

**HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY**  
**Fauquier County, Virginia**

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**Policy Title: Fleet Safety Program**  
**Section No.: 53**

**Date: November 13, 2008**  
**Supersedes Policy: NEW**

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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this program is to provide a comprehensive fleet accident control program and guidelines for fleet safety. An effective fleet safety program is necessary to help prevent vehicle accidents.

**II. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Fauquier County Government employees who operate a county-owned vehicle and who operate a personal vehicle on county business.

**III. RATIONALE**

Fauquier County Government is convinced that safe, dependable operation of vehicles and equipment is an essential factor in meeting our responsibility for providing services to the community. It is our objective to provide appropriate vehicles, training, and supervision for employees who operate vehicles. Supervisor(s) and department heads are expected to implement and enforce all fleet safety policies and procedures contained herein.

Of all areas of government operations, a motor vehicle accident has the greatest fatality risk to both workers and citizens of the community. Motor vehicles of all types are essential for governmental operation; this is an area of great liability exposure. In addition to liability exposure, there is also potential property loss and damage to vehicles and equipment. Management recognizes these areas of exposure and will provide the leadership, commitment, and support necessary to implement and maintain a fleet safety program. This includes management's commitment to provide direction in communication, education, and enforcement of the program.

**IV. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Each supervisor will provide the means and support necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and responsibilities outlined herein.
- B. Supervisors will monitor the implementation of the Fleet Safety Program in order to evaluate the overall program's effectiveness.
- C. Driver Selection is based on established criteria such as experience and a satisfactory driving record. Selection criteria will vary depending on the driver "type":

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1. Occasional drivers-drive only one or two times each week.
  2. Regular drivers-usually drive on a daily basis and have an assigned vehicle.
  3. Commercial Drivers License (CDL) drivers - drive vehicles weighing over 26,001 lbs. or transporting 16 or more passengers, including the driver.
- D. The employment application will provide information on the employees driving experience, accident record, traffic violations, and past employment for at least the previous three years. A five-year background check is required on CDL drivers. Background checks will include questions related to driving ability, care of vehicle, driving performance, accident record, etc.
- E. The hiring interview process will be used to resolve any questions regarding the information obtained or omitted from the employment application. A visual check of the driver's license is required to verify that the driver has the proper class of license.
- F. All management and supervisory personnel will report any deviation from any Fleet Safety Program guidelines or improper driving to the driver's Supervisor. Road observation may identify both acceptable and unacceptable driver performances.
- G. Accident Cards are recommended and should be placed in all vehicles to provide drivers with a guide as to what he/she should do in the event of an accident.
- H. An Accident Review Committee will be established, to review the details and circumstances of each vehicle accident. A determination will be made as to the "preventability" of each occurrence within thirty (30) - days of the accident. The Accident Review Committee will be composed of five (5) members from management, supervisory staff and employees.
- I. Management will direct supervisors to establish a list of occasional drivers who shall be permitted to operate spare vehicles/pool cars, only after they undergo the same screening process as regular or CDL drivers.
- J. Safe Driving Awards will be used to provide added incentive and driver motivation. Management will determine appropriate awards, such as pins, patches

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or other awards.

- K. Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) are used to evaluate past driving history. MVRs are to be reviewed at hire, then every 2 years for occasional and regular drivers and annually for CDL drivers.
- L. Supervisors must review the MVR with the driver to determine where remedial training is needed. The MVR will then be made a part of the driver's permanent file. This review by the supervisor will be used to evaluate the driver's attitude regarding traffic rules and regulations.
- M. At any time during employment, management may conduct "check rides". The supervisor will be able to spot driving deficiencies, determine driver's adherence to defensive driving principles and identify training needs.
- N. Supervisors will investigate all vehicle accidents that involve vehicles and drivers under his/her control.
- O. Supervisors will evaluate driver performance based on: fuel usage; vehicle maintenance; accidents or violations; citizen complaints; results of check rides; etc.
- P. Supervisors or department heads will do random inspections of vehicles to insure that drivers are inspecting their vehicles on a daily basis and vehicles are receiving appropriate maintenance/repairs/service.
- Q. Orientation and training will be provided to all drivers for whom the supervisor or department heads are responsible.
- R. Driver qualifications will be documented. A copy of a valid driver's license, MVR, driver training, application, interview notes, and references are to be included in the official personnel file for all occasional and regular drivers.
- S. A separate "Department of Transportation file" will be maintained for CDL drivers. In addition to the above information, this file must contain:
  - 1. Application for employment
  - 2. Request for Motor Vehicle Records

