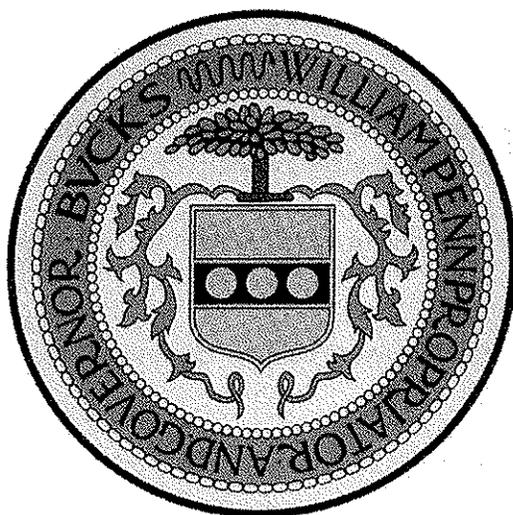


COUNTY OF BUCKS

VEHICLE HANDBOOK



Issued February 17, 2009

PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

To provide uniform procedures for the effective and efficient management of the County's vehicle fleet.

The safety and well being of our employees is of critical importance to the County of Bucks. Therefore, we each have a responsibility to not only protect ourselves when on the road, but also should do our part to protect those around us. Employees who are required to drive on County business at any time will be expected to consistently apply and follow all of the procedures outlined in this policy.

The procedures contained within supplement the County's existing employee Human Resources policy.

FAILURE TO FOLLOW ANY OF THE PROCEDURES IN THIS MANUAL WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION AS OUTLINED IN HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY.

OBJECTIVES:

- When it is in the best interest of the County, transportation is to be provided to individuals to assure efficient and effective delivery of services.
- Minimize the number of vehicles in the fleet without jeopardizing the delivery of services.
- To educate all County vehicle drivers of their responsibilities to professionally handle the use of County vehicles.

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IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

County Fleet Manager - Peter J. McElroy	Office (215) 345-3914 Cell (267) 718-1381
General Services -	(215) 345-3950 (215) 345-3952
Finance Department -	(215) 348-6564
Courthouse Security -	(215) 348-6095
Courthouse Operator -	(215) 348-6000
Daley Service Center - (Lower County Vehicle Service)	(215) 638-1820
Accel Auto Service - (Mid County Vehicle Service)	(215) 343-6737
Michael's Garage - (Upper County Vehicle Service)	(215) 766-8725

SECTION 1

DRIVER
GUIDELINES

COUNTY EMPLOYEE DRIVER GUIDELINES

DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Employees must maintain a current, valid driver's license for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in order to operate a County owned or leased vehicle.

Any employee who drives a County vehicle must immediately notify Human Resources through their Department Head should their driver's license be revoked or suspended for any reason. They must also immediately discontinue operating any County vehicle or driving a personal vehicle for County business or on County property.

Any employee who drives their own vehicle for County business must immediately notify Human Resources through their Department Head should their automobile insurance coverage be suspended for any reason. Further, they must immediately cease using their personal vehicle for County business.

County vehicles are to be driven by authorized employees only, except in the case of repair testing by an authorized mechanic. County vehicles will not be used for personal business.

Employees must know and abide by all applicable driving laws at all times.

The use of mass transit via SEPTA, TMA Bucks, and other transit suppliers is encouraged for use when traveling on County business, and the use of carpools for commuting to work, are encouraged in an effort to reduce greenhouse gasses and emissions. Employees interested in carpooling are encouraged to contact Public Information to have their names added to the list of those individuals interested in doing so. Employees can access the Bucks County Intranet site to connect with others interested in carpooling.

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITY:

Each department must maintain an eligible driver's database. The department must document when an employee is added or deleted from their department's eligible driver's database. This database insures access to pool vehicles, fleet fuel cards, self-insured vehicle coverage, and mileage reimbursement. It is the Department's responsibility to document any personnel changes that directly affect the database.

It is the responsibility of each department to check on a regular basis that the employee's driver's license is valid.

VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT

County vehicles are to be used by authorized employees as needed to ensure services provided by the County of Bucks.

