

	PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		SUBJECT: VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT SAFETY
	NUMBER: RSK 4-0	REVISIONS: 1	EFFECTIVE DATE: July 16, 2018
	SUPERCEDES: May 21, 2012	APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL:	
		A. Max Bacon, Mayor	Date

PURPOSE: To ensure that all City employees are fully aware that (1) vehicle and equipment accidents, whether they occur on City streets or highways or anywhere else during the course of City business or operations, can result in injuries to employees and others which cause unnecessary physical and emotional suffering, possible loss of income to employees, damage to vehicles and property, and delays in services to our community, (2) many accidents can be prevented, and (3) accident-free operations are the result of sound safety principles applied daily to the task at hand.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The use of the City of Smyrna's vehicles and equipment is a privilege offered to designated employees through City employment. It is not a right of employment and, as such, improper and/or unauthorized use will result in disciplinary action against the employee, up to and including termination.

No employee will be permitted to operate a City vehicle unless he or she possesses a proper, current, and valid operator's license for the type of vehicle *and* is authorized by the immediate supervisor and/or department head to operate the vehicle or equipment. In the case of specialized off-road equipment, the employee must have undergone proper training as verified by the immediate supervisor and/or department head before operating such equipment.

In order to ensure that each employee who operates a City vehicle is not only properly licensed but also does not possess certain serious violations (detailed below) against his or her driver's record, the Director of Human Resources/Risk Management will periodically request and review the state *Motor Vehicle Record* (MVR) of every employee who is called upon to operate the City of Smyrna's motor vehicles/equipment. For jobs requiring the operation of vehicles and/or equipment, such a review will take place for all applicants as a part of the hiring and selection process and, for current City employees, at least once annually. *Please note: All* accidents and violations that appear on an employee's MVR -- not just those which occurred on the job as a City of Smyrna employee -- will be considered.

Violations will be considered as follows:

TYPE A* VIOLATION - Includes (but not limited to) DWI/DUI, Refusing Substance Test, Reckless Driving, Manslaughter, Use of a motor vehicle for assault, Hit & Run, Eluding a Police Officer, any Felony, Drag Racing, License Suspension, and Driving While License Suspended.

*Any driver with these types of violation is a major concern. Incidents potentially involving any of the above will be carefully evaluated on a case by case basis before final violation determination is made.

TYPE B VIOLATION - Includes all at-fault vehicle accidents.

TYPE C VIOLATION - Includes all moving violations not classified as Type A or Type B. (Speeding, Improper Lane Change, Failure to Yield, running Red Lights, or Stop Lights), and violation of the Hands-Free law (H.B. 673).

TYPE D VIOLATION - Includes all non-moving violations (Illegal Parking or Vehicle Defects)

All violations will be reviewed by the City Administrator and Human Resources Director and may result in the disciplinary action listed below, up to and including termination, depending on severity of the violation(s).

CRITERIA

Declination, Termination or Reassignment to a Non-Driving Position:

- a) One or more Type A violations in preceding 36 months*
- b) Two or more Type B violations in preceding 36 months
- c) Three or more Type C violations in preceding 36 months
- d) One Type B violation and two Type C violations in preceding 36 months

Probation:

- a) One Type B violation in preceding 36 months
- b) Two Type C violations in preceding 36 months
- c) One Type C violation and two Type D violations in preceding 36 months
- d) Three Type D violations in preceding 36 months

Employees placed on probation will have MVR reports conducted every 6 months, and will remain on probation until such time as violations are reduced to an acceptable level.

Road/Skill Testing - Even though a City employee may possess a current, valid driver's license or certification to operate motor equipment, the employee may be required, at the discretion of the immediate supervisor and/or department head, to undergo a road and/or skill testing administered by the supervisor or a designated senior operator. Upon satisfactory completion or certification of the employee's abilities, written documentation verifying this fact should be prepared by the immediate supervisor and forwarded to the department head for inclusion in the departmental file. A copy should also be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources/Risk Management for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Driver Training - As a general practice, formalized driver training will neither be provided nor funded by the City of Smyrna. *Please note:* Exceptions include those employees who are assigned to Public Safety activities (i.e., Fire/EMS and Police) who are mandated by Georgia law to satisfactorily undergo specific driver training as well as any Public Works and Parks and Recreation employees who are required by law to have a Commercial Driver's License.

Attendance at a defensive driving course or compulsory driver training as a result of traffic violations will be at the employee's expense. Completion of a state approved course will not automatically guarantee reinstatement of City of Smyrna vehicle driving privileges where such privileges have been revoked. Each case will be considered on its own merits and will include:

1. Nature of occurrence(s);
2. Length of time since occurrence(s);
3. Demonstrated work performance; and
4. Demonstrated understanding of safe vehicle operation and its importance.

The merits of each case will be evaluated by the immediate supervisor and department head.

