

# Tazewell County Board Policy

Category: Human Resources  
Subject: Vehicle Policy

Policy Number: HR10-01  
Approval Date: Draft as of 8/13/10

Purpose: To establish administrative regulations which standardize the procedures utilized by County employees in the use of all Tazewell County vehicles or privately owned vehicles in the conduct of official County business.

Authority: The Tazewell County Board.

Rationale: Tazewell County operates a large and divergent fleet of equipment for a variety of purposes in providing services to the public. The cost to purchase, insure, maintain and operate the County fleet is a substantial capital and operating cost to taxpayers. It is important to maintain a comprehensive policy on vehicle use to ensure the safety and well being of County employees and property and to mitigate risk.

Action Plan:

1. General Policy.

- a. All vehicles owned or leased by the County are the property of the County.
- b. Any violation of this Policy will be cause for disciplinary action, including possible loss of driving privileges, and up to and including termination as determined by the appropriate personnel.
- c. County vehicles shall be used only for Official County Business, which is defined as:
  1. All duties performed in accordance with the employee's job description;
  2. Additional and/or specialized duties assigned by the employee's supervisor;
  3. Attendance at County-related business meetings, including educational and instructional programs;
  4. Commuting, when approved by the department head and County Administrator as part of a take-home policy (e.g., Sheriff's deputies). **Commuting can only be authorized for employees who reside in Tazewell County;**
- d. The operator of the vehicle, generally referred to as "employee," may include interns and others who are pre-authorized to drive a County vehicle when involved in Official County Business but may not be on the Tazewell County payroll. A valid Illinois driver's license is **required** to drive a vehicle.
- e. **No employee or other authorized user can drive a County-owned and/or insured vehicle without first reading and signing this form.**

- f. **Employees that use a personal vehicle for County business must maintain current proof of insurance (e.g. insurance card) with minimum limits as determined by State law and shall follow all State laws and the provisions of this policy while performing their job duties.**
- g. Driver Training and DMV Check: The County reserves the right to require a safe driver course at any time during employment, and to request a DMV record report as circumstances warrant. The County also reserves the right to require special recurrent safety training for employees/authorized users who have accidents in County-owned or insured vehicles;
- h. Tobacco Use: Pursuant to the Smoke Free Illinois Act, smoking—and other forms of tobacco use—is prohibited in County-owned or insured vehicles.
- i. The use of a County owned vehicle is **prohibited** for the following:
  1. Personal use of any nature when the employee is in an off-duty status, including unauthorized commuting, except where the vehicle is designated as an emergency response vehicle, the employee has an on-call status, and written departmental policies have been developed and approved; where the department head authorizes the vehicle be used for transportation to and from lunch; where the employee is away from his or her residence overnight because of Official County Business.
  2. Attendance at political rallies, parties, or for political solicitation, unless approved by an Elected Official as part of his or her job duties.
  3. Transportation of persons (including relatives/friends) or goods not having a direct relationship to County business, except in an emergency situation and with the authorization of the employee's department head.
  4. At any time when the operator of the vehicle has consumed any alcoholic beverage or any substance which might interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle.
  5. To pull or push another vehicle, except for County maintenance units, certain Highway Department operational equipment **and properly equipped squad cars.**
  6. Transportation of any alcoholic beverages, open or un-open, narcotics, firearms, or explosive materials, except in vehicles as it relates to the enforcement of laws and ordinances.
  7. Parking in front of or in a parking areas associated with any establishment which might cause discredit upon the County, unless the employee is on Official County Business.
  8. No driver of a County vehicle is permitted to send or read text messages on cell phones or similar communication devices while operating a County vehicle.

