

Seattle Police Manual

13.080 – Use of Department Vehicles

Effective Date: 05/01/2017

This policy applies to all SPD employees when using Department vehicles. For purposes of this section, the term “employees” also includes volunteer staff such as the Victim Support Team.

A Department vehicle is any marked or unmarked vehicle that is owned, leased, rented, seized, donated, or acquired through a collaborative program.

A marked vehicle is any Department vehicle with exterior markings identifying it as a Department vehicle.

13.080 POL

1. Chief Operating Officer Assigns Vehicles to Units

No unit, section, or bureau may take control of, use, or loan any vehicle without the written approval of the Chief Operating Officer.

2. Sergeants in Units With Assigned Vehicles Shall Maintain a Vehicle Log

This log will contain information identifying the employee assigned to specific vehicles, the mileage upon receipt of the vehicle, the service dates of each vehicle, and the mileage upon return of the vehicle.

3. The Department May Assign “Take Home” Vehicles

The Department may assign certain employees a “take home” vehicle due to specific rank or duty responsibilities. These employees must complete a Take Home Vehicle Agreement. (form 1.35.7) Captains will maintain Take Home Vehicle Agreements for their sections.

Employees with assigned vehicles or take home vehicles must notify the SPD Motor Pool within 24-hours (via e-mail) whenever their duty station changes.

Seattle Police Manual

4. Employees Will Sign Motor Pool Vehicles In and Out

Employees shall complete a Vehicle Requisition (form 1.35.5) to use Department pool vehicles.

From 0700 hours to 1530 hours weekdays, employees will sign pool vehicles in and out at the Fleet Control Office located on the seventh floor of the Sea Park Garage.

After hours, weekends, and holidays, employees will sign pool vehicles in and out in the Data Center.

Employees returning pool vehicles weekdays between 0700 and 1530 hours will park as directed by Fleet Control; and return the keys with the stall number and mileage.

Employees returning pool vehicles after hours, weekends, and holidays shall park in the same general area as originally parked and return the keys to Data Center with the stall number and mileage.

5. Employees Will Inspect Department Vehicles for Damage Before Driving

Employees with assigned vehicles will report new damage to their on-duty supervisor. For motor pool vehicles, employees report damage to the Fleet Control Office.

The supervisor or Fleet Control staff member will complete a Defective Equipment Report (City of Seattle form) and make an entry on the Vehicle Damage Report (form 1.35) indicating new damage.

The supervisor or Fleet Control staff member notified shall investigate the following:

- Who the vehicle was previously assigned to
- Who or what may have caused the damage

The supervisor shall submit a Memorandum of the findings, through the chain of command, to the Captain of the section to which the vehicle is normally assigned.

See also: Seattle Police Manual Section 13.010 - Collisions Involving City Vehicles.

Seattle Police Manual

6. Employees Will Return Department Vehicles to the Motor Pool Clean and With At Least One-Half Tank of Gas

7. Employees May Not Take Department Vehicles Outside the City Limits

Exception: Employees may leave the city if required by their duty or with supervisor authorization. Employees who live outside the city and have been assigned a take home vehicle, may take the assigned vehicle out of the city.

Employees requesting the use of a vehicle for a trip out-of-state shall submit a Vehicle Special Assignment Request (City of Seattle form) approved by their Bureau Chief to the Fleet Control Office.

8. Captains May Authorize Temporary Overnight use of a Department Vehicle

Employees requesting temporary overnight use of a vehicle shall submit a Vehicle Special Assignment request (City of Seattle form) approved by their captain. (Section 7 applies to all out-of-state use.)

Authorizations for overnight use are temporary (up to 30 days).

Captains may grant this authorization when the overnight use of the vehicle would benefit the department by improving the employee's efficiency in conducting city business.

When a captain is unavailable and need for vehicle is immediate, a lieutenant may authorize overnight use in place of a captain. The authorizing lieutenant must notify a captain as soon as practical.

Employees must submit requests for extended overnight use (more than 30 days), through the chain of command, to the Chief Operating Officer for final approval.

9. Sworn Employees Using a Marked Patrol Vehicle for any Reason Shall Log That Vehicle into Service

Employees will log in with Communications via radio or car computer.

Seattle Police Manual

10. Non-Sworn Employees Shall Not Operate Marked Patrol Vehicles Without Sergeant Approval

Exception: The approval requirement does not apply to stationmasters, IT, Fleets, and Charles Street personnel who facilitate or perform regular maintenance and repairs on these vehicles.

A marked patrol vehicle operated by any non-sworn employee must have a light bar hood that clearly indicates the patrol vehicle is "Out of Service".

11. Prohibited Activities During Use of Department Vehicles

Employees are prohibited from engaging in the following activities while operating a Department vehicle.

- Talking, texting, or any form of electronic communication or data retrieval on a hand held device while driving, except as provided by RCW 46.61.667.
 - Smoking, except as authorized for undercover operations.
 - Transporting unsecured loads, debris, and other materials and equipment in pick-up truck beds and on vehicles, except in the performance of SPD job duties.
 - Driving while impaired.
 - Driving in a manner that is discourteous or aggressive, unless necessary to effect a recognized law enforcement purpose.
 - Driving an unmarked vehicle in an HOV lane with no passengers, except during an emergency response. See Manual Section 13.030 – Emergency Vehicle Operations
 - Using a vehicle for secondary employment.
 - Allowing passenger(s) in the vehicle, except:
 - When necessary for city business as authorized by a supervisor,
- or
- When the employee is on stand-by or on-call as a first-responder while off duty and expected to respond quickly if summoned. In this case, the employee's passengers must

Seattle Police Manual

have alternate means of transportation available to allow the employee to respond from his or her immediate location.

12. Employees Will Not Use a Department Vehicle for Reasons Outside the Course and Scope of Their Job Duties.

Exception: Reasonable, minor, incidental stops while on duty, or en route to or from work, are permitted. Employees on stand-by or on-call as first-responders may conduct incidental personal business during those hours of stand-by or on-call assignment so long as they are able to respond quickly from their immediate location when summoned.

13. Employees May Request Cancellation of Parking Citations Received on City Vehicles While on City Business

Employees receiving parking citations, during the normal course of official investigations, shall obtain authorization for cancellation from their supervisor.

The employee shall then prepare and submit a Cancellation Request (form 1.51) through their chain of command to their Section or Precinct Captain.

Employees failing to submit a Cancellation Request within 48 hours shall accept the responsibility of making personal payment of the citation.

14. Tolling on the SR-520 Floating Bridge – Good To Go! Pass

Department issued "Good To Go!" passes are available to employees who need to use the SR 520 bridge for purposes of performing required SPD job duties in a vehicle that is not owned or leased by the Department. "Good To Go!" passes can be checked out at Fiscal.

The passes cannot be used for personal business or commuting to or from work in any Department vehicle, including "take home" cars.

The only Department vehicles exempt from the toll are emergency response vehicles on bona-fide emergencies.