

USE OF COUNTY-OWNED VEHICLES

Objective:	To establish procedures governing the use and maintenance of County owned vehicles.	Policy/Procedure Number:	01-28
Reference: <i>(All Applicable Federal, State and Local Laws)</i>	Agreements with collective bargaining units; Policy 01-44/Green Fleet	Effective Date:	11/6/2012
		Responsible Department:	County Administration
		Modified Date (s):	11/6/2012 2/3/2004 11/5/2003
Legislative Policy Statement:	County-owned vehicles must be used for official County business only. Personal uses of County-owned vehicles are expressly prohibited, except for authorized commuting and de minimus personal use. This policy applies to all Tompkins County employees.	Resolution No.:	2012-228 228-2004 225-2003
	County staff authorized to use a County-owned vehicle (designated driver) shall observe all local and state laws pertaining to the operation of the motor vehicle. Any fines imposed for any violation incurred by the designated driver shall be the responsibility of the designated driver.		
General Information:	The County is self-insured for automobile accidents, which could require taxpayers to pay significant sums in the event of injuries to passengers, drivers, or property damage. The County endeavors to reduce this risk of liability by limiting unnecessary use of County vehicles.	Next Scheduled Review:	August 2017
I. Definitions:	Self insurance —a risk management method in which a calculated amount of money is set aside by the county to compensate for potential loss.		
	Vehicles —Any motorized means of transportation used in the course of performing County business, including any automobile.		
II. Policy:	A. Only Tompkins County employees on official County business and as authorized by the department head or the County Administrator may drive or operate County-owned vehicles. Authorized drivers must have a valid driver's license.		
	B. Department heads are responsible for assigning and authorizing use of vehicles within their departments.		
	C. Official County business includes giving rides to other department staff or clients only as needed to fulfill the driver's work duties. In addition, County employees may provide rides to County employees from other departments, employees or elected officials from other municipalities, or to members of County-appointed advisory boards when (1) attending work-related conferences or meetings, and (2) when the transportation of those additional County or municipal employees as passengers is authorized by the department head. Also, County employees may provide rides to contractors and consultants for work related to a contract with the County.		

- D. When a County employee is using a vehicle shared among multiple departments and wishes to transport passengers who are not employees of either department, the employee who is designated as the driver must obtain permission from the department head responsible for custody and operation of the vehicle. Supervisors and department heads are not authorized to permit transport of passengers except as explicitly stated herein.
- E. Personal use of a County-owned vehicle is expressly prohibited, except for authorized commuting and *de minimus* personal use. *De minimus* personal use may include stopping for lunch between business stops or stopping for a personal errand on an authorized commute. Any stop for lunch must be within three miles of the route between stops and any stop for a personal errand must be within three miles of the route reasonably taken for the authorized commute. In no event shall the transportation of unauthorized passengers be considered a *de minimus* use.

Policy Exception

This policy shall not apply to the use of Sheriff's Office vehicles or the use of Department of Emergency Response vehicles. These Departments have established policies with regard to vehicle usage and additional policies with regard to maintenance that are specific to law enforcement and emergency operations.

III. Procedure:

A. Use

1. All occupants of County vehicles equipped with seat belts must use the seat belts at all times when riding in the vehicle. The County staff person designated as driver is responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed.
2. All gasoline must be purchased from the distributor currently holding an agreement with the County, when practical. Check with Purchasing to determine the current vendor
3. In appropriate circumstances, as an alternative to using a County-owned vehicle County department heads could consider the option of renting a car and obtaining insurance deemed appropriate by the Department of County Administration.

B. Management

Department Heads having custody of a County-owned vehicle must adhere to the following:

Maintenance

Ensure that the vehicle is in compliance with manufacturer recommended maintenance schedule.

Decals and Stickers

Ensure that the vehicle has County decals on it at all times and that County decals are removed before the vehicle is sold or traded in.

Ensure that the vehicle does not carry bumper stickers other than necessary parking stickers or other County-authorized stickers.

Titles

Ensure that vehicle titles are delivered to the Risk Manager, with a copy maintained by the department. Departments must advise the Risk Manager when they purchase or dispose of a vehicle.

Accidents

Ensure that reports of all accidents involving County vehicles be submitted to the County's Risk Manager (see Policy 01-22).