9. **No employee may continue to utilize a County vehicle while on suspension, paid or unpaid, imposed by Tazewell County or any of its Elected Officials. Employees on suspension must turn in their keys to the County Administrator, Department Head or Elected Official, or their designee, until they return to work.**
- j. General guidelines and Vehicle Operator responsibilities for County vehicle operation include the following:
  1. The operator of the vehicle is personally responsible for operating the vehicle in a safe, careful and courteous manner at all times and in strict adherence to all State, County and municipal laws, rules and departmental procedures. If the vehicle appears to be unsafe or in need of maintenance, the operator must report the conditions to his or her supervisor, department head or designee.
  2. The operator and all passengers must use seat belts at all times in accordance to Illinois State Law.
  3. Employees shall lock any County vehicle when it will be parked unattended. The driver of the vehicle will be held responsible for any stolen or missing item if the vehicle is left unlocked while unattended.
  4. The operator shall take the most direct route to his or her destination unless prior authorization is approved by the department head or in cases where an accident or emergency circumstances exist.
  5. Fuel shall be procured at designated County fueling facilities (e.g., County fuel pumps in Tremont, City garage facility in Pekin) except during an emergency or an extended trip where such purchase is not feasible. When fuel is purchased from other sources, receipts and other documentation shall be presented pursuant to County Auditor policy.
  6. Fuel purchased shall be the lowest Octane grade approved for the vehicle.
  7. Under no circumstances shall a non-authorized employee or a person who is not an employee of the County be allowed to operate a County vehicle without authorization of the County Administrator. New employees must provide their driver's license, undergo a motor vehicle check and be added as an authorized user with the County's insurance program by the County Administrator prior to driving a County vehicle. For purposes of this policy, the Emergency Management Agency response volunteers shall be considered authorized subject to the terms and conditions of this policy, including DMV checks and training requirements.
  8. Operators must complete a log if required by the department head. Information contained in a log should include Date, driver, purpose of the trip, beginning mileage, ending mileage and total miles driven.

k. Miscellaneous Policies

1. It is the responsibility of the employee to report and pay for all traffic or parking tickets issued to him or her while operating a County vehicle.
2. It is the intent of the County Board that this policy be utilized by all County departments, including those with elected officials as a department head. County elected officials or other department heads who wish to maintain a separate departmental policy may do so if such policy utilizes this policy as minimum guidelines **and only seeks to address additional department-specific circumstances through a departmental policy. No less restrictive department-specific policy can override the County Board policy on Acceptable Vehicle Use. Elected officials and other department heads shall provide a copy of additional, more restrictive vehicle use policies to the County Administrator upon passage of this policy and/or subsequent implementation of new departmental policies.**
3. All County vehicles, except certain unmarked vehicles (police, investigators, and Probation) will display a permanent Tazewell County seal and/or logo. County unit numbers may also be required.
4. Departments headed by an Elected Official, and **with approval of the Elected Official**, and all departments under the authority of the Board with the approval of the County Administrator, may install Global Positioning System (GPS) devices on County owned equipment.
5. Personal use, such as commuting, of a County-owned vehicle, in **some** cases is taxable to the employee. Employees properly authorized to commute using take-home vehicles shall complete records to substantiate both business and commuting miles driven in County-owned vehicles.

**EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the Tazewell County Vehicle Policy and agree to abide by all policies contained herein. I also understand that any infractions or violations of one more of these policies can result in disciplinary action up to an including dismissal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**John C. Ackerman**

Tazewell County Board

*Continuing a Family Tradition of Community Service*

April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010

**\*\*\* Press Release \*\*\***

## [Tazewell County Vehicle Policy](#)

Last week, Republican Gubernatorial Candidate Bill Brady called for an end of Personal Use of State Vehicles. He said "The sense of entitlement that the ruling class in Illinois feels has got to end. Every mile forward in a State Vehicle has to be in advance of the people's interest. It's common sense. Every taxpayer dollar spent must serve the public, not the insiders. That will be the rule on the day I become governor."

I completely agree with him. Government Vehicles should be used for Government Business only.

Several months ago I pushed for Tazewell County to adopt a Vehicle Policy. We are one of the few counties in the state that currently has no countywide policy governing the use of its vehicles. Peoria and McLean Counties have one basic policy that governs all vehicles and each department has additional policies that are more specific to themselves that include this basic countywide policy.

This new policy came up for discussion at the Tazewell County HR Committee two months ago and since then it has been sent back to the individual departments for further review. It should be coming back to the committee level in May. It needs to come back for further action.

