



**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT**

Subject:  <b>CITY-OWNED VEHICLE POLICY (Revised January 2014)</b>	Approval:   <hr/> Andrew Nunn CAO	Approval:   <hr/> Billy Finch Mayor	Effective: <u>2/15/2014.</u> Number: Page 1 of 6
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**PURPOSE**

This policy is intended to enable employees of the City of Bridgeport to provide approved City services requiring the use of City-owned vehicles; to monitor the use of City-owned vehicles; to bring the City into compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations relating to vehicle use; to minimize the City's liability exposure resulting from employee use of City-owned vehicles; and to eliminate abuse of City vehicle privileges.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Vehicle Operator:** An individual, who is:

- A City of Bridgeport employee, and
- In possession of a valid driver's license

**Vehicle:** A City-owned car, truck, or specialized equipment, which falls into one of the following classifications:

***Assigned Take-Home Vehicle:*** Authorized use of a City-owned vehicle by an employee of the City whereby the employee is permitted to drive to and from work in addition to providing an approved City service.

This classification includes those employees who may need to respond to emergencies during non-business hours. These vehicles may be equipped with special features and equipment, which enable an employee to provide immediate response to situations involving threats of life or property.

Certain personnel will be assigned radio and/or telephone equipped vehicles to facilitate access and communication on a 24-hour basis. These employees are authorized to drive assigned vehicles at any time.

Only those employees required to respond to emergencies, except for those classified as "emergency availability," will be granted vehicle take home use. These vehicles, after taken home, are not for personal use. Personnel classified as being on "emergency availability" are limited to the following:

Mayor  
Police Chief  
Fire Chief

**Assigned Daily Use Vehicle:** A City vehicle designated for use by an employee of the City for providing an approved City service on an ongoing basis, but not authorized for take-home use. These vehicles will be checked in and out daily.

**Temporary Purpose Use:** Any pre-authorized temporary use of a City vehicle for City business.

### GENERAL POLICY

Use of a City-owned vehicle, in any capacity, requires the prior approval of the Chief Administrative Officer. City-owned vehicles are to be driven by authorized City employees only. No other individuals, including but not limited to employee family members, may operate a city vehicle.

The City reserves the right to deny any individual use of a City-owned vehicle due to a poor driving record, vehicle abuse, violation of City vehicle policies, or for any other reason as determined by the Chief Administrative Officer in the exercise of his/her sole discretion.

The Department of Public Facilities will maintain and annually update a driver authorization record. Vehicle use privileges require a valid drivers' license and awareness in safety, fuel economy, and vehicle operation, and any other policy that the City may deem necessary.

**Notwithstanding the above, no employee may commute in a City-owned vehicle, unless prior approval has been granted by the Mayor or Chief Administrative Officer. All approvals expire on June 30th of each year. Department Heads must request vehicle use approval from the Chief Administrative Officer each fiscal year.**

### VEHICLE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNED TAKE-HOME USE

City vehicles shall be assigned to individual employees, or to the general citywide vehicle pool on the basis of work responsibility.

The Chief Administrative Officer shall use the following criteria to determine eligibility for the use of a City vehicle on a regular basis:

1. Agreement between the employee and the employer as a condition of employment either prior to, or after, hire date.
2. An employee who is permanently subject to emergency after-hours call
3. Vehicle is equipped with tools and/or instrumentation that are essential in an emergency response situation (for example, Police and Fire Chiefs).



4. An employee's responsibilities require that he or she perform certain job functions on a regular basis during off-hours.

### **VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT FOR DAILY USE**

The assignment of a daily use vehicle to an employee shall be reviewed annually by the Chief Administrative Officer to determine the propriety and priority of the vehicle usage.

### **PROCEDURE**

1. Initial vehicle usage requests require Department Heads to submit a completed Application for Use of a City-Owned Vehicle form and an approved City-Owned Vehicle Authorization and Assignment Form to the Chief Administrative Officer for each employee and each vehicle. Approvals are granted from the approval date through the end of the fiscal year (June 30).
2. Renewal vehicle usage requests require Department Heads to submit a Re-Application for Use of a City-Owned Vehicle form and an approved City-Owned Vehicle Authorization and Assignment form to the Chief Administrative Officer for each employee and each vehicle. Approvals are granted for one fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) and must be renewed annually.

### **MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of this policy are enforced in an equitable and prudent manner for the employees in their departments.
2. Department Heads will ensure that there will be no re-assignment of a City vehicle unless proper authorization has been obtained from the Chief Administrative Officer.
3. Department Heads shall ensure that any City employee assigned a City vehicle has met the necessary driver training requirements and possesses a valid operator license.
4. Department Heads are responsible for notifying the Department of Public Facilities and the Chief Administrative Officer of any violation or suspension of employee driving privileges.

### **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

City vehicles are to be operated with due regard to safety of life and property, and taking into account road, weather and all other relevant conditions and circumstances. Employees shall at all times operate City-owned vehicles with courtesy and common sense and in a manner that reflects proper conduct for the City of Bridgeport.