Permanent 24-hour use of a County vehicle is a privilege and shall be extremely limited. All permanently assigned vehicles used on a 24-hour basis will be specifically authorized and approved by the County Commissioners. Only positions with an approved permanently assigned vehicle allowance may take vehicles home on a regular basis.

Temporary 24-hour vehicle assignments may be authorized by division leaders and department heads. Vehicles temporarily assigned must be kept at secure location(s) during use.

Temporary 24-hour vehicle assignments may be authorized during the following situations:

1. When an employee must leave from his/her residence early the next day to attend authorized County business at a location other than the employee's normal work area.
2. When an employee returns from authorized County business after normal working hours and it is more practical to return the vehicle the following morning due to the proximity of his/her residence to the direction of travel.

Division leaders and department heads are authorized to allow authorized employees to take 4-wheel drive vehicles and other equipment home at night at times when adverse weather is forecast. This is to assure the employees will be available at their normal starting times or when called in to respond to other emergency conditions. The use of such vehicles or other equipment by employees for other than commuting to their job sites is strictly prohibited unless expressly authorized in writing by their division leader or department head.

COUNTY VEHICLE POOL

A vehicle pool is maintained for work related travel by all eligible County employees. These vehicles can be reserved in advance or assigned on a first-come, first-served basis by contacting the County's Fleet Manager at (215) 345-3914 or pjmcelroy@co.bucks.pa.us.

Keys are distributed from the General Services Administrative Offices at the County Warehouse. Eligible drivers will sign out pool vehicles in the General Services Office and maintain the appropriate mileage logs while using the vehicle. Vehicles will be signed in and keys returned to the General Services after use.

TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS:

Should an employee, for any reason, receive a summons for any motor vehicle violation, vehicle major offense, or a parking ticket, they must pay it as soon as possible. All violations and parking tickets should be reported to the employee's department as quickly as possible. Under no circumstances are parking or motor vehicle fines to be charged to the County.

Excessive motor vehicle violations, major vehicle offense, and/or a preventable accident history, may exclude a driver from being covered by County-provided insurance, and make them ineligible to drive a County vehicle.

Under the above circumstances, the driver's department head or designee will have three options:

1. Suspend the driver from driving a County vehicle for a period of time
2. Follow Bucks County's Progressive Discipline Policy, and requires the driver to complete a driver training course at the driver's, expense, as decided by the Department Director. Or, if available, a driver training course conducted by a PA Department of Transportation certified in house driver training instructor.
3. Both of the above.

Upon completion of one or all of the above disciplinary actions, a decision will be made by the driver's Department Head or designee, to determine if the driver is competent to resume his/her County driving privileges.

WITHDRAWAL OF COUNTY VEHICLE USE PRIVILEGES:

The privilege of driving a County vehicle will be withdrawn for any of the following reasons:

- No valid driver's license or suspended license.
- A driving record that becomes deficient during the course of operating a County vehicle.
- Frequent motor vehicle violations, or major vehicle offense, or a history of preventable accidents while driving a County vehicle.
- Vehicle abuse.

VEHICLE NEGLECT AND ABUSE:

Vehicles are to be operated in compliance with the Vehicle Code and in conformance with instructions contained in the manual provided by the manufacturer. Vehicles will not be driven off paved or improved road surfaces unless absolutely necessary.

Neglect and Abuse of a County Vehicle Falls into Two Categories:

1. Body Damage:

- Any damage to a vehicle's exterior or interior components.

2. Mechanical Damage:

- Neglecting to perform all operational checks on a daily basis, thereby causing damage to the vehicle driveline (engine, transmission, and differential) and/or any other suspension part, mechanical part, hydraulic system, or related mechanical components.
- Abuse due to vehicle stress caused by poor judgment. (i.e. jackrabbit starts, spinning tires, excessive speed while rounding corners)
- Careless or reckless driving habits that cause excessive wear and tear to any component including all special equipment that may have been added to the vehicle.

IF THE VEHICLE DAMAGE FALLS INTO EITHER OF THE ABOVE TWO CATEGORIES, REPAIRS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DRIVER'S DEPARTMENT.

