

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE No. 7-A

Department Fleet Management

Division

Date 7/28/08

This Procedure replaces  
Number 7  
Dated 1/26/99

Approved:  
Issuing Dept. 

Which is to be removed from the Administrative  
Procedures Manual and Destroyed

City Manager 

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

### VEHICLE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

A City vehicle is defined as a vehicle owned, leased, or rented by the City of Gainesville. City employees will operate vehicles in a safe and skillful manner within the guidelines of City directives and Florida State Statutes, including obedience to all traffic laws and basic rules of courtesy, and shall refrain from illegal activities.

#### Vehicle Acquisition

All fleet acquisitions are coordinated through the Fleet Management Department with the one (1) exception of RTS who is directly responsible for their own acquisitions after obtaining City Manager approval.

#### Budget Planning

In the General Government organization, replacement recommendations and requests for additions to the Fleet are submitted and considered during the budget process. Fleet Management's recommendations are based on analyses that attempt to determine the end of the cost-effective life of the vehicle/equipment. Fleet Management provides the replacement recommendations after consultation with the affected departments (except RTS). Each year the City Manager determines the final list of acquisitions within given budget constraints for the upcoming fiscal year.

#### Procurement

Fleet Management performs the following functions in coordination with the user department and the Purchasing Department:

- reviews all specifications during the Purchase Requisition process and provides comments as to the appropriateness of the vehicle and its features;
- advises whether vehicle/equipment should be purchased outright, purchased from total cost bid, or leased. Initial leases or lease extensions shall be approved by the City Manager after considering the recommendations of the Fleet Management director. Purchasing options may include the use of Governmental contracts, multiyear contracts, and individual bids;
- signs off on all vehicle acquisition requisitions;
- evaluates vehicle/equipment upon delivery to ensure conformance with specifications;
- prepares vehicle/equipment for service; and
- approves payment for vehicle/equipment.

#### Assignment of City Vehicles

City vehicles shall be assigned to departments, individual employees, or to a general vehicle pool on the basis of work responsibility. Vehicles may be assigned to employees, either solely for use during normal working hours or as a take home vehicle when deemed appropriate. The decision to assign a vehicle to an employee shall be based upon efficient and effective service delivery provided by the employee assigned to the vehicle, and on overall City services delivery.

Vehicle assignments to individuals will be reviewed and approved annually by each respective Charter Officer. General Government Department Heads will submit a proposed vehicle assignment certification list to the City Manager by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The proposed certification list shall include: the employee name; the vehicle number, make and model; whether to be assigned as a take-home vehicle or a vehicle to be used during normal working hours only; which of the following four (4) criteria are met. By January 1<sup>st</sup>, the City Manager will review and authorize/reauthorize vehicle assignments for the ensuing calendar year.

One or more of the following criteria will determine the eligibility for employees to take home a City vehicle on a regular basis:

- Agreement between the employee and the employer either prior to, or after, employment. The agreement should be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file.

Approval level - City Commission for Charter Officer; or appropriate Charter Officer for all others.

- Vehicle is equipped with tools and/or instrumentation that are essential in an emergency response situation. The employee responds directly to the scene of the emergency and is trained to use the tools and equipment. If response is on a rotation basis, each employee will only take home the vehicle when he or she is in "on call" status. Note: Communication equipment alone is not considered a tool or instrumentation for this purpose. Each Department Head will establish a response time standard for take-home vehicles appropriate to their respective service delivery. All employees assigned take-home vehicles will live within the established standard unless granted a specific exemption in writing by the City Manager.

Approval level - Charter Officer with documentation from Department Heads.

- An employee's responsibilities require that he or she perform certain job functions on a regular basis during off hours, and the documented miles traveled per year (during off-hours) between home and job destination justify the decision. Travel between home and work at regular scheduled office hours is not included. The employee who qualifies may be assigned a take-home vehicle or receive a monthly allowance. The employee will live within the established department response time standard.

