

Patrol/Unmarked Vehicle Use

703.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a system of accountability to ensure department vehicles are used appropriately. This policy provides guidelines for on- and off-duty use of department vehicles and shall not be construed to create or imply any contractual obligation by the City of Kalamazoo to provide assigned take-home vehicles.

703.2 POLICY

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety provides vehicles for department-related business and may assign patrol and unmarked vehicles based on a determination of operational efficiency, economic impact to the Department, requirements for tactical deployments and other considerations.

703.3 USE OF VEHICLES

703.3.1 SHIFT ASSIGNED VEHICLES

Prior to relieving an officer or Equipment Operator from a previous shift, officers shall log ensure that they have loaded up their assigned vehicle and logged into their MDT in accordance with Policy 422 - MDT

703.3.2 INSPECTIONS

Prior to using a vehicle or at the beginning of a patrol officer's shift, the officer should inspect the vehicle to include checking the oil, emergency lights, siren, and all assigned equipment. Officers shall be responsible for inspecting the interior and exterior of any assigned vehicle before taking the vehicle into service and at the conclusion of their shifts. 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.

The interior of any vehicle that has been used to transport any person other than a member of this department should be inspected at the beginning of a shift, 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 member shall search all areas of the vehicle that are accessible by the person before and after that person is transported.

All department 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.

703.3.3 SECURITY AND UNATTENDED VEHICLES

Unattended vehicles should be locked and secured at all times. No key should be left in the vehicle except when it is necessary that the vehicle be left running (e.g., continued activation of emergency

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lights, canine safety, equipment charging, and during times of inclement weather). Every effort shall be made to prevent prolonged idling of vehicles.

Public Safety Officers who exit a vehicle rapidly in an emergency situation or to engage in a foot pursuit must carefully balance the need to exit the vehicle quickly with the need to secure the vehicle.

Members shall ensure all weapons are secured while the vehicle is unattended.

703.3.4 VEHICLE LOCATION SYSTEM

Patrol and other vehicles, at the discretion of the Chief of Public Safety, may be equipped with a system designed to track the vehicle's location. While the system may provide vehicle location and other information, members are not relieved of their responsibility to use required communication practices to report their location and status.

Members shall not make any unauthorized modifications to the system. At the start of each shift, members shall verify that the system is on and report any malfunctions to their supervisor. If the member finds that the system is not functioning properly at any time during the shift, he/she should exchange the vehicle for one with a working system, if available. All malfunctions to the vehicles location system shall be noted in the supervisors DAR.

System data may be accessed by supervisors at any time. However, access to historical data by other than supervisors will require Division Commander approval.

All data captured by the system shall be retained in accordance with the established records retention schedule.

703.3.5 KEYS

Officers operating patrol vehicles shall obtain the key and the key fob for the patrol car from the designated location at the station. Officers shall either turn over the keys to the officer relieving them or to the designated location for key storage for that station. At no time shall keys or key fobs to patrol vehicles be stored in an officer's personal locker.

Members shall not duplicate keys. If an additional key is needed for a patrol vehicle, officers should request one from the fleet manager. The loss of a key shall be promptly reported in writing through the member's chain of command.

703.3.6 AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS

Members operating department vehicles shall not permit persons other than persons required to be conveyed in the performance of duty, or as otherwise authorized, to ride as passengers in the vehicle. All other passengers must comply with the Ride-Alongs Policy.

703.3.7 PARKING

Except when responding to an emergency or when on a call for service where this situation warrants a deviation, members driving department vehicles should obey all parking regulations at all times.

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Department vehicles should be parked in assigned parking spots where applicable. Members shall not park privately owned vehicles in parking spots assigned to department vehicles or in other areas of the parking lot that are not so designated unless authorized by a supervisor.

703.3.8 ACCESSORIES AND/OR MODIFICATIONS

There shall be no modifications, additions or removal of any equipment or accessories without permission from the Service Division Commander or designee.

703.3.9 CIVILIAN MEMBER USE

Civilian members using marked emergency vehicles shall ensure that all weapons have been removed before going into service. Civilian members shall not operate the patrol vehicle in a law enforcement capacity unless expressly authorized by a supervisor.

703.3.10 VEHICLE DAMAGE, ABUSE, AND MIS-USE

Damage to any department vehicle that was not caused by a traffic accident shall be immediately reported during the shift in which the damage was discovered and documented in memorandum format, which shall be forwarded to the Shift Commander. An administrative investigation should be initiated to determine if there has been any vehicle abuse or misuse.

