3-06/140.12 - Department Assigned Vehicles

Designated members of the Department may be assigned a County-owned vehicle in furtherance of the Department's mission. Only authorized individuals with a justifiable business need will be assigned a County-owned vehicle.

Defined

A Department-assigned vehicle is any County-owned vehicle or vehicle provided by another entity assigned exclusively to an individual Department member and parked at a place other than the member's Unit of assignment during the member's off-duty hours. This definition includes "motor pool vehicles" (3-06/140.10) driven by a member and parked at a place other than the member's Unit of assignment during the member's off-duty hours.

Approval

A Department-assigned vehicle shall not be driven and parked at a location other than the member's Unit of assignment during off-duty hours without appropriate authorization. Only a member holding the rank of Captain/Bureau Director or higher can request that a member be given a Department-assigned vehicle. Only an Assistant Sheriff or higher can authorize a request.

A Unit Commander requesting authorization to provide a Department- assigned vehicle to a member of their command shall prepare the Department-Assigned Vehicle Record and Approval Form for each individual member. The Unit Commander shall check the appropriate business need/justification box on the approval form or write the reason necessitating the need for a Department-assigned vehicle in the space provided. The form shall then be forwarded to the concerned Division Chief or Division Director for review and concurrence. The Division Chief or Division Director shall indicate their concurrence regarding the Department-assigned vehicle request by signing the form in the designated space and forwarding it to the appropriate Assistant Sheriff for approval. Except as provided below, authorization for Department-assigned vehicles require the approval of the concerned Assistant Sheriff. A Department-assigned vehicle shall not be assigned to a Reserve Deputy Sheriff without the written authorization of the Sheriff (MPP 3-01/090.35).

Completed authorization forms shall be forwarded to Communications and Fleet Management Bureau for processing and filing. Authorization is required annually, and all Department-assigned vehicles shall be noted on the July 1st Semiannual Vehicle Inventory Report in accordance with MPP section 3-06/145.00. Each Division shall submit a Department-assigned vehicle summary with the July 1st Semi-Annual Vehicle Inventory Report. These forms need to be completed for occasional off-site parking of a Department vehicle as defined below.

NOTE: For purposes of this section, Department members who reside in an adjoining County and drive a Department-assigned vehicle shall have the presumptive authorization of their Unit Commander to drive the vehicle out of Los Angeles County and need not make radio notification when leaving or entering Los Angeles County.

Vehicle Assignment

Only authorized members with a justifiable business need will be provided a Department-assigned vehicle.

Some members may have their on-duty transportation needs better addressed through the mileage permittee program than by approval of a Department-assigned vehicle.

Factors to be considered in making decisions related to Department-assigned vehicles include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Whether the member will be expected to perform criminal investigations, transport suspects or victims, or be required to respond to crime scenes or other field emergency locations;
- Whether the member's duties require immediate response from home with specialized equipment;
- The anticipated frequency of after-hours immediate responses;
- The frequency with which the member must report directly from home to locations other than the member's Unit of assignment or office;
- The provisions of applicable contracts, Memorandums of Understanding, and compensation packages; and/or
- Whether the mileage permittee program would be more suitable for the member. In considering the mileage permittee program, considerations should include costs as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department's operations.

Command and Executive Staff

In light of their emergency response responsibilities (both at their Unit of assignment and Department-wide), and to facilitate the efficient and effective performance of the Department's business throughout the County, the Department's executive and command staff (Captains or Directors – Bureau operations and above) shall be provided a Department-assigned vehicle.

Emergency Response – Countywide (Permanent)

Department members whose assignment includes both 24-hour and Countywide emergency response responsibilities may be provided a Department-assigned vehicle to facilitate their response. Examples may include, but are not limited to, members of the Department's Special Enforcement Bureau or supervisors assigned to the Department's Arson-Explosives Detail.

