



## VEHICLE USE POLICY

THE LANGUAGE USED IN THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE AND THE AGENCY. THIS DOCUMENT DOES NOT CREATE ANY CONTRACTUAL RIGHTS OR ENTITLEMENTS. THE AGENCY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. NO PROMISES OR ASSURANCES, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WHICH ARE CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THIS PARAGRAPH CREATE ANY CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT.

### I. OFFICIAL USE

To the extent applicable, SCDA adopts and incorporates the SWM-200 State Fleet Policy directives and standards. In the event of a conflict, the more restrictive provision shall apply.

Vehicles are to be used for state business purposes. Examples of authorized and unauthorized use, from the [SWM-200 State Fleet Policy](#), are noted in this section below.

### II. AUTHORIZED USES OF STATE VEHICLES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- A. Travel between place of vehicle dispatch and location of performance of official business.
- B. When on official out-of-town travel status, travel between place of temporary lodging and place of official business.
- C. When on official out-of-town travel status between either of the above places and:
  - 1. Places to obtain suitable meals.
  - 2. Places to obtain medical assistance, including pharmacies.
  - 3. Places of worship.
  - 4. Barber shops or hairdresser.
  - 5. Garment or vehicle cleaning establishments; or
  - 6. Similar places required to sustain health and welfare or continued efficient performance of the authorized operator, exclusive of places of entertainment.
- D. Transport of state elected officials, state employees, or official state guests, all of whom must be on official business of the state.
- E. Transport of professional or commercial representatives when in the direct interest of the state.
- F. Transport of materials, supplies, parcels, luggage, kits, or other items belonging to or serving the interests of the state.
- G. Transport of any person or item in any emergency, provided such movement does not endanger life or property.
- H. Children transported in a state vehicle shall be properly secured in a child restraint system that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards and as prescribed by the laws of the state.
  - 1. Personal use of a state vehicle to transport a child may be authorized if the criteria pertaining to transporting other persons and personal use are met as defined below.
- I. Other persons may accompany an authorized operator in a state vehicle on authorized use provided:
  - 1. No additional cost or expense is incurred by the state for such travel; and
  - 2. Prior approval is obtained from the applicable agency head or their designee for such travel.
- J. Domicile to duty transportation when authorized by the agency head, or their designee.

### **III. UNAUTHORIZED USE – UNAUTHORIZED USES OF STATE VEHICLES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

- A. Travel or task of a personal nature having no connection with the accomplishment of official state business or beyond the rated capacity of the vehicle.
- B. Transport of other persons not serving the interests of the state.
- C. Transport of hitchhikers.
- D. Transport of pets that are not service animals.
- E. Tobacco use, smoking, and vaping are prohibited in all state vehicles.
- F. Transport of acids, explosives, weapons, ammunition, non-prescribed medicines, alcoholic beverages, highly flammable materials except by specific agency authorization or by a duly commissioned law enforcement officer acting within his or her assigned duty
- G. Transport of any kind of equipment or cargo projecting from the side, front, or rear of the state vehicle in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to safe driving, to pedestrians, or to other vehicles.
- H. Extending the length of time of travel beyond that required to complete the official state purposes of the trip.
- I. Use of the state vehicle to provide transportation between home and place of official state business unless authorized by the agency head or their designee. The fact that an employee is “on-call” does not in itself justify this authorization. The urgency of employee availability and frequency of actual recall must be factually justified to the agency head or their designee and State Fleet Management to qualify as authorized use.
- J. Travel to or from social events unless acting as an official representative of the state.
- K. Use of a state vehicle while on annual leave.
- L. Operation of a state vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, psychoactive products, illicit drugs, or prescription drugs that are not prescribed to the operator.

### **IV. VEHICLE TELEMATICS AND TRACKING DEVICES**

- A. State vehicles may be equipped with vehicle telematics or automatic tracking devices. Information from these devices will assist the state to ensure efficient vehicle operation. Items such as speed, mileage, idle times, utilization, and routing may be monitored without the vehicle operator’s knowledge.
- B. Tampering with or removing a vehicle telematics, GPS tracking device, or component thereof from a state vehicle is strictly prohibited.