703.4 INDIVIDUAL MEMBER ASSIGNMENT TO VEHICLES, TAKE HOME USE AND USE OF UNMARKED VEHICLES

Department vehicles may be assigned to individual members at the discretion of the Chief of Public Safety. Vehicles may be assigned for on-duty and/or take-home use. Assigned vehicles may be changed at any time. Permission to take home a vehicle may be withdrawn at any time.

The assignment of vehicles may be suspended when the member is unable to perform his/her regular assignment.

703.4.1 ON-DUTY USE

Vehicle assignments shall be based on the nature of the member's duties, job description and essential functions, and employment or appointment status. Vehicles may be reassigned or utilized by other department members at the discretion of the Chief of Public Safety or the authorized designee.

703.4.2 TEMPORARY TAKE-HOME USE

Circumstances may arise where department vehicles may be used by members to commute to and from a work assignment, or need to respond to department business while off duty. Members may take home department vehicles only with prior approval of a Divisional Commander and shall meet the following criteria:

- (a) The circumstances are temporary and will benefit the needs of the department.
- (b) The member lives within a reasonable distance (generally not to exceed a 45-minute drive time) of the Kalamazoo City limits.
- (c) Off-street parking will be available at the member's residence.
- (d) The vehicle will be locked when not attended.
- (e) All firearms, weapons and control devices will be removed from the interior of the

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vehicle and properly secured in the residence when the vehicle is not attended, unless the vehicle is parked in a locked garage, or the weapons are secured in a vehicle gun vault.

- (f) For the purpose of attending an outside school, the member may, when circumstances permit, take home a department vehicle the night before for the purpose of leaving directly from home. The member shall return the vehicle on the same day as the school ends unless approved by a supervisor in charge of the vehicle being utilized.

703.4.3 ASSIGNED VEHICLES

Assignment of take-home vehicles shall follow the CBA and NBU employment contracts.

- (a) Unless articulated in the CBA or employment contract, vehicles shall only be used for work-related purposes and shall not be used for personal errands or transports, unless special circumstances exist and the Chief of Public Safety or Divisional Commander gives authorization.
- (b) Outside of the CBA and NBU employment contracts, vehicles will not be used when off-duty except:
 1. In circumstances when a member has been placed on call by the Chief of Public Safety or Division Commanders and there is a high probability that the member will be called back to duty.
 2. When the member is performing a work-related function during what normally would be an off-duty period, including vehicle maintenance or traveling to or from a work-related activity or function.
 3. When the member has received permission from the Chief of Public Safety or Division Commanders.
- (c) While operating the vehicle, authorized members will carry and have accessible a firearm that has been authorized for carry by the Firearms policy.
- (d) While operating the vehicle, authorized members will carry and have accessible their duty fire gear unless their Divisional Commander authorizes otherwise.
- (e) Unattended vehicles are to be locked and secured at all times.
 1. No key should be left in the vehicle except when it is necessary that the vehicle be left running (e.g., continued activation of emergency lights, canine safety, equipment charging, or inclement weather).
 2. All weapons shall be secured while the vehicle is unattended.
 3. All department identification, portable radios and equipment should be secured.
- (f) Vehicles are to be parked off-street at the member's residence unless prior arrangements have been made with the Chief of Public Safety or the authorized designee. If the vehicle is not secured inside a locked garage, all firearms and kinetic impact weapons shall be removed and properly secured in the residence or secured in a vehicle gun vault (see the Firearms Policy regarding safe storage of firearms at home).
- (g) Vehicles are to be secured at the member's residence or the appropriate department facility, at the discretion of the Department, when a member will be away (e.g., on vacation) for periods exceeding one week.

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1. If the vehicle remains at the residence of the member, the Department shall have access to the vehicle.
 2. If the member is unable to provide access to the vehicle, it shall be parked at the Department.
- (h) The member is responsible for the care and maintenance of the vehicle. The department shall be responsible for the cost of any related maintenance and/or fuel.
- (i) Assigned 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.
- (j) There shall be no modifications, additions or removal of any equipment or accessories without permission from the Service Division Commander or designee.

703.5 DAMAGE, ABUSE AND MISUSE

Damage to any department vehicle that was not caused by a traffic accident shall be immediately reported to the employee's immediate supervisor. An administrative investigation should be initiated to determine if there has been any vehicle abuse or misuse.