



**TOWN OF HOPKINTON**  
**OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN**  
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**Town of Hopkinton Vehicle Policy**

*Purpose*

The purpose of this policy is to set forth internal guidelines for Town issued vehicles; employee use of personal vehicles for work related duties; a Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy.

This policy is intended to provide a basic framework governing the use of personal and municipal vehicles in the Town of Hopkinton and, as such, cannot contain procedures governing every situation that might arise. Employees seeking clarification of or exemption from the provisions of this policy should contact the Town Manager who will provide such clarification and may authorize exceptions to the policy under mitigating circumstances.

Failure to comply with any and all provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal of Town vehicle privileges, suspension, and/or termination from Town employment.

**TOWN ISSUED VEHICLES POLICY**

*General Statement*

The use and operation of motor vehicles owned or leased by the Town of Hopkinton shall be governed by the this policy. Drivers who are required to have a Commonwealth Driver's License (C.D.L.) must also comply with any applicable Federal, State or local requirements.

*General Policy Provisions*

1. Municipal vehicles may only be used for legitimate municipal business. Permissible use of Town owned vehicles include transportation of property or passengers related to Town business; travel to professional association activities, courses, or seminars; travel to worksites and additional work-related activities as approved by the Town Manager and departmental supervision. During vacations or extended absence, vehicles shall be parked at a designated Town facility with the keys accessible at the department's office.
2. Municipal vehicles will not be used to transport any individual who is not directly or indirectly related to municipal business. Passengers shall be limited to Town employees and individuals who are directly associated with Town work activity (committee members, consultants, contractors, etc.).

3. Employees who operate municipal vehicles must have a valid motor vehicle license issued by the state of their current residence and may be required to provide proof of valid motor vehicle license once every six (6) years upon renewal, or as otherwise requested by the Town.
4. Vehicles should contain only those items, which are a part of its design and relevant to work related duties. The Town shall not be liable for the loss or damage of any personal property transported in the vehicle.
5. Employees who are approved for the use of a Town owned vehicle are expected to keep the vehicle clean and to report any malfunction or damage to their supervisor immediately. Department Heads are charged with maintaining the operational efficiency of vehicles assigned to their departments and must report changes to registration or damages to vehicles and all accidents immediately to the Town Manager's Office no later than 24 hours after the incident. Employee's involved in Town owned vehicles, while performing their duties must also file a Workman's Compensation report with the Director of Human Resources within 24 hours of the accident.
6. Employees assigned vehicles for emergency purposes are expected to park such vehicles in safe, legal locations to limit potential liability for the Town.
7. Employees and all passengers must wear seat belts in vehicles at all times.
8. Employees shall not operate municipal vehicles under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription drugs or medications that may interfere with effective and safe operation.
9. Employees driving municipally owned vehicles shall obey all applicable traffic and parking regulations, ordinances, and laws. Employees who are issued citations for any offense, while using a municipal vehicle, must notify their supervisor and the Town Manager's Office immediately within 24 hours of citation. Employee's shall be responsible for any costs associated with violations.
10. No employee may use a municipal vehicle for out of state use without advance approval of the employees' supervisor.
11. Town vehicles shall be marked in a uniform manner with the Town seal and government plates with the exception of unmarked police cruisers designated by the Chief of Police and in all other cases, the Town Manager.
12. Department Heads shall ensure that a valid copy of a Motor Vehicle's registration is placed inside every vehicle. Department Heads will also maintain the originals of those registrations and titles for the vehicles in their own department records. After registering a new vehicle, the Department Head shall report such transactions immediately to the Town Manager's Office to

ensure the required coverage adjustments can be to the Town's insurance policy.

13. Employees who are assigned a vehicle shall document to the Town Manager's Office the miles driven on the assigned vehicle by June 30th each year. The employee must provide the starting mileage use on July 1st, the miles driven through June 30th and the difference for insurance purposes. Each Department Head who manages a fleet of vehicles must also coordinate with the Facilities Department on the gallons of fuel used each year to conform with the Town's Fuel Efficient Vehicle policy.
14. The Town Manager's Office requires all Town Departments to process and file all auto fleet and department auto transfer changes with the Town Manager's Office in electronic format. The Town Manager's Office will relay all schedule changes to the Town's insurance provider. Changes to the Town's auto fleet or lease schedule must be filed with the Town Manager's Office and insurance carrier within one (1) business day of the auto registration transaction, lease contract execution or lease expiration, or certificate transaction. The following links provide the respective forms required to make any additions or deletions to the insurance schedule:
  - a. [Auto Change Request Form](#)
    - i. This form adds and subtracts vehicular apparatus from the Town's insurance.
  - b. [Transfer Request Form](#)
    - i. This form transfers vehicular apparatus between town departments.