SECTION 2

VEHICLE INSURANCE
&
ACCIDENT
PROCEDURES

INSURANCE

The County is self-insured. This means that if a County vehicle is damaged in any way or totaled in an accident, it is the responsibility of the driver's department to pay for the repairs or vehicle loss.

When a County vehicle is involved in an accident, follow the instructions as outlined in this section.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

For the purposes of this manual, an "accident" will be defined as any event where injury or damage occurs to a vehicle itself or any of its occupants as the result of a collision or mishap. In the event of an accident involving a County vehicle, its driver is required to follow each of the procedures listed in this section.

Minor vehicle incidents that do not cause injury or require repair, such as lightly bumping another object or minor dings and dents, do not require the driver to follow each accident procedure in this section. **However, the driver must report the incident to their department head or the County Fleet Manager.**

In the event of an accident, the driver is instructed to:

1. **STOP!** – Not only is it a County policy, but is also mandated by law. Any driver who does not stop after an accident has occurred will be subject to penalty by law and to disciplinary action by the County.
2. **NOTIFY THE AUTHORITIES** – Never leave the scene, your equipment, or your cargo, except in extreme emergencies. Locate a nearby phone and call the police. If a phone is not available, write a carefully worded note, giving the location and seriousness of the accident and give the note to a reliable motorist and have the motorist contact the police for you.
3. **PROTECT THE SCENE** – Immediately after the accident has occurred, all emergency devices, if applicable, should be utilized to protect the area around the scene of the accident to control traffic if necessary (4-way flashers, flags, flares, etc.).
4. **ASSIST THE INJURED** – Assist any injured persons, but never move them unless absolutely necessary for their safety. Keep them comfortable until emergency medical services have arrived.
5. **NOTIFY THE COUNTY** – Employees must report an accident to local law enforcement as well as to the County in accordance with established procedures. Employees also must report any moving or parking violations received while driving on County business and/or in County vehicles.

6. **FILL OUT A PRELIMINARY ACCIDENT REPORT** – A report must be submitted to the County’s Fleet Manager even when an accident results in no injuries to the driver and/or passengers. **Accident Report Forms are located with the vehicle in the vehicle’s log book.**
 - An “**Exchange of Information Form**” should be given to other party(s) involved in the incident.
 - The “**Acord**” Form will be completed by the employee and sent to Finance. This form records the facts surrounding the accident.
 - **Witness Cards** will be distributed to witnesses of the accident, completed, signed and given back to the employee. Get names and addresses of all witnesses to the accident, those which are for you and against you. If witnesses refuse to give their names, write down their license numbers. Should there be no witnesses, get the name and address of the first person to arrive on the scene.

7. **DO NOT DISCUSS THE ACCIDENT WITH ANYONE EXCEPT THE POLICE, COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES, AND/OR THE INSURANCE REPRESENTATIVE.** Remember, anything you say can be used in this case. Be polite, give your name, the company’s name, and offer your driver’s license. Do not promise anything and do not argue.

8. **OBTAIN PERTINENT INFORMATION** – Obtain the following for completion of the accident report:
 - Exact location, time, and date.
 - Make, model, type, and license number of all vehicles involved.
 - Names and addresses of all persons involved.
 - Names of injured and the extent of their injuries.
 - Names and addresses for insurance companies which provide coverage for the vehicles or property involved.
 - Estimate of the damage to all vehicles and property.
 - Names, addresses, and/or license number of witnesses.
 - Names and badge numbers of police officers who arrive at the scene, the police organization’s name, and the station location.

9. **REPORT FOR A POST-ACCIDENT DRUG TEST** – It is mandatory that all County employees operating a County-owned vehicle report for a drug test in accordance with Human Resources’ Policy #006.2. This is in addition to any substance testing required by dot regulations or responding law enforcement officials.

The vehicle’s operator must call and report for a post-accident drug test at the closest testing site listed in the vehicle’s post-accident information packet.

PROCEDURE FOR DAMAGED VEHICLES CAUSED BY COUNTY EMPLOYEE

In the event that repairs are required for a County vehicle, the employee's department is responsible for securing three (3) estimates from licensed repair shops. Estimates should be sent to County Fleet Manager along with a copy of the department's purchase order. Costs for repairs are to be charged to the department's appropriate budget code.