Approval level - Charter Officer with documentation from Department Heads.

- As provided by Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Also, employees may be allowed to occasionally take a City vehicle home when it is determined to be in the best interest of the City to do so. "Occasionally" is defined as occurring on an infrequent and irregular basis, and less than five consecutive working days in duration. This permission is granted at the Department Head level. Again, the City employee must live within the established Department response time standard in order to be assigned a take-home vehicle even on an occasional basis.

### **Use of Private (Personal) Vehicles While Conducting City Business**

Any personal vehicle used to conduct City business (including those on monthly car allowance) must, at a minimum, have personal automobile insurance coverage consistent with Florida Statutes. Higher personal automobile insurance coverage is strongly encouraged. Employees are encouraged to use City vehicles when conducting City business unless his/her supervisor has granted a specific exemption. Exceptions to this may be:

- employees who receive a monthly car allowance must use their personal vehicles(s);
- whenever there are no City vehicles available; and
- when traveling on an out-of-town business trip.

If an employee uses his or her personal vehicle to conduct City business, the City, depending on which method is in the best interest of the City, may:

1. reimburse the employee for City business miles driven;
2. provide the employee a monthly vehicle allowance; or
3. assign a City vehicle to the employee

- If there is no City vehicle available for local travel, and the employee utilizes his or her personal vehicle, the reimbursement rate will be based on the current rate allowable by IRS multiplied by the number of miles driven. If there is a City vehicle available for local travel, and the employee desires to utilize his or her personal vehicle and obtains his or her supervisor's prior approval, there will be no reimbursement provided

- If there is no City vehicle available for an out-of-town trip, the employee may use his or her personal vehicle. Reimbursement will be based on the current rate allowable by IRS multiplied by the number of miles driven or the approved round-trip commercial coach airfare, plus transfers, whichever is the lower amount. The airfare will be established on the date that the travel received final approval from the appropriate level. (Refer to the City Travel Policy for more specific instructions )

- If an out-of-town vehicle is available and the employee chooses to use his or her personal vehicle, the reimbursement rate will be the number of miles driven multiplied by 60 percent of the current rate allowable by IRS or the approved round-trip commercial coach airfare, plus transfers, whichever is the lower amount. The airfare will be established on the date that the travel receives final approval from the appropriate level. This percentage will be reviewed periodically and will vary depending on the replacement cost of the vehicles and the allowable IRS reimbursement. Employees must receive approval from the Department Head or Charter officer to exercise this option on the Travel Authorization Form. (Refer to the City Travel Policy for more specific instructions )

### **Car Allowance**

The respective Charter Officer shall review supporting documentation submitted by a Department Head and determine if it is appropriate for an employee to receive a monthly car allowance based upon actual vehicle use data, usually for three months or an initial authorization and 30 days for a renewal, to project annual utilization. The monthly allowance will be based on current IRS allowable mileage reimbursement rates.

The respective Charter Officer may authorize the employee to receive a monthly car allowance provided it does not exceed the cost of providing a City vehicle suitable for the intended use.

In the event an employee's monthly car allowance exceeds the cost to the City to provide a vehicle for that employee's use and the employee desires to continue using his or her private vehicle while conducting City business, the appropriate Charter officer may approve a reduced monthly car allowance not to exceed 80% of the computed cost of providing a City vehicle. The costs of the City vehicle will be supplied by the Fleet Management Director. This amount should be reviewed annually.

### **Safety Equipment Requirements**

All operators and passengers of City vehicles will use the vehicle seat and lap belts if the vehicle is so equipped. Airbags shall not be rendered inoperable on vehicles so equipped. Employees observed not following these safety equipment requirements shall be disciplined according to appropriate personnel/safety guidelines. In addition, any employee injured in an auto crash and found not wearing such protection can have Worker's Compensation benefits reduced as allowed by Florida Statute 440.09(4).

