

# DRIVER SELECTION AND TRAINING POLICY

## General Statement of Policy

The operation of vehicles is indispensable in conducting County business. The use of each vehicle and the manner in which it is handled directly affects the production of each County department and division. Vehicle collisions are potentially the most costly losses we can incur when property damage, employee injuries, bodily injury, fatalities and liability suits are taken into consideration.

It is County policy that a good driving record is a condition of employment with Washoe County for those persons who may drive a vehicle on behalf of the County. A good driving record is also a consideration for continued employment for those employees who are required to drive as part of their regularly assigned duties as County employees.

Employees who operate County vehicles or operate personal vehicles while on County business are required to pull to the side of the road while talking on a cell phone, (Hands Free or Not) texting, or otherwise using a mobile device to view or compose email. These activities are prohibited while operating a County vehicle or personal vehicle while on County business. As of Oct. 2010 OSHA has recognized that texting, talking on cell phones or other mobile devices can cause automobile accidents. It has been proven that the use of these devices could cause a driver to miss approximately 70% of the traffic control devices. It is currently against the General Duty Clause to text/talk on cell phones or use a mobile device while driving, which could result in a citation if a violation occurs.

The primary emphasis of this policy is to use counseling as the principal form of action in order to prevent poor driving habits from affecting the employee's status and from increasing liability to the County as a result of such habits.

Department heads are encouraged to counsel in nearly all cases where driving habits are beginning to deteriorate. This is particularly important where the incident or citations have occurred during off-duty hours. However, there may be exceptions in severe cases which should be considered carefully and with consultation from the Safety Committee, Risk Management and Human Resources. Where the incident or citation occurs on County business, counseling is required.

The execution of this policy shall be the joint responsibility of the Board of County Commissioners, the department head, the Safety Committee and the Risk Management Division.

## SECTION 1. Responsibility for Driver Selection and Training Program

The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for the leadership of the Driver Selection and Training Program, for its effectiveness and improvement,

and for authorizing the training required for ensuring safe operation of County vehicles or personal vehicles on behalf of the County.

The department heads and division heads who select employees to drive vehicles on County business shall require employees to demonstrate their qualifications to drive in conformity with the standards set forth herein.

County employees are responsible for adherence to all aspects of the Driver Selection and Training Program, including compliance with all rules and regulations and for continuously practicing safe driving while performing their duties.

The Risk Management Division and the department are responsible for providing defensive driving courses to employees.

The Safety Committee is responsible for establishing reasonable standards for driver selection in order to ensure that qualified drivers are selected and that proper employee counseling, training, or corrective measures are recommended concerning employees' driving. The Safety Committee also is responsible for reviewing accident reports and related information including driving records and advising the department head concerning any employee whose driving qualifications do not meet the standards set forth.

## **SECTION 2. Standards for Driver Selection**

The lives of people and the professionalism of County employees is under public scrutiny every time a vehicle is operated on County business. It is of paramount importance that County employees have a positive attitude toward their driving responsibilities.

Drivers of vehicles on County business shall be required to meet the following criteria:

- Possess a valid Nevada drivers license of the proper class or, in the case of an employee who resides in an adjoining state, a valid drivers license of the proper class from that state.
- Capable of passing valid eye tests and physical examinations when a question of fitness to drive arises.
- Capable of passing the defensive driving course.
- Capable of demonstrating familiarity with the type of vehicles assigned and passing a driving check ride when required.

## **SECTION 3. Driver Selection**

Every County employee who will drive a vehicle on County business must complete a Driver Selection Form after being offered employment.

The Driver Selection Form will be reviewed by the department head or division head and the Risk Management Division will make a motor vehicle record check. The department head will compare the record with the standards established by the Safety Committee and the appropriate hiring action will be taken by the department head or division head in accordance with those standards.

Current employees shall inform the appointing authority within 7 days of any convictions of a moving violation resulting in an accumulation of 8 demerit points or a suspension of driving privileges as defined in Nevada Laws. Employees will not drive on County business until the appointing authority has been notified and he/she authorizes the employee to operate a vehicle on County business.

All employees who drive on behalf of the County will complete a Driver Selection Form at least once every three years or at the request of the department or division head. The form will be retained in the employee's file in Human Resources.

#### **SECTION 4. Drivers Training**

Full-time and designated part-time employees driving County vehicles or personal vehicles while on County business are required to attend a Defensive Driving Course (DDC). DDC classes are offered by the County's Risk Management Division and the employee's department. Employees may also be required to attend periodic refresher DDC classes as directed.

- Assignments for classes shall be made by the employee's department or division head in coordination with the Risk Management Division.
- Departments will be required to determine which of their employees will need to participate in additional drivers training classes.

If the employee drives a County vehicle or drives a personal vehicle while on County business, the employee is required to participate in the Defensive Driver's Training classes once every three years.

The Risk Management Division will conduct DDC classes recommended by the County's Safety Committee and special periodic refresher classes.

New employees whose jobs require them to drive will participate in a County Defensive Driving Course within three months of his/her hire date.

Alternative defensive driving courses, approved by the Risk Management Division, can be used in place of the County's Defensive Driving Course for the required training in this section.

**SECTION 5. Accident/Driving Record Review & Appropriate County Action**

Driving record deficiencies may be grounds for denying employment to a prospective employee or for employee counseling, training, or corrective measures. Department heads will counsel such employees and take appropriate action when advised of the following circumstances.

- Any of these convictions for violations whether as a result of personal activities or while driving on County business:

Manslaughter as a result of operating a vehicle;

Driving under the influence of alcohol, controlled substance or other drug;

Failure to stop, failure to give information or failure to render assistance in the event of an accident;

Reckless driving;

Careless or imprudent driving;

Passing a school bus while loading or unloading passengers;

Speed contest, drag racing or exhibition of speed;

Accumulation of demerit points as defined by Nevada laws totaling 8 or more points in any 12 month period; or,

All other moving violations resulting in demerit points.

- Suspended, canceled or revoked licenses.
- Failure to have a valid drivers license of the proper class for the vehicle operated.

Whenever an employee has an accident subject to review by the County Safety Committee, the Safety Committee shall review the circumstances, obtain the driving record, and based upon the facts of the accident and the employee's driving record, and make recommends for counseling, training, or corrective measures to the department or division head.

All Safety Committee recommendations for employee counseling, training, or corrective measures shall be recorded in the employee's personnel file.

The Safety Committee may at its discretion refer a particular accident to the County Manager for review and appropriate action without hearing the facts and making a recommendation.

The County Safety Committee does not recommend any disciplinary measures. Any discipline shall, subject to applicable personnel rules, be imposed as appropriate by the responsible supervising authorities and reviewed in accordance with County policy by Human Resources.

## **SECTION 6. Definitions**

“Traffic Accident” means an unplanned happening involving a vehicle in motion, or an object set in motion by a vehicle, which results in death, bodily injury, or damage to property. A traffic accident may occur anywhere, on or off the highway.

“Preventable Accident” means any vehicle accident where the vehicle operator did not violate any law or ordinance contributing to the happening of such accident, however, the operator failed to drive or park the involved vehicle properly or as safely as possible under the conditions existing at the time of the accident.

“Non-Preventable Accident” means any vehicle accident where the vehicle operator did drive or park the involved vehicle properly and as safely as possible under the conditions existing at the time of the accident, and the operator did not violate any law or ordinance, which contributed to the accident.

Approved by BCC Jan 13, 2009  
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