

PURPOSE:

The Citrus County Board of County Commissioners manages a large inventory of vehicles and motorized equipment. These vehicles and equipment will be used only for official County Business and must be operated within the limits of the law and established County policy. Vehicles may be assigned to individuals, department/office/divisions, or to the Vehicle Pool based on the most efficient use.

POLICY:

- A. County Vehicles may be used only by designated County employees within the scope and purpose of official business. The use for personal business or pleasure is strictly prohibited, even when approved for use as a 24 hour 'drive home' vehicle. Department/Office/Division Directors, or their designee, will be responsible for ensuring compliance with established policy.
- B. Improper use of County vehicles, as determined by this policy, will necessitate just and proper action by the County Administrator, in compliance with disciplinary actions as outlined in the Employee Handbook.
- C. No one other than County employees are permitted to ride in a County vehicle except as authorized by County Administration. Exceptions may be made for emergencies involving the protection of life and property, or if riding along as an approved passenger in a County Ride Along Program.

People who are not County employees but are working for the County in a contractual capacity may be allowed in County vehicles for the purpose of conducting official County business. Example would be a consultant hired by the County or a staff member of another governmental agency. Approved Ride Along passengers must sign the Rider's Release Agreement incorporated herein.

- D. No County employee may drive a County vehicle home or have a County vehicle on a 24 hour basis except as outlined in this policy. All approvals shall come from the County Administrator.
- E. Vehicle records shall be maintained by Fleet Management.

- F. Department/Office/Division Directors shall be responsible for the enforcement of this policy within their respective group.
- G. Use of a County vehicle while attending an out-of-County conference, meeting, or seminar that results in no additional expenditures other than the use of the County vehicle shall be requested on a Leave Application form and approved by the Department or Office Director. If additional expenses are anticipated or incurred, the use of an Advance Travel Form will be required in addition to the Leave Application.
- H. Department/Office/Division Directors may authorize an employee to drive a County vehicle home after a conference, meeting, or seminar if their home is located between their current location and their designated office. The vehicle shall be returned the next morning. Furthermore, the Director may authorize an employee to drive a County vehicle home the night before a conference, meeting, or seminar if they deem it in the best interest of the County. An example would be an early morning out of County meeting that begins prior to 8:00 am when obtaining a Pool Vehicle the same day isn't possible.
- I. An employee may use their personal vehicle in lieu of County vehicles for official travel and/or business if approved in advance by the Department/Office Director. Whenever travel is by privately owned vehicle, the employee shall be entitled to a mileage allowance as permitted by Florida statutes and/or the County travel policy for such travel.
- J. County vehicles may not be used to transport other employees to and from work unless required as part of an on-call response team where two or more employees are necessary but only one County vehicle is needed.
- K. All vehicles must be the most appropriate for the task for which they are assigned. Consideration must be given to the terrain where the vehicle is normally operated, types of equipment carried, job duties of the operator, economy of operation, maintenance and other valid considerations
- L. All vehicles will carry an official County license plate, County seal, fuel purchasing card, current insurance card, and vehicle registration documents. Any deviation will be approved by the County Administrator.
- M. Vehicles will be classified in the following four categories:
 - 1. Vehicles assigned to specified employees with overnight use permitted**
 - a. County vehicles may be assigned to individuals on an overnight assignment only when it is found to contribute significantly to the efficiency

and effectiveness of Citrus County, is cost effective on its own merit, and is in the best interest of the citizens of Citrus County. The following conditions will be evaluated in making a determination for overnight vehicle assignment:

1. Twenty four hour call out when the driver-employee may be required to respond to a location other than their normal duty station, and where special tools, materials, or supplies required for or associated with the position must be carried in the vehicle.
 2. The driver-employee performs official County tasks outside the normal duty hours and must respond to a location other than their normal duty station; and where special tools, materials, or supplies required for or associated with the position must be carried in the vehicle.
- b. Vehicle assignment will be considered and evaluated on an individual basis. Application for approval shall be evaluated by the County Administrator or his/her designee.
- c. An employee with an overnight vehicle assignment may be subject to periodic evaluation by the Department/Office/Division Director to provide justification for continued assignment. Employees subject to call on a 24-hour basis are:
1. Approved by the County Administrator for specific duties and responsibilities where such assignment is for the entire fiscal year.
 2. Approved as to the function by the County Administrator where such 24-hour on call status is assigned within a department on a rotating basis.
- d. Documentation of increased employee productivity, and increased efficiency and effectiveness of County government service delivery, may be considered for overnight assignment.
- e. The Department/Office/Division Directors shall annually submit a list of employees that he/she feels justified in recommending for drive home or 24 hour basis vehicle usage to the County Administrator. The list shall specifically justify each request in light of the stated County policy. The County Administrator shall review and approve or disapprove such requests based on his/her assessment of the justification in relation to stated County policy.
- f. Department/Office/Division Directors shall be responsible for ensuring no

abuse of the 'drive home' policy occurs for those employees granted authorization.