Investigative Response Countywide (Permanent)

Department members whose assignment includes both 24-hour and Countywide investigative response responsibilities may be provided a Department-assigned vehicle to facilitate their response. Among the factors to be considered are the need for flexible work hours to facilitate after-hours work, the need for immediate, after-hours response capability to investigate serious crimes, the need for immediate access to specialized equipment, and/or the need to regularly report to work or end the day at various locations throughout the County. Examples may include, but are not limited to, investigators and supervisors assigned to Emergency Operations Bureau or a Detective Division Unit and not specifically assigned to a Station.

On-Call Emergency or Investigative Response – Countywide

Department members whose assignment includes weekend, holiday, or after-hours on-call Countywide emergency or investigative response requirements may be provided a Department-assigned vehicle to facilitate their response during their designated on-call cycle. The factors to be considered are the same as for Countywide emergency or investigative response assignments described above, except that the requirement for response rotates among various personnel. Examples may include, but are not limited to, the on-call Internal Affairs Bureau staff and associated force response team members, on-call Scientific Services Bureau staff, and/or on-call Emergency Operations Bureau staff.

Special Equipment Vehicles

Department members whose assignments require specialized vehicles or vehicles with special contents/equipment may be provided a Department-assigned vehicle when the vehicle or the equipment it contains is more appropriately stored at a place other than the member's Unit of assignment. Factors to be considered include the security of the vehicle and its contents/equipment, the need to perform work outside the employee's normally scheduled workday, the need to respond to after-hours incidents, and the general efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided. Examples may include, but are not limited to, Canine Services Detail transport vehicles and certain Facilities Services Bureau vehicles.

Motorcycles

Policies and procedures for Motorcycle Deputies' Department-assigned motorcycles are contained in the Motorcycle Guidelines Manual (Street Enforcement), updated May 23, 2003. Refer to the manual for specific details and restrictions.

Contract, Memorandum of Understanding, or Compensation Package

Department members may be assigned a Department-assigned vehicle by contract, interagency Memorandum of Understanding (or other agreement), or as part of their employee compensation package. Examples may include, but are not limited to, designated investigators assigned to a special federal task force. Such personnel shall adhere to the requirements of the contract or agreement and shall comply with the requirements of this, and all other Department policies related to vehicle use.

Occasional Off-Site Parking

A Unit Commander or his designee may authorize the intermittent, short-term use of a Department vehicle by a Department member when the member is scheduled to conduct Department business away from the member's Unit of assignment or to facilitate a response to a special assignment the following day. Examples may include, but are not limited to, travel to/from a distant training site, or facilitating the service of a search warrant. Occasional, off-site parking must be approved by the concerned Unit Commander or designee in writing, specifying the involved employee, vehicle, location, time period, and business purpose. The written authorization shall be maintained in the Unit's administrative file.

Unit Commanders shall designate whether a Department-assigned vehicle is to be parked at the employee's residence or another Facility on the Department-Assigned Vehicle Record and Approval Form. Unit Commanders shall consider the following in making this decision:

- Whether the vehicle will be secure if left unattended at the member's residence;
- Safety of the vehicle's equipment and/or contents; and/or
- Any other factor which may help the Unit Commander evaluate whether the vehicle will be more secure if left unattended at the member's residence or another County Facility.

Tax Implications

Sworn personnel provided a Department-assigned vehicle as described above do not, under current Internal Revenue Service regulations, incur any tax liability.

Professional Staff members provided a Department-assigned vehicle as described may incur tax liability as a result of any commuting or non-business use of the vehicle. Professional Staff members are individually responsible for any tax liabilities related to vehicle use. While some information regarding required record keeping and potential tax liabilities may be obtained from Administrative and Training Division, Professional Staff members should consult an independent tax professional or appropriate IRS publication for tax guidance related to their use of a Department-assigned vehicle.

Long-Term Absence

County vehicles are Department assets used in the furtherance of Department business. Unless specifically exempted by their Unit Commander, members absent or scheduled to be absent for a period greater than two weeks shall return the Department-assigned vehicle to the Unit of assignment to be made available to other employees as authorized by the Unit Commander. Command and Executive staff vehicles shall be returned to the Fleet Management Unit for safekeeping, preventive maintenance, and to be made available for reassignment based on the needs of the Department.