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3. Copy of Motor Vehicle Report/Annual Review Certificate
4. Request for information from previous employer
5. Drivers Physical Exam
6. Certification of Physical Exam
7. Record and certificate of Road Test
8. Driver's Data Sheet
9. Certification of Drug Test
10. Certification of anti-alcohol abuse training
11. Driver File Contents Sheets

**VI. DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The basic principles of defensive driving will be provided for all employees during their initial orientation. Employees are expected to be familiar with and observe all defensive driving guidelines.
- B. An employee shall not drive or operate a vehicle unless assigned or granted permission. Vehicles are to be used only for conducting official County business. No personal use is allowed. Family members or other non-employees are not allowed to drive County vehicles.
- C. Drivers must have in their possession a proper valid operator license when operating County vehicles. Drivers must be familiar with the specific vehicle they will be driving. Orientation training should provide an opportunity to learn about any special equipment or unusual aspects regarding the vehicle.
- D. Seat belt use is mandatory for vehicle operators and all occupants.
- E. Drivers must operate their vehicle in a safe manner at all times. Drivers should be prepared to change unaccepted driving habits and become familiar with and follow the principles of defensive driving.

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- F. Drivers must have and maintain a favorable driving record as determined by review of their MVR. In order to maintain a good driving record, employees may be required to complete a Defensive Driving Course recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.
- G. All drivers who operate vehicles in excess of 26,001 pounds gross vehicle weight and /or designed to carry 16 or more passengers, including the driver, are required by Virginia law to have a CDL. CDL drivers must pass a medical examination and drug/alcohol test.
- H. The driver will perform pre-trip and post-trip inspections. The Manufacturer's service schedule should be followed. If the vehicle is assigned to a driver then that individual is responsible for scheduling the vehicle for periodic service and repairs.
- I. *No one shall ever* operate a vehicle when there is a known safety defect. Any defects shall be reported immediately. All objects shall be secured inside the vehicle to avoid distractions and "missiles" inside the vehicle.
- J. If a vehicle is involved in an accident, the driver's first duty is to stop the vehicle. The police must be called. Employees must not make or promise settlements of damage. The drivers' supervisor shall be notified immediately and accident-reporting procedures outlined in the Vehicle Accident Card shall be followed.
- K. All drivers are cautioned to devote their full attention to driving. Many vehicle accidents can be contributed to driver distraction. Keep your mind on driving.
- L. Drivers must signal their intentions when slowing down, stopping, or making a turn.
- M. Always give pedestrians the right-of-way.
- N. All drivers must yield to emergency vehicles.
- O. Flasher lights on trucks, cars, and equipment should be used only as emergency or if work conditions require. Flasher lights are not to be used as an excuse to gain the right-of-way or break traffic rules. Their purpose is for the protection of employees and work areas and as a warning device for pedestrians in vehicular traffic.

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- P. Keep windshields and door windows clean for good visibility.
- Q. Be certain you have a complete picture of all objects behind your vehicle before moving in reverse. When visibility is impaired, drivers must walk-around the vehicle before starting and moving the vehicle.
- R. The person directing a driver must remain on the ground near the front or rear side of the vehicle to be in full view of the driver. Use hand signals only when directing.
- S. Do not leave the vehicle unattended with the motor running.
- T. All vehicles will be supplied with fire extinguishers. Drivers may offer the use of fire extinguishers to owners of civilian vehicles on fire. With the exception of fire department officers, employees should not personally use a fire extinguisher on civilian vehicles.
- U. All drivers must report all moving violations or accidents on or off the job to their immediate supervisor.

**VII. DRIVER SELECTION AND HIRING CRITERIA**

A. Selection of Drivers

Any driver with scores exceeding 5 demerits shall not be assigned to drive County vehicles. All authorized drivers will have their driving record reviewed by checking his or her driver's license number through the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles to receive an annual MVR.

B. Physical Examination

A pre-placement physical examination, as prescribed by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), will be given to all drivers when applicable. A medical doctor will complete the U.S. DOT Physical Examination Form. This physical examination may also include a drug and alcohol test.