Inspection/ Cleanliness - All City vehicles and equipment will be serviced and inspected in accordance with the respective manufacturer's guidelines (or more frequently, if necessary, based upon usage). If inspection guidelines are not readily available, it will be the responsibility of the department head to ensure that guidelines are drafted and approved for implementation.

City employees who have a vehicle assigned to them personally are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is maintained in safe, operable condition. For vehicles which have multiple operators, the immediate supervisor will share this responsibility with those employees who operate the vehicle(s).

Deficiencies which affect the safe operation of any vehicle will be grounds for taking the vehicle out of operation until qualified repairs can be made.

All City vehicle operators will be required to perform a "walk-around" inspection of City of Smyrna vehicles before use. The operator will be held responsible for damages and deficiencies occurring or observed after his or her operation of the vehicle unless he or she has properly documented the problem during the walk-around inspection. Deficiencies noted during the walk-around inspection which affect the safe operation of the vehicle will be grounds for restricting the vehicle's usage until qualified repairs can be made.

Because flying debris or debris wedged in floor controls or under pedals can cause accidents, trash, cans, parts, and/or loose items will not be permitted to accumulate in any vehicle or motorized equipment. The operator must, therefore, ensure that the inside of vehicle is cleaned out before each shift begins.

In addition, general cleanliness and appearance of City vehicles conveys pride and professionalism toward the City's employees. All vehicles and equipment should be cleaned a minimum of once weekly when in use (or more often if operations and/or conditions dictate). Vehicle cleanliness and appearance is the responsibility of the operator(s).

Drug Testing - As provided in the City's policy **GEN 11.0 "Drug and Alcohol,"** any employee in a safety sensitive position involved in an accident occurring during the performance of City business or on City property that result in injuries to themselves or others or damage to property shall undergo a drug test at the City's expense.

Seat Belts/ Restraint Devices - All City employees who operate a City vehicle or equipment as well as passengers in such vehicles will be required to properly wear seat belts/restraints when the vehicle or equipment is operational. Not only is it a proven fact that seat belts/restraint devices greatly increase crash survival rates and keep the vehicle or equipment operator and passengers in place in cases where sudden steering or stopping of the vehicle is necessary, the State of Georgia also requires all vehicle and equipment occupants to wear restraint devices as provided by the manufacturer.

City supervisors will be required to set the example and enforce this practice. City employees who do not comply will be subject to progressive disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Medication/ Drugs/ Incapacitation - City employees who are taking medication prescribed by a physician should determine from their doctor whether it is safe or not to drive and/or operate vehicles and equipment if this is a requirement of their respective jobs. Each employee is obligated to inform his or her immediate supervisor immediately of the use of any medications (either prescription or over-the-counter) that may cause drowsiness or other side effects or in any way impair the employee's ability to perform essential job functions such as operation of a vehicle.

If, at any time, a City employee feels that he or she is incapacitated due to illness, injury, fatigue, mental stress, vision problems, injury, or any other cause, he or she is *required* to inform his or her immediate supervisor at once. Failure to do so could result in a serious accident, unnecessary exposure to risk, and disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Distraction-Free Driving

Motor vehicle crashes are among the leading causes of death and injury, and rising property liability costs. The City values the safety and well-being of all employees and is committed to establishing policies and practices that promote safe driving habits and makes the workplace safer.

Using a cell phone or mobile electronic device while driving significantly increases the risk of a motor-vehicle crash. Texting while driving even further increases the risk. Additionally, per Georgia law, use of hand-held devices while driving is prohibited, except for limited exceptions.

Therefore, all employees of the City are prohibited from holding a mobile device while driving a city owned vehicle except as authorized by H.B.673. Failure to follow these restrictions may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Smoking in Vehicles – Per City Ordinance and City Policy, smoking in or while operating a City vehicle or equipment is strictly prohibited.

Vehicle Movement and Spotters - Because improper backing procedures can cause a major source of accidents and loss, (including loss of use, damage to the vehicle, damage to other vehicles and property, and even injury and death to others), the following procedures will be strictly enforced and observed by all City employees:

- City vehicles will not be backed up without the driver first checking on all sides of the vehicle he or she is operating for clearances. The driver has the ultimate responsibility for the safe movement of the vehicle.
- City vehicles with blind exposures to the rear or with close clearances will not be backed up or driven forward without utilizing a second or third person as a spotter. The spotter should be positioned to the rear or front of the vehicle (as appropriate to the direction of movement) and physically in clear sight of the driver. The spotter will instruct the driver in maneuvering the vehicle safely. The spotter must be visible at all times while the vehicle is moving. Once again, the driver has the ultimate responsibility for the safe movement of the vehicle.
- Every reasonable effort (within legal limitations) will be made to park vehicles so that backing up will not be necessary.
- Drivers of City vehicles will make every reasonable effort to avoid placing vehicles in areas where visibility and clearances are limited.