

MOTOR VEHICLE USE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guidelines regulating the use of Township vehicles by Township employees. Any violations of this policy or unauthorized use of vehicle may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, verbal warning, written reprimand, time-off without pay (suspension), loss of use of vehicle, termination, or fine.

GENERAL

Terminology

AUTO means a land motor vehicle, trailer, or semi-trailer designed for travel on public roads but does not include “mobile equipment.”

EMPLOYEE means an individual who is employed by Liberty Township in a part-time or full-time capacity.

MOBILE EQUIPMENT includes, but is not limited to golf carts; other vehicles designed for use principally off public roads; vehicles that travel on crawler treads; and vehicles that are not self-propelled. See the Business Auto Coverage Form in the Liberty Township Insurance Policy for additional clarification.

OFFICIAL TOWNSHIP BUSINESS includes any authorized use to meet the needs of approved programs, functions or activities of the Township.

TOWNSHIP VEHICLES includes “autos” owned or leased by the Township and any privately-owned vehicle used by Township employees in the course of their business.

1. Only employees over the age of eighteen with a valid Ohio driver’s license that covers the type of vehicle to be operated may operate Township vehicles. A copy of your driver’s license with the signed ***Driver’s License Information Form*** (Forms) must be submitted to the Assistant Township Administrator prior to any use of a Township vehicle.
2. Employees must follow all local, state, and federal laws while operating a Township vehicle. All employees driving a Township vehicle must consent to having their license and driver’s record checked for accidents, violations, suspension, revocation, assignment points, and any other job-related information contained therein prior to any use of a Township vehicle by the employee. The Township may deny the use of a Township vehicle by any employee as a result of any such review of the employee’s license and driver’s record as determined by the Township in its sole

3. discretion. If the Township denies the use of a Township vehicle to an employee and the job duties of the employee require the use of a vehicle, the Township may terminate that employee.
4. Township vehicles are to be used for conducting official Township business only. Any use of Township vehicles not specifically authorized hereunder is prohibited and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
5. Employees who use their personal vehicle on behalf of the Township or in the furtherance of your job will be reimbursed for mileage in the amount not to exceed the rate used by the Internal Revenue Service for business travel upon submission of a valid ***Expense Reimbursement Form (Forms)***.

ASSIGNMENT OF VEHICLES

1. Upon the effective date of this policy, the assignment of Township vehicles to Township employees shall require the approval of the Township Administrator or Department Manager. The Township reserves the right to review the continuing need for any vehicle assignment.
2. Employees may not drive Township vehicles not permanently assigned to them without the express approval of your supervisor, department manager, or the Township Administrator.
3. All employees who use a Township vehicle (permanently or otherwise) will be required to sign the Employee Acknowledgment Form from the Introductory Section indicating you have read and will comply with the rules and provisions of this policy. Employees who do not comply with any of the provisions of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. The operator of the Township vehicle shall be responsible for checking the vehicle before operating to ensure that the vehicle lights, turn signals, brake lights, and other safety equipment are functional on the vehicle. If the operator finds any of this equipment is not functioning properly, the operator shall report malfunctions to your supervisor as soon as possible in order to arrange for repairs.

AUTHORIZED USE OF VEHICLE

1. Township vehicles shall not be used for any purpose other than Official Township Business or as authorized by the Liberty Township Board of Trustees.
2. Safety belts shall be worn by all operators and passengers at all times in Township vehicles violation of this rule may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
3. Turn signals and warning signals shall be utilized by all vehicle operators. Vehicle headlights shall be used during periods of limited visibility or any time the vehicle windshield wipers are in use.
4. Authorized use includes travel between the place where the Township vehicle is dispatched and the place where Official Township Business is performed. During working hours, the Township vehicle may be used by the employee authorized to use the vehicle to travel to obtain a meal.
5. An employee needs to be authorized by the Township Administrator if the employee will be taking the vehicle outside of the Township for more than twenty-four (24) hours. If an employee has been authorized to use a Township vehicle outside of the Township, the following travel is allowed:

- Travel between the place of Official Township Business and the place of temporary lodging.
 - When not within reasonable walking distance, between either the place of Official Township Business and temporary lodging and places to obtain meals, places to obtain medical assistance (including drugstore), places of worship, barber shops or hair salons, cleaning establishments, and similar places required to sustain the health, welfare, or continued efficient performance of the driver, exclusive of places of entertainment.
6. Transport of other officers, employees, or guests of the Township when such individuals are on Official Township Business is authorized.
 7. Authorized use includes the transport of consultants, contractors, or commercial firm representatives when such transport is in the direct interest of the Township.
 8. Travel between the place of dispatch, or place of performance of Official Township Business, to an employee's personal residence when specifically authorized by the Township Administrator.
 9. The employee operating a Township vehicle shall be responsible for reporting to the proper person or seeing that any service, safety, or maintenance items are corrected on the vehicle.
 10. The employee operating a Township vehicle shall be responsible for the appearance, interior and exterior cleanliness, and general condition of the vehicle.
 11. Any employee operating a Township vehicle shall obey all traffic and motor vehicle laws as well as all those rules described herein. Violating these laws and rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 12. Handling and dialing cell phones while driving compromises safety and increases the risk of accidents.
 - While operating a vehicle on Township business talking on a cellphone is discouraged.
 - If the driver must **talk** on a cell phone, smartphone, or other electronic device while the vehicle is in motion:
 - Use should be kept to a minimum,
 - Remain alert to traffic and other vehicles around you,
 - Be completely familiar with the phone before using it,
 - Be prepared to break conversation to respond to a traffic hazard, and
 - If available use the hands-free or speaker phone feature.
 - While operating a vehicle on Township business, the use of electronic communication devices (navigational systems entry, cell phones including text messaging, email access, or web browsing) exclusive of talking is prohibited while the vehicle is in motion.
 - Cell phone use while driving is illegal in a number of states. It is the employee's responsibility to know the laws in the area in which you are driving.