C. Commercial Drivers License

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All drivers should have in their possession the appropriate classification of license for the vehicles they will drive. Currently, Virginia law requires all drivers who operate vehicles exceeding 26,001 pounds gross (this may include the vehicle and trailer being towed) or vehicles made to carry 16 or more passengers, including the driver, to have a CDL.

D. Road Test

As part of the job placement process, a driver may be required to perform a road test. A road test should be a minimum of 30 minutes of driving in actual traffic conditions the drivers might encounter during their work. Road tests are required when drivers operate vehicles such as trucks, buses, and vehicles with trailers in tow.

**VIII. DRIVER TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

A. An effective training program recognizes the knowledge and skills necessary for an employee to perform in a satisfactory and safe manner and attempts to bridge the gap between the employee's existing level of knowledge and that required in the job position. Initial training should be given to all new employees prior to starting work. Refresher training will occur annually for regular drivers to update information on operational changes, equipment, government regulations, etc.

B. There are two approaches to driver training:

1. Classroom training - This class will review policy and rules, federal and state regulations, accident and emergency procedures and basic defensive driving techniques.
2. In-vehicle training - To ensure employees are familiar with the equipment, vehicle inspections, cargo handling, and defensive driving. In-vehicle training provides one of the best methods of giving practical instruction to a driver under closely controlled conditions.

C. Defensive Driving Techniques

Defensive driving means driving to prevent accidents in spite of the actions of others or the presence of adverse driving conditions. A driver must be able to control and avoid accident-producing situations.

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D. Regulations

Traffic regulations and State and Federal Department of Transportation safety regulations shall be explained to each new driver with emphasis on those regulations particular to each Department's own operation.

E. Cargo Handling

Various cargos require different skills to load, transport, and unload. Dump trucks, line trucks, utility trucks and trailers, hazardous materials and over-size loads, all require special knowledge which a driver may not have acquired in prior experiences. In order to minimize cargo losses, equipment damage, and third party claims, it is essential that new drivers are made aware of specific hazards and how to deal with them.

**IX. Accident Reporting**

A. Responsibilities--accident reporting begins at the accident scene, not when the driver returns to the office or shop. If involved in an accident, the driver will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Protect the injured – if possible, the driver should request medical assistance from authorized sources such as police, fire department, or a hospital.
2. Protect the accident scene – the driver should immediately place warning signals or other devices.

B. Procedure for Actions Following a Vehicle Accident

1. All vehicle accidents are to be reported, whether they occur on public or private property. The report of the occurrence must be submitted to Risk Management within twenty-four (24) hours following the date of the accident and must be made using the "Automobile Loss Notice", accompanied by a "Supervisor's Investigation Report", "Witness Statements Form", and, if necessary, the Police Crash Report.

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2. The police must be called to investigate every accident involving a County owned, leased, or rented vehicle that occurs on a public roadway or highway and in every accident on private property if any person suffers bodily injury or death. Call Risk Management at 540.428.8732 for information regarding specific incidents that may not require police investigation.
3. Occasionally a County vehicle may be involved in an incident where it was not damaged and did not cause bodily injury (i.e., part of an accident involving other vehicles, but escaped damage, etc.). A report should be submitted to document the County vehicle's presence at the scene when the incident took place should the facts be needed at a later date.

C. Vehicle Accident Reporting Procedure

1. Stop immediately and render first aid, if necessary.
2. Call 911.
3. Personally notify the supervisor, by radio or telephone, and give the location of the vehicle accident.
4. Show identification and/or driver's license to other parties involved, if requested.
5. Do not admit blame or responsibility.
6. Obtain insurance information, vehicle information, identification and/or driver's license information from the other driver and passengers.
7. Obtain names and witness statements from anyone who witnessed the incident.
8. An "Automobile Loss Notice" must be completed and submitted to the Supervisor the same day of the vehicle accident. All information requested on the vehicle accident form must be supplied.

D. County equipment involved in a vehicle accident is required to be taken to Fleet Maintenance within 48 hours of the incident for an estimate of the damages (even

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if immediate repair is not necessary). Mechanical failure, if alleged, must be addressed by the report from the examining mechanic. A copy of the written estimate of damages is required to accompany the Automobile Loss Notice. If the equipment is immobilized, contact Fleet Maintenance for towing.