#### *Assignment of Vehicles*

When a determination is made that decommissioned public safety vehicles will be made available to other Town Departments, the Town Manager shall determine the assignment of the vehicle.

At a minimum, each assigned owner shall review the need for a new automobile after five (5) years of use or 90,000 miles, whichever triggered first. Furthermore, the Town shall prioritize transferring Emergency Town Vehicle assignments to non-emergency vehicle assignments before purchasing new automobiles, as long as the automobile meets the needs of the non-emergency department receiving the vehicle.

All vehicles shall be registered to the Town of Hopkinton.

1. The following employees and officials may have Town vehicles assigned to them for use in the conduct of their official business subject to availability of funding:
  - a. Emergency Town Vehicles:
    - i. Director of Public Works
    - ii. Fire Chief
    - iii. Police Chief
    - iv. Inspector of Buildings
    - v. Superintendent of Water & Sewer
    - vi. Superintendent of Highways

- vii. Town Engineer & Facilities Director
  - viii. Police Department Lieutenant
  - ix. Deputy Fire Chief
  - x. Health Department
  - b. Non-Emergency Town Vehicles:
    - i. Assessors Department
    - ii. Assistant Building Inspector
    - iii. DPW Administration
    - iv. On-call staff
2. The above employees and officials using Emergency Town Vehicles may also use said vehicles for transportation to and from work with the approval of the Town Manager if the employee resides within a reasonable distance from the Town of Hopkinton.
  3. The Town Manager may rescind such assignment in writing at any time. Said authorization shall be reviewed by the Town Manager based on availability of funding and whenever a position requiring Emergency Town Vehicle access has been vacated.
  4. The assignment of additional Emergency Town Vehicles will be made in writing by the Town Manager, and will only be considered for employees who require a vehicle for the ordinary and necessary discharge of their job functions. The criteria that will be used in the determination of eligibility for Emergency vehicle use include:
    - a. Officially designated on-call status;
    - b. Requirement for frequent emergency availability;
    - c. Emergency or other equipment contained in the vehicle; and/or
    - d. No Town facility is available for garaging in a safe and convenient location.
  5. Vehicle use is limited to reasonable travel while performing job duties, and reasonable travel to and from the place of work and residence. The vehicle should not be utilized for personal travel outside a direct commuting route.
  6. The Town Manager may, from time-to-time, permit other employees or officials to use vehicles for transportation to and from work on a temporary basis if it is consistent with the needs of the Town. All other vehicles will be assigned on a daily basis by the Department Head and garaged at the appropriate Town facility when not in use.
  7. Imputed Income Taxation
    - a. Employees who are assigned marked and unmarked police vehicles, and/or marked municipal vehicles carrying tools and meeting certain other eligibility criteria will not be subject to imputed income taxation as a result of the vehicle assignment.
    - b. Other employees authorized to commute in a Town vehicle may be subject to imputed income regulations as set forth by the Internal Revenue Service, which considers a certain portion of the vehicle use (namely the commute) to be income for the purposes

of income taxation.

- c. The Finance Department shall be responsible for determining any tax liability and will be provided with the names of all employees authorized to use Town vehicles for commuting purposes, and the normal, one-way commuting distance.
- d. The Finance Department shall issue an annual non-compensation benefit form to each employee who is subjected to an imputed income taxation.

*Vehicle Accident, Loss, Damage or Liability (Municipal Issued Vehicles)*

The following guidelines are to be followed regarding accidents, loss or damage to Town owned vehicles.

