



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY  
**DEPARTMENT WIDE**

REVISION DATE  
10/19/21

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1 of 10

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**DOC 230.500**

**POLICY**

TITLE

**VEHICLE USE**

**REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:**

- Effective: 9/25/95
- Revised: 1/15/97
- Revised: 2/19/01
- Revised: 4/23/03
- Revised: 7/31/06
- Revised: 2/5/09
- Revised: 9/26/11
- Revised: 1/19/15
- Revised: 4/13/15
- Revised: 10/19/21

**SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:**


Updated terminology and references of Chapter 12 of the SAAM manual to DES Transportation Policy throughout  
 I.B.2., III.A.3., III.D., V.B.2., V.C.4., V.C.8.b., IX.A.4., X.G., XI.B. - Adjusted language for clarification  
 Removed II.C. that the In-Service Training Coordinator will provide defensive/safe driver training  
 Added II.D that state-owned or leased vehicles will not be used in vehicle pursuits  
 III.B. - Adjusted language as person-centered  
 Added V.4. that alcohol, cannabis products, or other intoxicating substances may only be transported as part of the driver's official duties  
 Removed VIII.A.2. that travel between duty station and official residence may be approved when the home is also the official duty station  
 VIII.C. - Removed unnecessary language  
 Added "Vehicle Pursuit" to the Definitions section and Policy Glossary

**APPROVED:**

Signature on file

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHERYL STRANGE**, Secretary  
 Department of Corrections

\_\_\_\_\_  
 9/21/21  
 Date Signed

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## REFERENCES:


DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 4.92](#); [RCW 43.41.130](#); [RCW 46.29](#); [RCW 46.30](#); [RCW 70.120.170](#); DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations; DOC 810.010 Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing for CDL Drivers; [Records Retention Schedule](#); [Washington State Department of Enterprise Services Transportation Policy](#)

## POLICY:

- I. The Department has established guidelines and procedures for the use of state-owned or operated vehicles compliant with all traffic safety laws and in the interest of safety.
- II. Use of state-owned or operated motor vehicles must be authorized and for official state business only (i.e., activities performed by a state official, employee, contract staff, authorized volunteer, student, or employee of another governmental jurisdiction as directed by the person's supervisor in order to accomplish state programs or as required by the duties of the person's position or office).
- III. Operating state vehicles at the lowest cost per mile will conserve Department resources. Travel will be minimized by continuously reviewing staffing assignments and field operations and consolidating trips where possible.

## DIRECTIVE:

- I. General Requirements
  - A. Vehicle operators using private, state-owned, and rental vehicles on official state business must comply with state and local laws and Department policy.
    1. In Prisons, state vehicle use by incarcerated individuals is limited to facility grounds, state-owned limited or no public access roads, and forest roads.
      - a. Superintendent approval using DOC 02-300 Incarcerated Individual Driver Authorization Checklist is required before an incarcerated individual uses a vehicle. The form will be retained in the electronic imaging file per the Records Retention Schedule.
  - B. Except for incarcerated individuals, vehicle operators must have a valid driver's license in their possession when operating a state motor vehicle.
    1. Incarcerated individuals should be adequately/appropriately supervised while operating motor vehicles.
    2. When employees are assigned to a position that requires driving a state-owned vehicle, managers/supervisors must visually check that they have

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a valid driver's license in their possession as part of the evaluation process.


- a. The visual check will verify that the driver's license has not expired, and the driver is at least 18 years of age.
- C. Truck drivers and bus operators will have the appropriate Commercial Drivers License (CDL) endorsements and will comply with United States Department of Transportation regulations including, but not limited to, random drug testing per DOC 810.010 Alcohol and Controlled Substance Testing for CDL Drivers.
- D. Personal use of state-owned, leased, or rented motor vehicles or violation of traffic safety laws constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, including:
1. Suspension or termination of the right to operate state-owned or operated motor vehicles, and/or
  2. Termination of employment in the case of repeated violations.

## II. Driving Safety Requirements

- A. Managers/supervisors will identify employees, contract staff, and volunteers who:
1. Drive as their primary job duty.
  2. Have 2 alleged collisions involving state or third party vehicle/property damage within a 24 month period.
  3. Have any alleged collisions resulting in injury in a 24 month period.
- B. Managers/supervisors will provide identified employees, contract staff, and volunteers with a review of Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Transportation Policy.
- C. State-owned or leased vehicles will not be used in vehicle pursuits unless operating under a memo of understanding as a Community Response Unit (CRU) member in partnership with another law enforcement agency.

## III. Vehicle Accidents


- A. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will take the following actions when involved in an accident:
1. Immediately notify law enforcement if:
    - a. An involved person is, or claims to be, physically injured,
    - b. Any vehicle is damaged, or
    - c. Liability for damage may extend to the operator or to the state.