### **V. HANDHELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

- A. Drivers of state vehicles shall not operate cell phones, multi-media enabled smart phones, MP3 players, GPS devices, laptop computers, tablet computers, or other handheld electronic devices (an “electronic device”) unless the electronic device is being operated via a hands-free mode or while the vehicle is in park and is being used solely for the conduct of official state business. Any use of an electronic device that is not hands-free, including but not limited to talking, reading, sending or receiving text messages, or reading, sending or receiving email messages, is prohibited while the vehicle is in drive or in motion. Drivers are prohibited from watching the screen of an electronic device while operating a state vehicle unless the vehicle is in park.
- B. Personnel who, as a part of their official duties, must use an electronic device other than as set forth in this directive and while operating a state vehicle, are required to have authorization from his or her agency head or their designee, submitted to SFM for review prior to an agency granting approval. Nothing in this directive excuses the obligation to comply with applicable traffic laws.
- C. An exception to this requirement is an emergency call placed to 911 for situations such as a fire, traffic accident, road hazard, or medical emergency. In such cases, the communication should be as short as reasonably necessary to communicate the nature of the emergency, location, etc.
- D. Agencies have the option to adopt supplemental electronic device use policies as they need or desire, if such supplement is not less restrictive than this directive.

## VI. PERSONAL USE

De minimis personal use may be allowed in those situations where it would not result in the authorized operator substantially deviating from his or her normal business-related route and where such use is either necessary or in the best interests of the state.

## VII. ASSIGNMENT

Positions, not personnel, have assigned vehicles, and vehicles may be moved around between positions at the discretion of the agency. No individuals, other than the Commissioner, have permanently assigned vehicles.

## VIII. COMMUTING

Employees may be allowed to drive state vehicles to their home / personal residence under the following circumstances if authorized by the agency head or one of his designees (i.e. deputy commissioners or general counsel).

- A. Routinely: Positions where the employee is based out of their home or state vehicle. For example, many inspectors begin and end their workday from home and work out of their vehicle while conducting inspections.
- B. Routinely: Employees who are often required to report to multiple duty stations directly from their residences, without notice on the previous workday.
- C. Situationally: In cases where an employee conducts business while traveling to and/or from the office. For example, an employee may pick up supplies between their office and home; therefore, they may be allowed to drive a state vehicle home that day.
- D. Situationally: In cases where an employee will begin or end business travel at their home for time's sake. For example, an employee whose office is in Columbia and lives in Camden must go to Florence one morning. It would be the best use of time and resources for them to take a state vehicle home the day before, go directly from their home in Camden to Florence, and return the vehicle the next day they travel to the office in Columbia.

## IX. TRIP LOGS

Trip logs should be completed daily when a vehicle is used. All fields on the log, including name, date, mileage, to/from, and purpose of the trip should be completed. Logs should be submitted monthly to your appropriate fleet point of contact.

- A. Guide to completing Trip Log (attached)
- B. Vehicle Trip Log (attached)

## X. MAINTENANCE, CARE, AND CLEANING

Unless otherwise instructed, all vehicles must be serviced every 5,000 miles. Drivers are responsible for contacting State Fleet Government Equipment and Automotive Repair (GEAR) to get a purchase order and optional automotive shops in the area where the vehicle is located. SCDA uses GEAR for all maintenance and repairs to vehicles.

Personal items that are not routinely used during the performance of state duties should not be kept in state vehicles. Trash should be removed daily, and vehicles should always be ready for use.

Vehicle washing and fuel card usage instructions are provided in the SCDA procedure attachment titled "State Vehicle Accident and Maintenance Procedures" (attached).

## XI. INSPECTIONS

Vehicles may be inspected at any time, but supervisors should perform inspections twice per year. A member from SCDA's Finance and Administration team will audit a selection of vehicles annually as well. When any inspection is performed, the following templates shall be used:

- A. Blue Bag Inspection Sheet (attached)
- B. Black Bag\* Inspection Sheet (attached)

\*Note that black bags are being phased out of vehicles and replaced with blue bags as needed.

## XII. ACCIDENT / INCIDENT PROCEDURES

Follow all directives in the SCDA State Vehicle Accident / Incident Procedures document.

### **XIII. POLICY ADHERENCE**

Employees shall obey all traffic laws, this SCDA Vehicle Use Policy, and the SWM-200 State Fleet Policy when operating an agency vehicle. Employees who violate any portion of the SCDA Vehicle Use Policy or the SWM-200 State Fleet Policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to obey traffic laws may also result in disciplinary action, even if no traffic citations are issued by law enforcement.

### **XIV. SCDA FLEET CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS**

Send notifications or questions about vehicles to SCDA's fleet management team at [fleet@scda.sc.gov](mailto:fleet@scda.sc.gov).