1. All accidents, regardless of fault, are to be reported immediately to the Town Manager's Office and the Director of Human Resources immediately, no later than 24 hours after the incident, to the operator's supervisor, including whether the accident resulted in bodily injury or property damage.
2. A Police report is required when any Town owned vehicle is in an accident or suffers loss or damage. Additionally, the Town Manager may request a written report concerning the incident and will be submitted to the employees supervisor, except that in the case of personal injury to the operator the report shall be submitted as soon as possible. Copies of the report shall be filed with the local police department and the Town Manager's Office (for insurance purposes). In the case of personal injury, Human Resources shall be notified within 24 hours of the incident.
3. Any employee who is assigned a municipal vehicle and who is arrested or charged with a motor vehicle offense for which the punishment includes suspension or revocation of the motor vehicle license must notify their supervisor immediately, no later than 24 hours after the incident. Conviction for such an offense may be grounds for loss of municipal vehicle privileges and/or further disciplinary action upon review of the Department Head and Town Manager.
4. Employees who incur parking or other fines in municipal vehicles shall be personally responsible for payment of such fines. Violations may also result in disciplinary action or revocation of vehicle privileges.
5. Penalty for Negligence. The vehicle operator privileges of an employee may be suspended or revoked by the Town Manager if a Town vehicle is damaged or destroyed due to the negligence of the employee. Other disciplinary action may be taken at the discretion of the Department Head and Town Manager.

**USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE FOR WORK-RELATED DUTIES**

For the purposes of this section, “personal vehicle” shall be defined as an automobile that is owned and insured for private use by an employee, but is used to perform approved Town duties.

#### *General Policy Provisions*

1. **Travel Reimbursement Approval.** Travel expense reimbursement is intended for travel within and outside the Town of Hopkinton for official town business purposes only. Employees will not be reimbursed for personal automobile use within the Town of Hopkinton if an employee has access to a town-issued vehicle, unless there is advance approval of the employees’ immediate supervisor, Department Head, Finance Director or Town Manager, unless specifically authorized by a previously negotiated collective bargaining agreement.
2. **Mileage Rate.** When an employee is authorized to use a personal automobile for work-related travel, the employee shall be reimbursed at a rate established by the Internal Revenue Service rate in effect on July 1st of each given fiscal year. The mileage rate is intended to include the costs of gasoline, repairs, insurance, and general wear and tear on the automobile.
3. **Travel Reimbursement.** In addition to the mileage rate, the Town will reimburse employees authorized to travel outside of Hopkinton for tolls and reasonable parking expenses. Receipts shall be provided as a condition of reimbursement. Employees receiving automobile allowances may be reimbursed for incidentals (such as tolls, reasonable parking expenses) for work related duties only. Employees will not be reimbursed for tolls which would normally be paid by the employee during his or her normal commute to work.
4. **The Town requires employees who are reimbursed for work related travel for a personal vehicle, or who receive an automobile allowance, to show proof of the following minimum levels of insurance coverage: Bodily Injury: \$100,000/\$300,000; and, Property Damage: \$25,000.**
5. **Irregular commutes.** Employees will not be reimbursed for commuting between their homes and offices to other regular work locations, unless the travel exceeds the normal commute mileage from the employee's primary residence to the office at which the employee regularly reports for their job duties. Reimbursement will only include the difference between the regular commute mileage and the total mileage accrued for individual trip outside of the regular work day.
6. **In order to be reimbursed for personal automobile use, employees must complete both a “Travel Reimbursement” and a “Request for Payment” form. These forms shall be submitted to the employees’ immediate supervisor for approval, prior to submission to the Town Finance Director for payment. Employee’s shall submit for reimbursement within one (1) month of the date of expenses rendered.**
7. **Employees will obey all relative traffic laws associated with the jurisdiction in which they are travelling. It is the responsibility of the employee to know the traffic laws within the jurisdiction**

they are driving within. If an employee is charged with a motor vehicle offense, the employee is fully liable for all inclusive penalties and charges associated with the offense.

