

Iowa Law related to Hands Free Driving goes into effect July 1, 2025. Supervisors are reviewing this with staff. Additional information related to the law is on the final page of this policy.

2 - EMPLOYMENT

2.12 - Vehicle Policy

Revised: March 17, 2007

Revised: January 2022

This policy applies to all City employees who operate City vehicles or who receive reimbursement for the use of their personal vehicles while conducting City business.

Because of safety concerns, employees shall not manually dial cell phones while driving City vehicles or driving their personal vehicle while conducting City business. Cell phone usage while driving should be only usage that is absolutely necessary.

AUTHORIZATION

Authority to receive mileage reimbursement for the use of a personal vehicle or to use a City-owned vehicle must be approved by the City Administrator or appropriate Department Director. All tax laws shall be followed.

Authority to receive a regular vehicle allowance for the use of a personal vehicle instead of using a City-owned vehicle must be approved by the City Administrator. All tax laws shall be followed.

Only City employees shall drive or ride in City vehicles except that others may ride in a City vehicle when such transportation is involved in City business such as meetings or seminar attendance. Volunteers and Community Service workers may ride in City vehicles in conjunction with performance of their duties for the City.

Assignment of City vehicles for commuting is restricted to the following:

City Electrician	Police Chief	Sewer Superintendent
Fire Chief	Police Department (2)	
Fire Department (3)	Police Canine Officers	

Where on-duty status continues beyond normal duty hours, city employees may be authorized by the Department Director or the City Administrator to use City vehicles for commuting at the time of the special duty hours or emergencies, such as the Street Superintendent during snow season.

City vehicles shall comply with the requirements of the Code of Iowa concerning labeling publicly owned motor vehicles.

As required by the Code of Iowa City-owned vehicles that are required to operate on ethanol-blended gasoline shall be marked with an ethanol fuel sticker, which notifies the public that the vehicle is being operated on gasoline blended with ethanol. This requirement does not apply to unmarked vehicles used for law enforcement or security.

Commuting trips, private use incidental to and on the same routes as commuting trips, and incidental private use during duty hours are public purpose uses because of the employee's ready availability and response through radio contact.

Incidental private use during duty hours is allowable **only** when it is necessary or reasonably required that the employee remain on duty, or be available for duty when engaged in a private activity during regular duty hours. It is required that the employee be at a known location and be accessible by telephone or remote radio.

Department Directors shall be responsible for scheduling the use of City vehicles as authorized by these procedures. These schedules may include out-of-town travel for training, meetings, continuing education, or other City-approved business. Department Directors shall also be responsible for scheduling and assigning City vehicles for in-town use.

LICENSING

Any person who uses a City vehicle must annually provide proof of an appropriate operator's license. Department Directors shall be responsible for ensuring that every employee using a City vehicle in their department has a valid license to operate the type of vehicle used in his or her work. The employee's driving record must justify the operation of City vehicles. Repeated violations of driving laws or accidents either on or off-duty may result in disciplinary measures including discharge. Conduct which causes suspension of a required operator's license and subsequent inability to perform assigned duties may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment.

STORAGE

Vehicles assigned for commuting or on an emergency or special-use basis, shall whenever possible, be stored in a garage on private property or a City-owned garage. All other vehicles shall be stored on City property, within a City garage if possible.

MAINTENANCE

Employees who are assigned vehicles shall assume responsibility for washing and cleaning the vehicle at appropriate times. It shall be the employee's responsibility to promptly report any mechanical failure or problem.

It is the Department Director's responsibility to see that preventive maintenance schedules are established and followed for all vehicles in their department and to require all employees in their department to use City vehicles in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

VEHICLE SIZE AND COST

All vehicles considered for purchase must be capable of high mileage with long-term warranties and without optional features. Automatic transmission, heater, air conditioner, and radio are authorized. Exceptions to this policy must be reviewed by the City Administrator prior to the purchase of the vehicle.

ACCIDENTS

If an accident occurs while driving a City vehicle or while driving your personal vehicle for City business, you must notify your supervisor immediately. Written reports must be filed on **all** damage or injuries. Accident forms are available in the Human Resources Department or in the City Safety Manual and must be completed as soon as possible. If the accident results in injury to a City employee, the City's Human Resources Department must be notified immediately so the OSHA Injury and Illness Incident Report and/or the Workers' Compensation First Report of Injury or Illness Report can be completed.

INSURANCE

City-owned vehicles are covered by the City's liability and property damage policy.

Personal vehicles used while on City business shall be covered by the vehicle owner's policy as the primary vehicular insurance policy. The City's vehicular insurance policy would be a secondary insurer.

Unauthorized passengers in City vehicles or in personal vehicles while on City business are not covered by the City's vehicular insurance policy. In case of accident any unauthorized passenger is the responsibility of the driver who is operating the vehicle.

HANDS-FREE DRIVING

IT'S
THE
LAW

New legislation signed into law prohibits drivers from using electronic communication devices while driving—**unless the device is used hands-free.**

“HANDS-FREE” MEANS:



You can't hold your phone in any way.



You can't manually scroll, type, or interact with your phone in any way.



You can't enter in an address to GPS while driving.



You can't stream videos or make video calls, even with voice commands.



You can't view texts, videos, or social media.



You can't call, text, or dial unless using hands-free or voice activation.

WHAT COUNTS AS AN “ELECTRONIC DEVICE”



Cell phones



Laptops



PDAs



Tablets



Gaming devices

WAYS TO STAY HANDS-FREE



AUXILIARY CABLE EST. COST: \$3 - \$7

Connect your phone to the AUX jack to use voice commands or one-touch control, with audio through your car speakers.



BLUETOOTH® EST. COST: \$10 - \$20

Bluetooth® devices like speakers, earpieces, or adapters let you go hands-free without wires.



VEHICLE MOUNT EST. COST: \$5+

Use a vent clip or cup holder mount to secure your phone. Then use voice commands or a single tap.



SPEAKERPHONE EST. COST: \$0

Turn on speakerphone and set your phone in a secure spot to comply with hands-free laws.

ENABLE DRIVE FOCUS

ANDROID:

1. Open Settings
2. Find Modes and Routines or a similar term
3. Select Driving: Find and tap on "Driving" mode

IPHONE

1. Open Settings
2. Go to Focus
3. Select Driving
4. Customize Driving Focus



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VOICE COMMANDS



1. Press the voice button
2. Wait for prompt
3. Speak clearly
"Call home"
"Navigate to 321 S Road Street"
4. Follow prompt if needed

EFFECTIVE JULY 2025