UNAUTHORIZED USE OF VEHICLE

1. Any use for personal purpose, other than commuting which has been authorized as specified in Authorized Use of Vehicle.
2. The employee operating a Township vehicle is not allowed to permit an unauthorized person to drive the vehicle. Only the Township Administrator can authorize a person to operate a Township vehicle.

3. Travel or tasks beyond the vehicle's rated capability is not authorized.
4. Non-employees are not permitted to ride in a Township vehicle except for business- related reasons (for example, carpooling to a permitted function).
5. Only in extreme emergency (for example, safety) would a non-employee minor under the age of eighteen (18) years old, be permitted to ride in a Township vehicle. Activities such as routinely dropping children off at school or picking them up from daycare are strictly forbidden.
6. Transport of hitchhikers is unauthorized.
7. It is unauthorized to transport cargo which has no relation to the performance of Official Township Business.
8. Transport of acids, explosives, weapons, ammunition, or highly flammable material, except by specific authorization, or in an emergency situation, is not authorized.
9. Authorized use does not include the transport of any item or equipment projecting from the side, front, or rear of the vehicle in a way which constitutes an obstruction to safe driving, or a hazard to pedestrians or to other vehicles.
10. Attending sporting events, including hunting and fishing, which are not in the service of Township business is prohibited.
11. Operation of a Township vehicle while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances is prohibited. An employee who violates this provision is subject to immediate discharge from employment.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each employee who regularly operates a Township vehicle is required to report any suspensions or revocations of your driver's license, in writing, to your department manager regardless of whether the incident occurred within the scope of your employment or during non-work time.
2. Each employee who occasionally operates a Township vehicle is required to report any suspensions or revocations of your driver's license, in writing, to the Assistant Township Administrator regardless of whether the incident occurred within the scope of your employment or during non-work time.

3. Any driver who is convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances or reckless operation, regardless of whether the incident occurs within the scope of employment and regardless of whether you were operating a Township vehicle or your own personal vehicle, shall not be permitted to operate a Township vehicle for a period of not less than thirty (30) calendar days. If you are subject to a court imposed suspension for greater than thirty (30) days, you shall not be permitted to operate a Township vehicle during the period of the court-imposed suspension. In addition, if the offense involved driving under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the Assistant Township Administrator or the Township Administrator will provide you reference(s) to available counseling and treatment program(s). If you seek treatment or care, the Township will not bear the cost (other than benefits that may be provided by health insurance for a covered employee). Any driver convicted of a second violation under this section will not be permitted to operate a Township vehicle for a minimum of thirty- six (36) months. If you are subject to a court imposed suspension for greater than thirty- six (36) months, you shall not be permitted to operate a Township vehicle during the period of the court-imposed suspension.
4. Drivers with any combination of three (3) moving violations / convictions or at fault accidents within an eighteen (18) month period shall be placed on driving probation notice, and are required to complete a remedial and / or defensive driving course(s) prior to being authorized to use a Township vehicle. Such course(s) must be approved by the Assistant Township Administrator or Township Administrator, and must not be taken on Township time or at Township expense. Probation shall be for a period of one (1) year. Any further violation or accident will result in termination of employment, should the operation of a motor vehicle be an essential part of employment duties, as determined by the Township Administrator.
5. An employee may be disciplined for moving violations, convictions, or causing or being involved in at-fault accidents in a Township vehicle. Such discipline may include discharge, when warranted. Furthermore, an employee who loses driving privileges may be discharged from a position that requires driving as an essential function of that position.
6. The driver of any Township vehicle which is involved in an accident shall immediately report the accident to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and your supervisor, department manager, the Assistant Township Administrator, or the Township Administrator. Drivers must report such accidents regardless of whether they occur on public roads. The verbal report must be followed with a written report within twenty-four(24) hours of an accident. Without limitation of the rights of Liberty Township to deny defense and indemnification of employees involved in motor vehicle accidents pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 2744, employees involved in motor vehicle accidents are required to pay any insurance deductibles for damage sustained to Liberty Township vehicles if the accident occurred while you were not engaged in the performance of official job duties or other activities authorized by the your supervisor, the department manager, Assistant Township Administrator, or the Township Administrator.

7. Parking, moving violations, and other fines received while operating a Township vehicle are the responsibility of the employee.
8. An employee, who is involved in an accident when operating a Township vehicle in a non- approved manner, will be subject to appropriate legal action to recover costs.
9. In the event there is a conflict between the matters expressed in this manual and any other applicable contract, collective bargaining agreement, law, regulation, or policy statement or directive, the applicable contract, collective bargaining agreement, law, regulation, or other policy.