1. Any City employee who commits parking or traffic violations while operating a City-owned vehicle will be personally liable for all fees, or fines.

2. The driver of an assigned City-owned vehicle is responsible for immediately notifying his/her Department Head and Municipal Garage of any vehicular accidents. A copy of the Police accident report must be sent to the Municipal Garage and Chief Administrative Officer.
3. Any City employee who is found responsible for an accident or other moving violation while operating a City-owned vehicle will be subject to proper disciplinary procedures.
4. Any City employee who abuses the provisions of this policy is subject to loss of City vehicle driving privileges, suspension from work, termination, and/or other appropriate disciplinary actions as determined by the Chief Administrative Officer.
5. Any City employee assigned a daily use City vehicle has the responsibility of ensuring that he or she:
  - a) Makes necessary arrangements to pick up and return the vehicle each day as determined by the Municipal Garage;
  - b) Uses the vehicle only for conducting official City of Bridgeport business;
  - c) Carries a valid driver's license;
  - d) Wears a seat belt at all times while the vehicle is in motion;
  - e) Operates the vehicle in a safe manner conforming to traffic laws and road conditions;
  - f) Complies with the Smoke-Free Campus Policy, recognizing that smoking is prohibited in City-owned vehicles;
  - g) Reports any change in driver's license status to the Department Head.

#### **VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP**

Employees assigned a City vehicle shall be responsible for the condition of their assigned vehicle, including compliance with all maintenance schedules, reporting any needed repairs, and maintaining its cleanliness. The following must be adhered to:

1. Washing and cleaning of the vehicle is the responsibility of the vehicle custodian. Vehicles are to be taken off-site to an authorized facility.
2. Vehicles maintained by the Municipal Garage must be fueled at the City's designated vendor, unless written authorization is received from the Municipal Garage. The Police and Fire Departments must use their respective fuel pumps.
3. Drivers are responsible for promptly reporting to the City maintenance facility or vehicle pool attendant any mechanical trouble or damage and for promptly providing notice to the City as to the expiration dates for vehicle registration and/or inspection.
4. The assigned driver of a City-owned vehicle is responsible for taking the vehicle to the City maintenance facility for scheduled monthly maintenance of fluid changes, brake jobs, tire changes, and any damage, faulty equipment or other needed repairs.
5. Each time a City vehicle is driven, the driver shall determine that all functions, as shown below, are operating properly.



- a) Lights and turn indicators are working.
- b) Motor oil is at the proper level.
- c) Fluid levels in the radiator and the battery are adequate.
- d) Fuel tank is at least one-quarter full.
- e) Brakes operate properly.
- f) Tires are properly inflated.
- g) Horn operates properly.

Employees authorized to use a City vehicle are prohibited from using that vehicle at any time when their driving ability has been impaired through the ingestion of drugs, medication or alcoholic beverages.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Department of Public Facilities shall maintain a list of employees who are authorized to use City vehicles and the justification for such use. A record of each assigned driver will be maintained by Public Facilities and will include copies of all signed forms and accident reports, as well as missed maintenance.

Public Facilities is responsible for ensuring that departments with City-owned vehicles adhere to scheduled maintenance appointments and meet inspection, registrations and emission deadlines.

The Municipal Garage shall immediately notify the payroll office, and the City Payroll Manager of the exact date an employee is assigned a City-owned vehicle, and of the exact date an employee is no longer assigned a City-owned vehicle.

The Municipal Garage is responsible for assigning daily use vehicles each morning and assuring that they are returned each afternoon as stated in the Application for Use of a City-Owned Vehicle form.

### **TAX IMPLICATIONS**

In accordance with IRS regulations, employees granted take-home use of City-owned vehicles may be required to receive a commuting benefit as computed at the standard rate under IRS regulations. The IRS may consider this commuting benefit imputed income, and it may be added to the employee's paycheck and taxed accordingly. Public Facilities MUST notify the Department of Finance of an employee granted take-home use of a City-owned vehicle so that the City of Bridgeport is in full compliance with IRS regulations. All questions regarding IRS regulations and tax issues should be directed to the Department of Finance.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Any employee found to be in violation of this policy, including but not limited to use above and beyond "City business use" or "take-home use" as defined above, or use of the assigned City-owned vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol, will be subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination as determined by the Department of Labor Relations and Chief Administrative Officer.

**SUMMARY**

Employees are responsible for safeguarding City-issued equipment associated with their assigned vehicles. Any stolen, damaged or missing equipment may be considered as evidence that the employee failed to safeguard the equipment and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken as determined by the Department of Labor Relations and the Chief Administrative Officer.

City-owned vehicles will not be altered by any employee in any way. No City vehicle shall have any stickers, posters, signs, or any other similar attachment placed on or affixed unless previous approval or directive has been issued.

With the exception of certain Police and Fire vehicles, City-owned vehicles will have a City decal affixed to both sides, unless exempted by the Chief Administrative Officer.

City of San Francisco

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