*Vehicle Accident, Loss, Damage or Liability (Personal Vehicles)*

1. In the event of an accident, loss or damage to a personal vehicle, while on approved business and regardless of which party is at fault, a police report is required to be completed by the respective jurisdiction's Police Department. The report must be sent to the Town Manager's Office and to the employee's immediate supervisor.
2. In the event that an employee's personal vehicle is damaged during an approved, work-related trip and the damage is not due to the gross negligence of the employee and not repaired by another party's insurance, the Town will reimburse the employee, up to a maximum of 50% of the cost of the repairs or replacement value and the amount of any deductible, per occurrence, to cover the costs associated with the repairs; provided that the employee filed a claim with their personal insurance. Furthermore:
  - a. It will be the responsibility of the employee to provide a required appraisal of damage to the vehicle. Without an appraisal, no compensation will be applied by the Town.
  - b. The Town reserves the right to inquire with an alternative appraiser to determine the cost of repairs.
  - c. The Town Manager shall have the authority to authorize full reimbursement based upon the conclusions of the Police report, appraisal(s) and the nature of the damage or loss to a personal automobile.
3. If the damage to a personal vehicle is due to the gross negligence of the employee and includes a second party, the employee will be fully liable for all inclusive penalties and costs associated with the offense. If the damage is due to gross negligence of the employee and does not include a second party, the Town will compensate the employee according to the schedule outlined in Section 2 of "*Vehicle Accident, Loss, Damage or Liability (Personal Vehicles)*" above.

## **FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE POLICY**

Approval Date by the Board of Selectmen: April 27, 2010; revised March 6, 2012

Effective Date: April 27, 2010

### **DEFINITIONS**

Combined city and highway MPG (EPA Combined fuel economy): Combined Fuel Economy means the fuel economy from driving a combination of 43% city and 57% highway miles and is calculated as follows:  
 $=1/((0.43/City\ MPG)+(0.57/highway\ MPG))[i]$

Drive System: The manner in which mechanical power is directly transmitted from the drive shaft to the wheels. The following codes are used in the drive field:

- AWD = All Wheel Drive: four-wheel drive automatically controlled by the vehicle powertrain system;  
4WD = 4-Wheel Drive: driver selectable four-wheel drive with 2-wheel drive option;
- 2WD = 2-Wheel Drive

Heavy-duty truck: A vehicle with a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 8,500 pounds.

#### *POLICY STATEMENT*

In an effort to reduce the Town's fuel consumption and energy costs, the Board of Selectmen hereby adopts a policy to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles to meet this goal.

#### *PURPOSE*

To establish a requirement that the Town of Hopkinton purchases only fuel efficient vehicles for municipal and school use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.

#### *APPLICABILITY*

This policy applies to all divisions and departments of the Town of Hopkinton.

#### *GUIDELINES*

All departments shall purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable.

The Town of Hopkinton will maintain an annual vehicle inventory for non-exempt vehicles and a plan for replacing these vehicles with vehicles that meet, at a minimum, the fuel efficiency ratings contained in the most recent guidance for Criteria 4 published by the MA Department of Energy Resources' Green Communities Division. The fuel efficiency ratings contained therein are based on the most recently published US Environmental Protection Agency combined city and highway MPG ratings for vehicles.

This Green Communities' Guidance for Criteria 4 must be checked for updates prior to ordering replacement vehicles.

#### *EXEMPTIONS*

Heavy-duty vehicles such as fire-trucks, ambulances, and public works trucks are exempt from this criterion. Police cruisers are exempt from this criterion. However, municipalities must commit to purchase fuel efficient cruisers when they become commercially available. Police department administrative vehicles must meet fuel efficient requirements

#### *INVENTORY*

The following information shall be included in a vehicle inventory list and said list shall be updated on an



annual basis:

Model	Make	Model Year	Year Purchased	Drive System	Weight Class	MPG	Annual Miles Driven	Total Fuel Consumption	Vehicle Function

NOTE: Departments may use EPA combined MPG estimates or actual combined MPG.

*FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PLAN*

The Town shall develop a plan to replace all non-exempt vehicles with fuel efficient vehicles as defined above. Said plan shall outline the process by which the Town will replace vehicles, set goals for when the existing fleet will be replaced and review said plan on an annual basis.

*QUESTIONS / ENFORCEMENT*

All other inquiries should be directed to the department responsible for fleet management and/or fleet procurement. This policy is enforced by the Town Manager/Board of Selectmen and/or their designee(s).

RELATED INFORMATION:

*United States Environmental Protection Agency, Green Vehicle Guide*

- <http://tiny.cc/greenEPA>

*Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, Green Communities Program*

- Green Communities Criteria: <http://tiny.cc/criteria>
- List of Fuel Efficient Vehicles: <http://tiny.cc/vehicles>

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[i] The EPA changed their calculation of MPG in 2007 to better reflect actual driving conditions, this included a shift to more highway and less city driving.