

CITY OF TUMWATER  
POLICY MANUAL - PART 2: OPERATING POLICIES

SECTION 8  
VEHICLE USAGE

- 8.01 Purpose
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8.01 Purpose

It is the policy of the City to provide vehicles for business use, to allow employees to drive on city business, and to reimburse employees for business use of personal vehicles according to the policy.

8.02 Reference

The term “vehicle” as used in this policy includes, but is not limited to, cars, trucks, backhoes, front and end loaders, graders, and any other motorized equipment.

8.03 Policy

City-owned or leased vehicles shall be used exclusively for the conduct of municipal business.

8.04 Procedures

8.04.01 Employees may not drive any vehicles for city business, without prior approval of their supervisor. Periodically, before approving a driver, each supervisor should check the employee’s driving record, with the employee’s consent, and verify the existence of a valid driver’s license. Employees approved to drive on city business are required to inform their supervisor of any changes that may affect either their legal or physical ability to drive or their continued insurability.

8.04.02 Unless otherwise authorized by the city, only employees and/or qualified volunteers holding valid Washington state Driver’s License and/or commercial vehicle endorsement, if applicable, will be allowed to operate city vehicles.

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- 8.04.03 Passengers will be transported in city vehicles only to the extent that their conveyance is directly related to official business. No “civilians” shall be transported other than the appropriate medical response/transport vehicles.
- 8.04.04 If possible, city vehicles will be regularly assigned to those departments which have a continued need for them. Additional vehicles are maintained in a motor pool for use by individual employees, as needed.
- 8.04.05 Some city departments may assign city vehicles to individual staff. In doing so each individual department must maintain departmental procedures for the operation of these assignments. All such departments must be cognizant to the IRS ruling that deals with commuting mileage that may be subject to withholding, and may further need to work cooperatively with the Finance Department to fulfill these obligations.
- 8.04.06 Employees who drive a vehicle on city business must, in addition to meeting the approval requirements of their supervisor, exercise due diligence to drive safely and to maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents. Employees are also responsible for any driving infractions or fines as a result of their driving.
- 8.04.07 Employees who use their personal vehicles for approved business purposes will receive a mileage allowance equal to the Internal Revenue Service optional mileage allowance for such usage. This allowance is to compensate for the cost of gasoline, oil, depreciation, and insurance. Therefore, employees who operate personal vehicles for city business must maintain auto liability coverage as required by State law.

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8.04 Procedures

8.04.08 Employees must report any accident, theft, or malicious damage involving a city vehicle to their supervisor and the appropriate personnel within the city police department, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. Such reports must be made as soon as possible but no later than forty-eight hours after the incident. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with authorities in the event of an accident.

8.04.09 Employees shall not operate any city vehicle at any time or operate any personal vehicle while eligible for mileage reimbursement and on city business while using or consuming alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription medications that may affect their ability to drive. The city prohibits operators of vehicles from drinking alcohol, consuming illegal drugs, and taking prescription medications that affect ability to drive, and driving. Smoking inside any City vehicle is prohibited.

8.04.10 Employees shall avoid excessive idling, and the City of Tumwater shall employ anti-idling technologies whenever practicable. "Excessive Idling" means the running of an internal combustion engine that supplies the motive power for a vehicle for longer than 3-5 minutes, when not to move the vehicle with the normal flow of traffic on a street or roadway. Excessive idling does not include running the vehicle's engine while stopped at a traffic signal or waiting for the passage of other vehicles to permit safe entry into the flow of traffic.

Excessive idling would be permitted to the extent necessary in the following cases:

- Police, Fire or other City vehicles as required for safe and effective performance of the equipment;
- Fire department vehicles, ambulances, and other City vehicles when responding to an emergency or when the use of special equipment *requires* the engines remain in operation;

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- Vehicles, equipment, or other machinery when actually employed at the site of such work, and only to the extent necessary for the efficient and safe operation of the vehicle;
- Running the engine to clear windows in freezing temperatures or to provide temporary shelter from hot or cold weather;
- When required for the protection of life, health, or property; and
- As necessary for diagnosis, adjustment, or testing vehicles undergoing repair or maintenance.