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2. Report the accident to their supervisor within 24 hours.
  3. Complete and submit [SF 137 State Driver Vehicle Collision Report](#) online within 2 working days and provide a copy of the submitted form to the Regulatory, Litigation, and Safety Unit.
  4. If an involved person is, or claims to be, physically injured, report the incident to the DES Office of Risk Management as soon as possible.
  5. Report the accident to the operator's own insurance carrier if the accident occurred while the operator was driving a privately owned vehicle on official state business.
- B. Department employees, contract staff, and volunteers will only make statements regarding liability of the Department as required by appropriate law enforcement.
- C. If an accident occurs when an employee, contract staff, or volunteer is driving a privately-owned vehicle on official state business, the driver's own insurance carrier is the primary carrier for payment of all losses/recoveries arising from the accident.
1. Private insurance carriers should be referred to the Washington State Department of Transportation's Enterprise Risk Management Office for discussion or claims settlement authorization.
- D. Claimants may request the [Standard Tort Claim Form Packet](#) from the DES Office of Risk Management or the Regulatory, Litigation, and Safety Unit to file a vehicle accident tort claim against Washington State per RCW 4.92.

#### IV. Liability

- A. The State Agency Self-Insurance Liability Program provides liability coverage when employees are involved in an accident with a third party while driving on official state business and acting in good faith. Washington State's liability protection also provides coverage for volunteers or students operating state-owned vehicles when the Appointing Authority authorizes the use.
1. The Washington State Workers' Compensation Program provides coverage for employees who sustain injuries as a result of accidents that occur while conducting official state business.
- B. Contract staff may operate state vehicles only after obtaining the written permission of the Appointing Authority. The State Agency Self-Insurance Liability Program does not cover claims arising from a contract staff's use/operation of a state vehicle.

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C. Liability protection will only be available for vehicle operators or passengers who have received authorization by statute or expressly by the Secretary or designee.

D. Washington State is not liable for any vehicle damage or liability resulting from the use of a privately-owned vehicle.


V. Operation of State-Owned or Operated Motor Vehicles

A. The operator will:

1. Conduct a visual inspection (i.e., check headlights, signals, general condition of the tires and vehicle) before operating the vehicle.
2. Operate the vehicle in a professional and safe manner at all times, and comply with Washington State traffic safety laws and regulations.
3. Not transport unauthorized passengers (e.g., relatives, friends, hitchhikers, pets).
4. Only transport alcohol, cannabis products, or any other intoxicating substances in state vehicles when transporting is within part of the driver's official duties.
5. Maintain vehicles in a secure location when not in use.
6. Be personally liable and responsible for paying moving/parking violations (e.g., tickets, towing that is the direct result of a parking violation).
7. Report mileage driven, date, driver's name, and purpose on DOC 05-070 Vehicle Usage Log.
8. Notify the manager/supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator, as applicable, by the end of the next business day upon notification by the applicable licensing agency that the operator's driver's license has been suspended, revoked, or otherwise determined invalid.
  - a. Incarcerated individuals are exempt from this requirement.

B. The Washington State Department of Transportation fuel card should be used to purchase regular unleaded gasoline or diesel whenever possible. The universal fuel card may only be used to purchase fuel.

1. Fuel cards will not be marked with the 4 digit PIN and must be kept secure. Mileage logs, keys, and fuel cards will be kept in the local Department office when the vehicle is not in use.

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2. If a fuel card is lost or stolen, the employee, contract staff, or volunteer will notify the Department fuel card administrator as soon as possible.
3. If a fuel card for an M-plated vehicle fails, the employee will be reimbursed per DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations.

C. The following items will be in every vehicle during each use:

1. Vehicle registration certificate,
2. Owner's manual,
3. A copy of this policy,
4. [SF-137 Vehicle Accident Report](#),
5. Instructions for use of the Department fuel card,
6. Certificate of Liability Insurance,
7. Instructions in case of emergency, as defined by the preventive maintenance designee, and
8. The following emergency equipment:
  - a. Washington State approved first aid kit
  - b. Fire extinguisher with a BC rating
  - c. Three reflective road safety triangles
  - d. Personal Protective Equipment kit

VI. 12 and 15 Passenger Full Size and Cargo Vans

- A. The Department is required to remove rear seats and reduce passengers by 5 or more in all 15 passenger vans used for passenger transport.
- B. 12 and 15 passenger van drivers must have at least 2 years driving experience.
- C. 12 and 15 passenger van drivers and their managers/supervisors are required to sign the following forms at the time of the initial driving assignment. Managers/supervisors will maintain completed forms per the Records Retention Schedule.
  1. [15 and 12-Passenger Full Size Van Driver Valid License to Drive and Driving Experience Statement](#)
    - a. Incarcerated individuals are exempt from this requirement.
  2. [15 and 12-Passenger Full Size Van Driver Safe Driving Practices Acknowledgement Statement](#).
- D. Before initial operation of a 12 or 15 passenger van, managers/supervisors must provide 12 and 15 passenger van safety education or training. The training must include, at a minimum, a review of:

