

Vehicle Use

703.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

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 USE OF VEHICLES

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

703.3.1 SHIFT ASSIGNED VEHICLES

Members who use a county owned/leased/rented vehicle as part of their work assignment shall ensure that the vehicle is properly checked out and logged on the daily shift roster, 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 on the daily shift roster.

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.

703.3.2 UNSCHEDULED USE OF VEHICLES

Members utilizing a County-owned vehicle for any purpose other than their regularly assigned duties shall first notify the Watch Commander of the reason for use and a notation will be made on the shift roster indicating the operator's name and 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.

703.3.3 UNMARKED VEHICLES

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.

703.3.4 INVESTIGATION DIVISION VEHICLES

Investigation Division vehicle use is restricted to investigative personnel during their assigned work hours unless approved by an Investigation Division supervisor/commander.

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703.3.5 AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS

Members operating County-owned/leased/rented vehicles shall not permit persons other than County members or persons required to be conveyed in the performance of duty, or as otherwise authorized, to ride as a passenger in their vehicle unless previously authorized by their supervisor.

703.3.6 PARKING

Members shall not park privately owned vehicles in any stall assigned to a County-owned vehicle or in any other areas of the parking lot that are not designated as a parking space unless authorized by a supervisor.

703.3.7 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 deputy shall search all areas of the vehicle that are accessible by the person before and after the person is transported.

703.3.8 PRIVACY

All County-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.

703.4 ASSIGNED VEHICLE AGREEMENT

Members who have been assigned a take-home vehicle may use the vehicle to commute to the workplace and for department-related business. The member must be approved for an assigned vehicle by his/her Division Commander:

- (a) Except as may be provided by a memorandum of understanding time spent during normal commuting is not compensable.
- (b) County-owned vehicles shall not be used for personal errands or other personal business unless approved by a supervisor.
- (c) The member is responsible for the care and maintenance of the vehicle. The Department should provide necessary care and maintenance supplies.
- (d) The vehicle shall be parked in secure off-street parking when parked at the member's residence.
- (e) Vehicles shall be locked when not attended.
- (f) If the vehicle is not secured inside a locked garage, all firearms and kinetic impact weapons shall be removed from the interior of the vehicle and properly secured in the residence (see the Firearms and Qualification Policy regarding safe storage of firearms at home).

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- (g) When the member will be away (e.g., on vacation) for periods exceeding one week the vehicle shall be stored in a secure garage at the member's residence or at the appropriate department facility.
- (h) All department identification, portable radios and equipment should be secured.

Members are cautioned that under federal and local tax rules, personal use of a County-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 Sheriff. Assigned vehicles may be changed at any time and/or permission to take home a vehicle may be withdrawn at any time.

703.5 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. Deputies shall not duplicate keys.

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.

703.6 ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

When driving an assigned vehicle to and from work outside of the jurisdiction of the Shasta County Sheriff's Office, a deputy 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).

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

Deputies shall, at all times while driving a marked County-owned vehicle, be armed, appropriately attired and carry their department-issued identification. Deputies should also ensure that department radio communication capabilities are maintained to the extent feasible.

703.7 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. It is the assigned member's responsibility to ensure that his/her assigned vehicle is maintained according to the established service and maintenance schedule.

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

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703.7.1 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.

703.8 VEHICLE DAMAGE, ABUSE AND MISUSE

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

When a collision involves a County vehicle or when a member of this department is an involved driver in a collision that occurs in this jurisdiction while on duty, and the collision results in serious injury or death, the supervisor should request that an outside law enforcement agency be summoned to investigate the collision.

The member involved in the collision shall complete the County's vehicle collision form. If the member is unable to complete the form, the supervisor shall complete the form.

Any damage to a vehicle that was not caused by a traffic collision shall be immediately reported during the shift in which the damage was discovered, documented in memorandum format and forwarded to the Watch Commander. An administrative review should be initiated to determine if there is any vehicle abuse or misuse.

703.9 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 County-owned vehicle upon the toll road shall adhere to the following:

- (a) All members operating a County-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 a request for reimbursement from the County for any toll fees incurred in the course of official business.
- (b) All members passing through a toll plaza or booth during a response to an emergency shall notify, in writing, the appropriate Division Commander within five working days explaining the circumstances.