PROCEDURE FOR COUNTY VEHICLE ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY OTHER DRIVER

An accident caused by the other driver requires completion of the forms noted in "Procedure at Scene of Accident" and sent to the County Fleet Manager, even when there are no damages to any vehicles or injuries to anyone involved.

If other drivers cause any damage a County vehicle, the Fleet Manager will arrange for an appraisal of the County vehicle. The department pays for repairs to the vehicle from their appropriate budget code.

COUNTY EMPLOYEE INCIDENTS WHEN OPERATING A COUNTY-OWNED VEHICLE

Employees are encouraged to seek any medical attention they believe necessary following an accident in a County-owned vehicle. If there are no injuries at time of incident, a report will be kept on file in the event the employee develops symptoms at a later date. If there are injuries, the employee will report to Human Resources (Workers Compensation Coordinator) through their department head ASAP.

NOTE: Remember, all vehicle accidents or incidents must be reported to the County. Use the provided Accident Forms and give to the County Fleet Manager. Failure to report an accident / incident immediately may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of the driver.

SECTION 3

SAFETY RULES

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The efficiency of any operation can be measured by its ability to control loss. Accidents resulting in personal injury and damage to property and equipment represent needless suffering and waste. It is Bucks County's responsibility to provide the safest conditions and equipment for all employees. The County's goal on safety is:

- The safety of the employee, the public, and the operation is foremost and every attempt will be made to reduce the possibility of accidental occurrence.
- Safety will take precedence over expediency and shortcuts.
- Bucks County intends to comply with all safety laws and ordinances.

GENERAL COUNTY SAFETY RULES

- In Pennsylvania, it is mandatory that all occupants of a vehicle use seat belts at all times without exception. All employees are expected to wear seatbelts at all times while in a moving vehicle being used for County business, whether they are the driver or a passenger, including the rear seating positions. Employees should never allow anyone to ride in any part of the vehicle not specifically intended for passenger use and/or any seat that does not include a working seat belt. Any malfunctioning seat belt should be repaired or replaced immediately.
- Use of **ANY** handheld device while behind the wheel of a moving vehicle being used on County business, is strictly prohibited. Engaging in other distracting activities including, but not limited to, eating, putting on makeup, reading or changing radio stations or music, is also strongly discouraged while driving.
- Smoking is not permitted in any vehicle that is owned, leased, operated or controlled by the County, including County sponsored vanpools.
- Use of alcohol, drugs or other substances, including certain over-the-counter cold or allergy medications that in any way impair driving ability, is prohibited.
- All employees are expected to follow all driving laws and safety rules such as adherence to posted speed limits and directional signs, use of turn signals and avoidance of confrontational or offensive behavior while driving.
- Substance Use: The use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and the carrying of such in County vehicles is prohibited at all times. All prescription medicine and over the counter medicines must be in their original containers. The driver's immediate supervisor must be alerted if a driver is using prescription drugs that may affect their alertness, judgment, or reaction time while driving a vehicle. All drivers must comply with all County, Federal, State, and local laws and relating to drug testing. (See H.R. Policy #006.2)

- Employees transporting authorized children or other passengers will never leave them unattended while in a County vehicle.
- All vehicles of the County must be operated within the legal weight limits that are applicable to each particular vehicle. If compliance with this policy is not possible, the district supervisor is to be notified immediately. Drivers caught overloading their vehicles will be held responsible for and fines that may result.
- Drivers must maintain a keen and alert driving posture while operating a County vehicle.
- Radio volume must remain at a reasonable level that does not interfere with the driver's concentration or their ability to hear outside the vehicle.
- The driver is to be in attendance during all loading or unloading operations and is responsible for any damage or loss to the vehicle or cargo. Vehicles must be secured and locked after exiting.
- All drivers must follow the most practical route unless weather or road conditions deem it necessary to deviate.
- Pre-trip/post-trip inspections are to be done by the driver.

Every employee of Bucks County will be expected to demonstrate an attitude that reflects the General Safety Rules listed above and in the driver's license policy. (Section 1).