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1. This policy
2. DES Transportation Policy on full size van and van driver requirements
3. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) passenger van safety, including hangtag and flyer, available at:  
[https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/13699\\_15-passenger\\_van\\_factsheet\\_english\\_060418\\_v3a\\_tag.pdf](https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/13699_15-passenger_van_factsheet_english_060418_v3a_tag.pdf)


E. A review of the initial training content, along with any updated information, will be conducted every 2 years.

#### VII. Permanently Assigned Vehicles

- A. At least one of the following conditions will be met before a vehicle is permanently assigned:
  1. Travel requirements, not including travel between home and duty station, average 1,000 miles or more per month. This mileage must be maintained over a 12 month period.
  2. The individual is on 24 hour call and all of the following conditions exist:
    - a. A state vehicle is not available on a 24 hour trip dispatch basis,
    - b. It is not practical to use other Department vehicles, and
    - c. The frequency of travel is too great to justify requiring the person to use a privately-owned vehicle.
  3. A need exists for a specially equipped or special purpose vehicle that limits its use.
- B. The permanent assignment of a vehicle is not in itself sufficient justification to use the vehicle for travel between the duty station and official residence.

#### VIII. Use of a State Vehicle Between Duty Station and Official Residence

- A. Travel between duty station and official residence may be approved by the Secretary/designee when:
  1. It is economical or advantageous to the state,
  2. The employee, contract staff, or volunteer commences or completes a trip when the motor pool is not open, and/or
  3. There is a reasonable threat to the personal security or safety of the employee, contract staff, or volunteer (e.g., darkness, isolated location, area has a record of crime).

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- B. Travel between the duty station and official residence may be approved for employees, contract staff, or volunteers:
  - 1. Whose duties require use of assigned vehicles,
  - 2. Who are on 24 hour call, and
  - 3. Whose off-duty calls average a minimum of 10 times per month.
- C. Justification for exceptions must be submitted to the Office of Financial Management Director through the Secretary/designee.
- D. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers are advised to check current Internal Revenue Service Publication 535 fringe benefit rules regarding the reporting, taxability, and value of operating a state motor vehicle between the duty station and official residence.


**IX. Privately-Owned Vehicles**

- A. The use of a privately-owned vehicle in conducting official state business may be authorized by the Secretary/designee when it is more advantageous or economical to the state than travel by common carrier or a state vehicle.
  - 1. Authorization should be obtained before the trip begins.
  - 2. DOC 03-423 Authorization for Mileage Payment must be submitted and the Travel Voucher System if the trip is more than 120 miles round-trip.
  - 3. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will not be reimbursed for mileage when they elect to use a privately-owned vehicle for convenience rather than use a state vehicle.
  - 4. Employees, contract staff, and volunteers will refer to DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations for authorization and reimbursement rules.
- B. Privately-owned vehicles will not be used to transport individuals under the Department's jurisdiction.


**X. Rental Vehicles**

- A. A rental vehicle may be used for in-state, official state business when:
  - 1. A state vehicle is not available,
  - 2. The use is advantageous to the state, and/or
  - 3. The use has been approved in advance by the Secretary/designee.



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- B. A rental vehicle may be used for out-of-state official business with prior Secretary/designee approval.
  - C. The Washington State master vehicle rental contract provides insurance coverage.
    - 1. Vehicle liability for Washington State is provided as a part of the State Agency Self-Insurance Liability Program.
  - D. The rental vehicle will be obtained from a rental firm listed in the DES nationwide vehicle rental services contract. Payment will be made using a Department issued purchase card or alternative form of payment.
    - 1. If the traveler does not have access to a Department issued purchase card, the traveler's personal funds may be used. Rental costs may be submitted for reimbursement per DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations.
  - E. If a personal vacation is combined with official state business, employees, contract staff, and volunteers will execute a personal contract to rent a motor vehicle for the vacation portion of the trip.
  - F. Personal use is restricted to use for obtaining meals and/or incidental supplies.
  - G. 15 passenger van rentals for passenger transport are prohibited.
- XI. Volunteer and Student Drivers
- A. Volunteers and students must have prior Appointing Authority approval to use state vehicles and privately-owned vehicles for official state business.
  - B. Volunteer and student drivers must have at least 2 years driving experience.
  - C. If in a vehicle accident, volunteers and students are provided Workers' Compensation coverage through the Department of Labor and Industries.
- XII. Recordkeeping and Reporting
- A. Each facility/office will maintain comprehensive records of employee, contract staff, and volunteer travel and motor vehicle usage that include:
    - 1. DOC 05-070 Vehicle Usage Log, and
    - 2. Cost records relating to the operation, gasoline, oil, and service.
  - B. Records on leased vehicles will be maintained and reported separately from Department-owned vehicle records.

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**DEFINITIONS:**

The following words/terms are important to this policy and defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual: Vehicle Pursuit. Other words/terms appearing in this policy may also be defined in the glossary.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**DOC FORMS:**

- DOC 02-300 Incarcerated Individual Driver Authorization Checklist
- DOC 03-423 Authorization for Mileage Payment
- DOC 05-070 Vehicle Usage Log