- E. The supervisor must complete the "Supervisor's Investigation Report" form and submit it, along with the "Automobile Loss Notice" form, to the Risk Management Division within twenty-four (24) hours from the date of the accident.
- F. All fleet accidents will be investigated. Investigations are conducted to help prevent future accidents.

**X. VEHICLE USE**

- A. All current and prospective employees who drive or will drive a Fauquier County Government vehicle as part of their normal duties or who may have need of a County vehicle in the course of their employment must have a valid Commonwealth of Virginia driver's license appropriate for the vehicle they will operate.
- B. Employees who operate personal vehicles for County business for which mileage is reimbursed or an allowance paid to the employee must have a valid Commonwealth of Virginia driver's license. Individually owned motorcycles shall not be used for business related matters.
- C. Employees using their personal vehicles for County business, including traveling to seminars, are required to have liability insurance coverage on their personal vehicle. An employee's personal insurance will be responsible for paying claims resulting from accidents when the employee uses his personal vehicle for County business.
- D. County vehicles may be taken home only with prior authorization, during times of emergencies, when "on call", or such other circumstances as deemed necessary by the County. Under no circumstances are County vehicles, including vehicles used by public safety personnel, to be driven by non-employees or used for personal business.

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- E. Noncompliance with this Vehicle Use Policy may disqualify an employee from driving privileges and could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**XI. DRIVER MONITORING AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- A. MVRs are to be reviewed at hire, then every 2 years for occasional and regular drivers and annually for CDL drivers. MVRs are necessary to ensure drivers using County vehicles are performing in a safe manner both on and off the job. Since Virginia drivers are on a point system with the DMV, the following criteria will be used for disciplinary actions.
- B. An accident review committee of five (5) people will review all vehicle accidents which occur in the course of employment. Based on all the facts, the committee will determine if the accident was "preventable" by asking- *"did the driver fail to do everything he/she could have done to avoid the accident?"*
- C. When a driver has been put on notice that driving behavior must improve, the immediate supervisor is responsible for monitoring driver behavior. Remedial training will be scheduled by the immediate supervisor. Any driver not complying with scheduled training or remedial actions is subject to disciplinary action, up to an including termination.

**XII. DRIVER DISCIPLINE**

- A. The following consequences shall be enforced in disciplining a driver under the provisions of this policy:
  - 1. Verbal warning (up to 3 demerit points on MVR)
  - 2. Written warning up to 5 day suspension (for traffic violation or property damage claim)
  - 3. Suspension without pay for a period three weeks. (For two (2) preventable accidents in a twelve month period)
  - 4. Permanent driving suspension (in extreme circumstances showing reckless disregard for self/others)

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- 5. Termination of employment (three (3) preventable accidents in a twelve (12) month period)
  
- B. Drivers who operate a County vehicle while under the influence or in the possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or narcotics will be removed from driving duties regardless of the number of points.
  
- C. Failure to report an accident is grounds for removing a driver from driving duties.

**XIII. DRIVER IMPROVEMENT**

- A. Drivers with 3-5 demerit points on MVR or driver evaluation – Shall be given the option to attend the next regularly scheduled Defensive Driving Class provided by a local driver clinic or the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. Failure to successfully complete a Defensive Driving Class shall result in the suspension of the privilege of driving a County vehicle.
  
- B. Drivers with 6 or more demerit points.
  - 1. Shall be suspended from driving until completion of a Defensive Driver Class
  - 2. Mandatory completion of the Defensive Driving Class within sixty (60) days.
  - 3. 30-45 minute check ride by supervisor to evaluate driving habits every six (6) months until driver is accident and violation free for one year.
  - 4. Failure to successfully complete the Defensive Driving Class shall result in the termination from employment with the County
  
- C. Drivers with two (2) or more preventable accidents within any twelve (12) month period.
  - 1. Suspension of driving duties for a minimum of six (6) months.
  - 2. Mandatory completion of the Defensive Driving Class within thirty (30) days.

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3. Upon restoration of driving privileges a 30-45 minute check ride by supervisor to evaluate driving habits every six (6) months until driver is accident and violation free for one year.
4. Failure to successfully complete the Defensive Driving Class shall result in the termination from employment with the County

**XIV. REPEAL**

This policy repeals Personnel Policy Section 33 *Seat Belt Use*, Personnel Policy Section 39 *Driver Safety Program*, and any other conflicting County policy.