- g. Because of a change in job responsibilities or service requirements, the County Administrator may, during the course of the fiscal year, add or delete from the overnight use list.
 - h. In the case of 'drive home' vehicles assigned per the above policy, off-street parking must be provided when a vehicle is taken to a place of residence. Every effort should be made to ensure the safety and security of the County vehicle.
 - i. In the case of drive home vehicles assigned per the above policy, the vehicle may not be taken to an out-of-county residence. An employee may drive it to a location within the county in proximity to their residence provided a suitable secured off-street parking place is utilized. Every effort should be made to ensure the safety and security of the County vehicle. During an emergency, the County Administrator may override this restriction.
 - j. Recognizing that some professional positions may require the furnishing of a vehicle on a 24 hour basis as part of a compensation package to induce employment, the County Administrator may authorize such action.
 - k. Employees who are assigned a County vehicle and operate the vehicle to and from work may be responsible for the tax liability for the value of this benefit.
- 2. Vehicles assigned to specified employees without overnight use permitted.**

Vehicles assigned to this category are for employees whose job responsibilities require the use of a vehicle at least 20 hours per week for County business, but do not meet the managerial, on-call, or irregular work hours criteria required for assignment under category A.

3. Vehicles assigned to a division without overnight use permitted.

Vehicles assigned to this category must be designated or equipped to perform highly specialized functions, or provide needed transportation, which would preclude their use as general pool vehicles.

4. Vehicles permanently assigned to an inter-departmental vehicle pool.

- a. Vehicles assigned to this category include all vehicles that are not included in other categories. Such vehicles shall be assigned to general locations, which shall be determined from time to time by the County Administrator.
 - b. The vehicle pool will be administered by Fleet Management.
- N. Employees who are assigned a County vehicle are responsible for insuring that the vehicle is clean. Employees are expected to follow a maintenance schedule and insure pre-trip inspections are done daily on their assigned vehicles per Fleet Management policies. Operators may be held responsible for fines and for damages resulting from their own negligence.
- O. Vehicle idling should be avoided to reduce fuel expenses and wear and tear on internal engine components unless needed to safely operate attached equipment, the vehicle is stopped in traffic, or required for public safety.
- P. Smoking is prohibited in all County vehicles.
- Q. If an employee is assigned a County vehicle and/or equipment, it becomes his/her responsibility to exercise reasonable care in its use, to preserve the life of the asset, and to observe all safety precautions.
- R. All County vehicles must be secured at all times. When the operator-employee is out of the vehicle, the keys must be removed from the ignition and in the possession of the operator. Exception would be made only if removing the keys would prevent the safe operation of equipment such as the use of the PTO or safety equipment. When the operator-employee is away from the vehicle, the vehicle shall be locked to prevent unauthorized access.
- S. Any violation of the above specified policies shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES TO RELATED AR's: AR 8.07.02 dated 12-14-93; AR: 8.07.02-1 dated August 4, 1998; AR 8.07-2 dated May 13, 2008; and AR 8.07-3 dated August 23, 2008; AR 8.07- dated October 14, 2008. Order of Items D & G changed April 22, 2014. Supersedes AR 8.07-5 dated August 10, 2010; Supersedes: AR 8.07-6 dated October 14, 2014

In consideration of the opportunity to participate in the Ride-Along Program of the Citrus County _____ Department, which includes but is not limited to reporting to an Citrus County facility and riding with an on-duty Citrus County employee in a motor vehicle, (hereinafter referred to as "vehicle"), while the employee is engaged in routine duties, answering calls for service, and performing other responsibilities of his or her job, I, the undersigned, whose address is _____, do hereby agree to the terms listed below.

I confirm that I am healthy and able to participate in this program, that I can quickly and safely enter and exit the vehicle that I will be riding in. I agree to wear the safety equipment required or available for use while participating in the ride-along and to follow the direction and orders of Citrus County personnel. Failure to follow any direction, order, regulations, or rules may expose me to additional harm and may result in the termination of my participation in this activity.

I hereby assume all risk of personal injury or death, and property damage or loss, from whatever causes arising from my participation in the Citrus County Ride-Along Program. I understand that riding in a Citrus County vehicle will expose me to all hazards associated with travel by land as well as the extreme and unpredictable hazards of a governmental services environment, including but not limited to vehicle accidents, physical attacks or armed conflict.

I understand and accept these risks and acknowledge that said risks could result in injury, permanent disability, or death. I voluntarily, willingly, and knowingly assume any and all risks, known and unknown, in any way associated with being a passenger in any Citrus County vehicle.

I hereby grant express, voluntary, and knowing consent to the rendering of all emergency medical treatment that may become necessary while participating as a passenger in a Citrus County vehicle. I understand that I shall be obligated to pay the costs of any such treatment.

I hereby agree to release, hold harmless, indemnify, and defend Citrus County, its employees, agents, and representatives, from any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, expenses, fees, fines, penalties, suits, proceedings, actions, and cost of actions, including attorney's fees for trial and appeal, arising from or connected in any way with my participation in the Citrus County Ride-Along Program, whether due to my acts or the acts of others.

I agree this provision includes any claims based on negligence, action, or inaction by Citrus County or Citrus County employees, agents, and representatives. If I am employed by a local government in Florida, or by the State of Florida, these provisions may be subject to Florida Statute 768.28. If I am employed by the U.S. Government, these provisions may be subject to federal law.

I agree to appear in court or other official proceeding to testify about what I observed while riding with Citrus County personnel. I further understand and agree my participation in the Citrus County Ride-Along Program may be terminated at any time by a designee of Citrus County, Florida. I hereby execute this hold harmless and indemnification on behalf of myself and my heirs and assigns.

SIGNATURE

PRINT OR TYPE NAME

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, 20___. Personally known to me _____ or produced _____ as identification.

NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: _____