It is my goal to make sure that this new policy contains three simple provisions that are standard in most counties across the state.

- 1) We need to state and clarify that all vehicles purchased by the county taxpayers and that have expenses paid for by the county taxpayers are accountable to the county taxpayers. Some believe that once these vehicles are assigned to the individual departments, they are their property. Would you purchase a vehicle and pay for the insurance, take the responsibility for the risk involved in the usage of this vehicle and also pay for the maintenance and cost of usage for this vehicle while not having any control of the usage of it? No.

The taxpayers have paid for these vehicles, are paying for the continued cost of these vehicles and assume the risk in the usage of these vehicles. As such, the County Board as their elected representatives are the ones who are directly accountable to the taxpayers and should have the control of the usage of all of these vehicles.

- 2) No County Vehicle should be used in any way for personal use. This verbiage is from the McLean County Vehicle Policy: Not allowed: "1) Personal use of any nature when the employee is in an off-duty status." 2) Attendance at political rallies, parties, or for political solicitation. 3) Transportation of persons or goods not having a direct relationship to County Business, except in an emergency situation and with the permission of the employee's supervisor. 4) At any time the

operator of the vehicle has consumed any alcoholic beverage or any substance which might interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle."

- 3) We need to encourage all of our departments to make more specific policies for the usage of their vehicles. These need to be developed by the individual departments, presented to the Property Committee for review and approval, and must include the Countywide Vehicle Policy. This is what is currently done in McLean County and many other counties across the state.

Tazewell County is very far behind the standard practices that are common in the majority of the counties in Illinois. It is time we correct this and provide the taxpayers these simplistic standards. For your information, I have posted the McLean County Vehicle Policy on my website. As always, I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve you on the Tazewell County Board and if I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**John C. Ackerman**  
(309) 635-7624  
[www.JohnCAckerman.com](http://www.JohnCAckerman.com)

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH POLICY  
ON  
COUNTY OWNED OR LEASED VEHICLES

WHEREAS, in the course of conducting official business for the County of McLean it is required that certain county employee positions operate an automobile; and

WHEREAS, the County of McLean owns and provides certain employee positions of the county with an automobile for use in the course of conducting official county business; and

WHEREAS, the McLean County Board wishes to establish policies to govern the use and maintenance of county owned or leased vehicles, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the following policies shall be established and applied to all county owned or leased vehicles:

I. GENERAL POLICY

A. All vehicles owned or leased by the County are the property of the County and shall be assigned to specific departments by the County Administrator. The County Administrator shall determine the assignment of all vehicles based on demonstrated need as justified by departments. All vehicle assignments should be considered temporary and subject to periodic review by the County Administrator.

B. County vehicles shall only be used to assist county employees in designated positions while in the performance of official County business. For purposes of this policy, official County business shall be defined as:

- 1) all duties as described within the position job description.
- 2) special duties as may be assigned by the employee's supervisor.
- 3) attendance at assigned educational/instructional programs or County related meetings.

C. All County owned or leased vehicles must be marked with the official County logo. Any exception must be justified in approved departmental policies.

D. The use of County owned vehicles is prohibited for the following:

- 1) personal use of any nature when the employee is in an off-duty status. EXCEPTIONS: a) where the vehicle is designated as emergency response vehicle, the employee is in an on-call status and written departmental policies have been developed and approved, b) where the supervisor authorizes the vehicle be used

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for transportation to and from lunch, c) where the employee is away from his residence overnight in the course of conducting official business.

2) attendance at political rallies, parties, or for political solicitation.

3) transportation of persons or goods not having a direct relationship to County business, except in an emergency situation and with the authorization of the employee's supervisor.

4) at any time when the operator of the vehicle has consumed any alcoholic beverage or any substance which might interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle.

E. General guidelines for County vehicle operation include:

1) All vehicles shall be operated in a safe manner and in adherence to all State, County and municipal laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the operation of a motor vehicle.

2) any employee operating a vehicle should take the most direct route to his destination.

3) County vehicles shall not be parked in proximity to any establishment which might cause discredit upon the County unless such action is pursuant to the performance of County business.