SECTION 4

VEHICLE LOG BOOK

VEHICLE LOGBOOKS

A County Vehicle Logbook is applicable to all vehicles. **This logbook must be kept in the vehicle at all times.** The logbook should contain the vehicle's mileage log, Vehicle Inspection Reports, gas card, accident information packet and any other information pertaining to the vehicle.

Vehicle Mileage Logs will be completed each time the vehicle is used. A sample page of the Mileage Log is included in this section. If a vehicle has five different drivers in one day, **each driver must fill out the logbook.** Each sheet must be signed and dated.

Any mechanical malfunction or damage to the vehicle must be documented in the **Vehicle Inspection Report** included in the logbook. The County Fleet Manager will conduct vehicle audits by using the Vehicle Inspection Report.

If a problem is safety related, it must be reported to the department's supervisor immediately. **If any major problems are found and are not noted in the logbook, it will be the fault of the last driver.** Vehicle logbooks can be obtained from each department.

When a vehicle is retired or transferred, the logbook must be returned with the vehicle.

SECTION 5

FUEL CARD INSTRUCTIONS

FUEL CARD INSTRUCTIONS

All County vehicles must have a fuel card to obtain fuel. Only eligible employees listed in each department's database will be authorized to obtain fuel at the County's warehouse in Doylestown Township or Core Creek Park in Middletown.

For card processing, follow the instructions listed below:

DOYLESTOWN:

- Swipe the card at the island pump.
- The machine will ask for two prompts, your **PIN number** (which is the last four digits of your social security number) and the **mileage**. Then follow the instructions at the pump.

CORE CREEK:

- Use gas key assigned to vehicle
- Enter your **PIN number**, (which is the last four digits of your social security number) as indicated and pump fuel.

Before you pump fuel, check to see if your vehicle requires diesel or unleaded fuel. If the wrong fuel is used it could result in serious engine damage, and disciplinary action for the driver.

FUEL OBTAINED FOR A VEHICLE WITH A CARD THAT IS ASSIGNED TO ANOTHER VEHICLE OR EQUIPMENT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

When a vehicle is retired or transferred, the fuel card must be returned with the vehicle.

SECTION 6

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Preventive maintenance will be completed for all County vehicles as soon as possible in accordance with schedules listed in the manual provided by the manufacturer. County vehicle operators will also abide by the following standards:

- No County vehicle shall be left idling while not in use.
- Keep tires inflated to the manufacturer's recommended maximum pressure and the wheels properly aligned.
- Anticipate situations and avoid unnecessary braking.
- Use air conditioning sparingly and in recirculation mode whenever possible.
- Avoid quick starts and hard braking and obey posted speed limits.

Vehicles will also be kept in as clean a condition as possible considering weather conditions.

Minor vehicle maintenance and detailing is available for a nominal fee through the Department of Corrections. Examples of services offered are as follows:

- Oil Changes
- Decal Application
- Exterior/Interior Detailing
- Minor Paint Work
- Minor Repairs

D.O.C. vehicle services can be arranged by contacting the Fleet Manager at (215) 345-3914 or pjmcelroy@co.bucks.pa.us.

The County is contracted with the following maintenance facilities for most vehicle repairs and maintenance work. Services provided by these facilities at fixed rates include: towing, state inspections/emissions testing, alignments, brakes, wheel balancing, tune ups and safety checks. Departments should contact any of these facilities when vehicle repairs or maintenance work is required.

MICHAEL'S GARAGE
5000 Township Line Rd.
Plumsteadville, PA 18949
Phone - (215) 766-8725
Fax - (215) 766-2658

ACCEL AUTO SERVICE
1693 Meetinghouse Rd.
Warminster, PA 18974
Phone - (215) 343-6737
Fax - (215) 343-4240

DALEY SERVICE CENTER
2749 Bristol Pike
Bensalem, PA 19020
Phone - (215) 638-1820
Fax - (215) 638-9392

Preventive Maintenance is critical to your vehicle's life expectancy. It is both the driver and your department's responsibility to know when your vehicle is due for preventative maintenance.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT EACH DEPARTMENT SCHEDULES SERVICE APPOINTMENTS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