### **Altering Vehicles**

City vehicles will not be altered in any way without first obtaining written approval of the appropriate Department Head and the Fleet Management Director. All approved alterations must be coordinated through Fleet Management.

No City vehicles shall have any stickers, posters, signs, or any other similar attachment placed on or affixed to them unless previous approval or directive has been issued by the appropriate Charter Officer.

Tags: All City vehicles will be issued City tags except:

1. Public Safety Investigatory work, or
2. Those approved by a Charter Officer

### **Vehicle Inspection**

All employees will perform a "walk-around" of the vehicle to see if there are any visible problems prior to it being driven. If problems are noted, please refer to the following instruction, if applicable:

- If body damage is discovered, check to see if the City's standard Accident Report has been completed and a copy forwarded to Fleet Management
- If there appears to be any significant malfunctioning, do not operate the vehicle, call Fleet Management to have the vehicle towed. If the vehicle can be operated safely, take it to the appropriate City-operated garage.

### **Vehicle Collisions**

All employees, if involved in any vehicular collision in a City vehicle or in a private vehicle while performing City duties, shall:

- call the appropriate law enforcement agency;
- call Risk Management;
- allow Risk Management or the appropriate law enforcement agency to determine if the vehicle should be towed; and
- complete the City's standard Accident Report and forward copies to Risk Management and Fleet Management (if City vehicle involved)

### **Safeguarding Issued Equipment**

Employees are responsible for safeguarding City-issued equipment associated with their assigned vehicles. This includes (but is not limited to) issued equipment which is normally left in the assigned vehicles. For example, if an employee leaves his or her assigned vehicle for repairs or maintenance (temporary or take-home), the employee shall insure that all equipment is safeguarded prior to leaving the vehicle. If any equipment is subsequently stolen/missing, this will be evidence that the employee failed to safeguard the equipment and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Use of City Vehicles**

All persons who operate City vehicles will be employees of the City and possess a valid Florida Driver's License as required by law. City vehicles are to be used as necessary to conduct business of the City and its operations. Employees shall not operate City vehicles for the purpose of conducting a private business or enterprise or any other personal use. However, it is recognized that a de minimus amount of personal use of a city vehicle may be required for those employees who:

- are assigned a take-home vehicle and, therefore, commute to and from work in the City vehicle;
- conduct their daily work in or from a vehicle;
- are on City authorized travel; and
- de minimus personal use shall be limited to:

1. Commuting to and from work for those employees assigned a take-home vehicle
2. Driving to and from a restaurant to eat during an approved meal break if no personal vehicle is available to the employee.
3. Personal emergencies if no personal vehicle is available and the appropriate Department Head grants approval

Note: The City Manager and Police Chief shall establish separate regulations for the Police Department Take Home Vehicle Program.

The following are examples only of uses that are not allowed and do not in anyway include all prohibited use:

- Transporting non City employees, including family members (unless provided by a Collective Bargaining Agreement)
- Utilizing the vehicle while on vacation or any other time where City business is not being conducted, except for the de minimus use as defined under "Use of City Vehicles" in this policy. "

Please ask your supervisor for clarification if there is any doubt in the interpretation of the policy or should you be unclear whether or not a particular use is allowed.

#### **Operation of Vehicles Out of City Limits/Service Area**

City employees, while operating City vehicles, are required to remain within the City limits unless commuting efficiencies can be realized through brief route departures or if the City service boundaries extend beyond the City limits. All other departures require the prior approval of the appropriate supervisor.

#### **Transportation of Persons Not Engaged in City Business**

Each Department Head shall insure that only authorized personnel are allowed to operate City-owned vehicles and equipment. In addition, non-City employees or other City employees shall not be allowed as passengers in City vehicles except in cases where they are conducting City business with City staff. This provision does not apply to the Regional Transit System in the case of providing public transportation.

#### **Tobacco Products Prohibition**

Smoking and other tobacco products are not allowed in any City vehicle at any time.