4) Fuel shall be procured at designated County fueling facilities except during emergencies or extended trips. When it becomes necessary to purchase fuel from other sources, receipts shall be presented for reimbursement purposes.

5) All employees shall be responsible for any traffic or parking citations issued to them while using a County vehicle. Any such citation received shall be reported to their supervisor within 48 hours.

6) Employees shall lock any County vehicle when it will be parked unattended. The driver of the vehicle will be held responsible for any stolen or missing item if the vehicle is left unlocked while unattended.

7) No employee shall be permitted to store a County vehicle at his/her residence or use it for personal business unless a provision is made in the Board approved departmental policies. To obtain approval, a department must justify the need or circumstances under which a position would be required to store a vehicle at his home or that such storage is in the best interest of the County.

8) Under no circumstances shall a non-authorized employee or a person who is not an employee of the County be allowed to operate a County vehicle. For purposes of this policy, the Sheriff's Reserve shall be considered to be authorized persons.

## II. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Because individual County departments have unique circumstances and uses for County vehicles, any department which has a County vehicle assigned to it shall develop departmental policies in addition to the general policies cited above. Such departmental policies shall incorporate the general policies and clearly identify any possible exception to the general policies. Departmental policies must be reviewed by the County Administrator, the Property Committee and approved by the County Board.

No County department, not currently assigned an automobile, shall be permitted to acquire a vehicle until it has secured Board approval of its departmental policies.

Additional minimum requirements for departmental policies:

A) Utilization: There shall be a provision to assure that a County vehicle will be utilized fully. No department should authorize any employee to incur mileage claims when a County vehicle is not being utilized and is available.

B) Maintenance: All vehicles shall be kept as clean as conditions permit. All preventive maintenance including lubrication and oil change shall be made at County facilities or county designated facilities. Repairs beyond the capabilities of County staff shall be made at County designated sites. Department heads shall insure that the provisions of all warranty requirements are met.

C) Record-keeping: Accurate records shall be maintained by departments in the following areas:

1) Specific names of employees assigned to response vehicles or vehicles being stored overnight at the employee's residence.

2) Fuel usage and miles per gallon.

3) Detailed records of all maintenance and repairs including preventive maintenance logs.

4) Detailed records of any accident or damage to any vehicle.

D) Storage: The department shall specify the location vehicles will be stored at times when they are not in use by County personnel in the performance of official County business. Storage in other than a County provided location may be justified for the following reasons:

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- 1) The vehicle is designated as an emergency response vehicle and is assigned to a County position whose job performance would be significantly obstructed to the public detriment without the immediate availability of a vehicle on a 24 hour basis.
- 2) The vehicle is to be assigned to a County position during a time of impending emergency. Such assignment shall be for limited duration only.
- 3) With department head approval, a vehicle may be stored at an employee's residence when the employee's residence is a shorter distance from a temporary work site than the permanent storage and such storage shall result in a reduction in travel time to the benefit of the County.
- 4) At such times as storage areas designated by the County are not available due to construction, facilities maintenance or other cause, the department head may request that departmental vehicles be stored at the employee's residence until such time as County designated storage is available. Approval of any such temporary storage must be obtained from the County Administrator.

### III. DISCIPLINE

Any violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action as specified in section 10.68 of the McLean County Code.

### IV. REPEALER

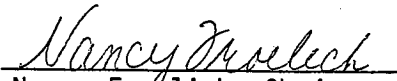
Any and all resolutions or ordinances previously adopted by this Board pertaining to the use and control of County owned or leased vehicles are hereby repealed.

### V. EFFECTIVE DATE

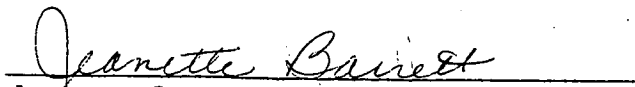
This resolution shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage as provided by law.

Adopted by the County Board of McLean County, Illinois, this 19th day of April, 1988.

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy Froelich, Chairman  
McLean County Board

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeanette Barrett, Clerk of the County  
Board of the County of McLean, Illinois