGE, ABUSE AND MISUSE**

When a City-owned vehicle is involved in a traffic crash or otherwise incurs damage, the involved member shall promptly notify a supervisor. Any traffic crash report shall be filed with the agency having jurisdiction (see also the Traffic Crash Reporting Policy).

When a crash involves a City vehicle or when a member of this department is an involved driver in a crash that occurs in this jurisdiction, and the crash results in serious injury or death, the supervisor should request that an outside law enforcement agency investigate the crash.

The supervisor will complete a report on any accident involving an on duty officer, if a supervisor is involved then an outside agency will be requested to complete the report.

Any damage to a vehicle that was not caused by a traffic crash shall be immediately reported during the shift in which the damage was discovered, documented in an Employee Report of Vehicle - Equipment - Property Damage form and forwarded to the Division Commander. An administrative investigation should be initiated to determine if there is any vehicle abuse or misuse.

Any city vehicle equipment or property that is damaged shall be documented in an Employee Report of Vehicle - Equipment - Property Damage form.

#### **703.10 TOLL ROAD USAGE**

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

To avoid unnecessary toll road charges, all members operating a City-owned vehicle upon the toll road shall adhere to the following:

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- (a) All members operating a City-owned vehicle for any reason other than in response to an emergency shall pay the appropriate toll charge or utilize the appropriate toll way transponder. Members may submit for reimbursement from the City for any toll fees incurred in the course of official business.