

DRAFT

Bloomfield Police Department

Take-Home Car Policy

PURPOSE:

Establish uniform guidelines, restrictions and eligibility criteria for the use of assigned vehicles for the Bloomfield Police Department's take home vehicle program.

POLICY:

This policy establishes the Department's Assigned Vehicle and Take Home Vehicle programs. These programs are approved and authorized by the City of Bloomfield and the Chief of Police.

The Bloomfield Police Department and the City of Bloomfield has recognized the benefits of individually assigned cars for Public Safety personnel. The long-term asset value of the equipment is extended significantly because the cars are assigned to one operator, the mileage is extended, and the vehicle maintenance and care is improved. Vehicle assignments and replacements shall be in accordance with the fleet management policies of the department.

To ensure the integrity of the program, strict procedures and prohibitions contained in this and other policies of the department shall govern it. Officers shall familiarize themselves with this and other pertinent policies and guidelines regarding the program. Any of these privileges may, at the discretion of the Chief of Police, be suspended or revoked in part or whole at any time for violation of any provision or departmental policy associated with vehicle care, maintenance or operation. Suspension or loss of these privileges shall not be subject to appeal.

PROCEDURES:

I. Vehicle take-home Program

A. The City of Bloomfield Police Department's vehicle take-home program is a privilege extended to authorized, designated personnel of the police department. Before the employee is authorized or

eligible to participate in the Vehicle take-home program, he/she must meet criteria that includes, but is not limited to:

1. The member shall have successfully completed the Field Training Program or probationary period with the Bloomfield Police Department and be in good standing with the department; and
2. The member resides within the city limits of Bloomfield; or
3. The member resides within a 15-mile radius from the nearest Bloomfield city limit using the shortest, most economical and reasonable route. The positions of Chief and Assistant Chief are not confined to the 15-mile radius; however, if the distance is too great the Chief of Police can choose to define a reasonable distance for those positions.
4. Those personnel as authorized by the Chief of Police.

II. Assignment of Vehicles

A. Departmental vehicles shall be assigned to individual members for full-time retention and use within the limitations of this and other policies.

B. Assignment of vehicles under the vehicle take-home program is a privilege and may be rescinded by the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief at any time for cause.

C. All authorized, designated personnel who live outside the City of Bloomfield shall confine use of the City's vehicle to the shortest, most direct route to and from their home, the city or other authorized duty assignment.

D. Members are permitted to use assigned vehicles for personal errands (such as stops at grocery stores, cleaner's etc.) only while traveling directly to and from work or other authorized assignment

or location. Once a member has arrived home, any such use of the vehicle is absolutely prohibited and unauthorized.

E. Use of City vehicles outside the City of Bloomfield shall be confined strictly to official Public Safety business unless otherwise herein provided for or specifically approved by the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief.

III. General Regulations

A. All authorized, designated personnel participating in the Vehicle take-home program shall have in their possession a valid Iowa driver's license at all times while operating a Public Safety or other City vehicle. Off-duty officers shall also have in their possession their badge, department issued Public Safety identification, authorized and approved firearm and portable radio. Officers shall be appropriately attired in order to maintain a favorable public, professional image.

B. Unattended vehicles shall always be kept locked with keys removed at all times. Seat belts must be used as required by City and departmental policy and state law.

C. Members shall not leave weapons or materials relative to their job or other issued equipment in the passenger compartment of their vehicle when it is parked at their residence. This equipment includes but is not limited to department issued raincoats, jackets, radios, and AED's.

D. When off-duty or while outside of the City of Bloomfield, officers shall not take enforcement action unless absolutely necessary to protect the life of another (i.e.: crimes against persons or intoxicated drivers). Other traffic violations, misdemeanors and property type crimes are not considered urgent or life threatening and do not require emergency intervention. If an offense is witnessed by the officer while outside the city limits of Bloomfield, the officer may contact our department's communications dispatcher and have the proper jurisdiction contacted for enforcement action if necessary.

E. Members on or off duty, or passengers, who intend to consume or possess, or who have consumed any amount of alcoholic beverage shall never drive or ride in any City owned vehicles.

F. No off-duty Public Safety vehicle shall be parked on the lot of any alcoholic beverage establishment or in such proximity it may be reasonably inferred the officer is patronizing the establishment.

G. The vehicle shall not be utilized for carrying heavy or excessive loads and shall not have objects protruding from the trunk or windows. Exception to this will be official equipment or evidence.

H. While on duty all officers shall have all necessary equipment to perform their duties in a safe manner including but not limited to a medical bag, AED, Bloomfield PD issued shotgun, Bloomfield PD issued rifle, and "go bag."

IV. Maintenance

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the basic rules of safe vehicle operation is that the officer be familiar with both the vehicle and its capabilities. The day to day condition of the vehicle is of paramount importance for safe operation, with the final responsibility for care resting on the officer who operates the vehicle.

The City of Bloomfield provides a maintenance department consisting of one mechanic. Employees shall always take city owned vehicles to the city maintenance department first and allow them to repair or troubleshoot the problem and decide the best course of action. Participating members should never attempt to repair a vehicle themselves other than immediately repairable issues such as a flat tire.

II. INSPECTION

Each officer of the Agency who will operate a vehicle during his/her tour of duty must check the following on the assigned vehicle.

A. Prior to use, the following items shall be checked daily by the officer:

1. Proper inflation and condition of tires;

2. Brakes, lights, windshield wipers and washers, horn, emergency equipment, and other electrical equipment;

3. Damage to exterior and interior of the vehicle;

4. Mechanical defects - Certain conditions such as a defective exhaust, steering mechanism irregularities, alignment, or other mechanical defects can only be discovered after the vehicle is operational; and

5. These conditions, or any of the above not readily corrected shall be immediately reported to the Assistant Chief of Police and a report filed. An employee shall not operate an unsafe vehicle.

B. Prior to use, the following items shall be checked as needed by the officer:

1. Cleanliness, particular attention should be given to any loose items inside the vehicle that have the potential to be used as a weapon against the operator or would hinder the safe operation of the vehicle. It is important for the assigned vehicles to sustain a professional and clean appearance;

2. Gauges, to keep the vehicle within the proper operating ranges;

3. Condition of spare tire and other necessary equipment;

4. Oil and water (each time the vehicle is refueled);

5. Battery water level (if not maintenance free) and transmission fluid (at least weekly); and

6. Routine maintenance (oil, filter, lube)

7. At the beginning of each shift, the officer shall search the prisoner transport area. The rear seat will be removed and the area searched.

The vehicle's rear seat area will be searched in the same manner after every prisoner transport.

8. Prior to the transport of any prisoner the officer shall search the detainee prior to that officer transport. This shall also apply even when the officer receives the detainee from another officer.

9. All officers will be subject to random maintenance/cleanliness checks at the discretion of the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief, or City of Bloomfield mechanic. All officers will be required to complete a monthly checklist provided by the Bloomfield Police Department. All checklists must be turned into the Assistant Chief of Police before the last day of the month.

- Members participating in the vehicle take-home program are responsible for ensuring all routine upkeep is performed on the vehicle. This includes ensuring the vehicle is kept clean, all equipment is operating properly, and scheduled maintenance is performed regularly. Officers assigned to night shift may request in writing to the Assistant Chief of Police to arrange for maintenance. The officer will be responsible for transportation to and from the city mechanics garage while their assigned vehicle has maintenance performed. Oftentimes the officer that is on duty can assist in transportation for this officer.