

Use of District Vehicles

703.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures for the off-duty use of district take-home vehicles. The use of take-home vehicles is an essential component of the district's recall program, which ensures resources are available in the event of an emergency or critical incident. To facilitate faster response to recalls or for other legitimate district needs, members may be allowed to take district vehicles home. These vehicles provide the means to respond directly to an incident without first diverting to a fire station to retrieve a vehicle and/or needed equipment.

703.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Emergency recall - A member's assignment requires immediate response during off-duty hours to other than the member's normal work location to handle an emergency action.

Investigative recall - A member's assignment requires timely response during off-duty hours to other than the member's normal work location to handle a fire investigation.

Take-home vehicle - A vehicle owned by the District that is authorized for commuting between work and home and/or off-duty use. District vehicles secured at a location other than the member's assigned work location for the purpose of shortening a member's commute shall also be considered take-home vehicles.

703.2 POLICY

The District provides vehicles for official business use and may assign take-home vehicles based on its determination of operational efficiency, economic impact to the District, emergency and investigative recall, and other considerations.

703.3 PROCEDURE

District members authorized to use take-home vehicles must adhere to the following guidelines:

- (a) Vehicles shall only be used for official business and, when approved, for commuting to allow members to respond to district-related business and recall to duty outside their regular work hours.
- (b) Members authorized to use take-home vehicles are to monitor the radio whenever they are operating the vehicle. They are to make appropriate notification or take appropriate action on any fire-related matter that may come to their attention via the radio or through personal observation.
- (c) District members are prohibited from driving district vehicles any time their driving ability may be impaired by prescription or non-prescription drugs or alcoholic beverages.

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- (d) Members operating district-owned vehicles shall not permit persons other than district members or persons required to be conveyed in the performance of duty, or as otherwise authorized, to ride as a passenger in their vehicle.
- (e) District take-home vehicles are to be left at a fire facility during vacations or other periods of leave in excess of seven days unless approved by the Fire Chief or the authorized designee.
- (f) District members shall not relinquish control of, nor allow any person to operate, district vehicles if that person is not a member of the District, except in the case of an emergency where the member is unable to drive him/herself.

703.3.1 ASSIGNED VEHICLE AGREEMENT

Members who have been assigned a take-home vehicle may use the vehicle to commute to their workplace and for district-related business. The member must be approved for an assigned vehicle by the Fire Chief and shall sign an agreement that includes the following criteria:

- (a) The member must live within a 30-minute commute of his/her regularly assigned work location (based on average traffic flow). A longer response time may be allowed based on special assignment of the member.
- (b) , Time spent during normal commuting is not compensable.
- (c) District-owned vehicles shall not be used for personal errands or other personal business unless approved by the Fire Chief for exceptional circumstances.
- (d) The District should provide necessary care and maintenance supplies.
- (e) Off-street parking shall be available at the member's residence.
- (f) Vehicles shall be locked when not attended.
- (g) All district identification, portable radios and equipment should be secured.

Members are cautioned that under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules, personal use of a district-owned vehicle may create an income tax liability to the member. Questions regarding IRS rules should be directed to the member's tax adviser.

The assignment of vehicles is at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Assigned vehicles may be changed at any time. Permission to take home a vehicle may be withdrawn at any time.

703.3.2 VEHICLES SUBJECT TO INSPECTION

All district-owned vehicles are subject to inspection and/or search at any time by a supervisor. No member assigned to or operating such a vehicle shall be entitled to any expectation of privacy with respect to the vehicle or its contents.

703.3.3 ACCESSORIES AND/OR MODIFICATIONS

No modifications, additions or deletions of any equipment or accessories shall be made to district vehicles without written permission from the Fire Chief.

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703.3.4 TOLL ROAD USAGE

Members responding to an emergency or incident on toll roads, while on-duty, are exempt from paying the toll. All members passing through a toll facility during a response to an emergency shall draft a memo to the Fire Chief or the authorized designee as soon as practicable explaining the circumstances.

Commuting or returning to the station after an emergency may not qualify for this exemption. Members operating district-owned vehicles are responsible for the toll charge. All members operating a take-home vehicle off-duty on a toll road shall pay all appropriate toll charges.