

## Policies regarding personal use of assigned vehicles

Information compiled December 28, 2005

**The Question:** If you assign vehicles to employees so they may respond at all times, what kind of parameters do you place on personal use of the vehicle? Do you allow passengers in the vehicle? Do you have a written policy that you can share?

**Clallam Transit** says... We are in the process of rewriting our policy. It currently states only:

Employees with written permission from the GM may take company vehicles home for commuting to work. Permission will be granted only in instances where the employee is reasonably expected to respond to emergency situations away from the base and it is in the best interests of CTS to grant such permission.

We are going to expand it to include language advising that commuter use of vehicles not accounted for as business use is subject to reporting to the IRS as fringe benefit compensation.

And, language to allow some personal use incidental to the commute (dropping children at school, picking up a gallon of milk, etc)

**Columbia County Public Transportation** says ... We do not assign vehicles to employees. Therefore have no policies pertaining to this.

**Community Transit** says... We have had a policy that isn't well-distributed and is currently under review. I'll summarize our take on take-home cars:

1. We can assign vehicles on an annual basis when the employee's job is one where they get called out at least 10 times a quarter (40 times per year) and where time is of the essence.
2. Employees must document the emergencies they are called for so that annually they can justify the need for an extension of the privilege. We have taken cars away from those who did not meet this requirement.
3. Employees who drive between work locations can use a company car or their own car, at their choice. If their assigned work location changes from day to day,

they may take the car home to enable them to report directly to their assigned start point rather than coming first to the base to pick up a company car. This privilege is extended to administrative employees and service quality monitors, but coach operators must sign in at Dispatch before checking out a vehicle and leaving the yard so they cannot take a vehicle home.

4. Unauthorized use of staff vehicles includes: Using a vehicle without proper authority, transporting family members or other unauthorized passengers without proper authority, using a vehicle for personal purposes, excessive failure to properly complete the vehicle reservation log, and failure to operate the vehicle in a safe and defensive manner. However, personal use that is incidental to authorized work use (such as a quick run through a drive-in for food during the shift) is considered de minimus and does not violate this policy.

Employees who have annual vehicles issued to them must either maintain contemporaneous records of all use that might be personal (such as the normal commute) and reimburse the company for these costs, or may pay a flat monthly fee that satisfies IRS guidelines.

**Grant Transit** says... GTA does not assign vehicles to employees. As you know, we have a staff of only 1.5 and the car is parked in the parking lot at city hall in Ephrata and is used for official use only.

**Grays Harbor Transit** says...We do not assign vehicles to employees.

**Everett Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to staff. They are considered support. No personal use is allowed. Passengers are allowed to be transported if there is a business reason for the transport (e.g. inspector takes a customer to a transfer location due to a missed connection).

**Intercity Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to specific staff. We have a pool of vehicles that are available to all staff. No written policies concerning the staff cars but we do allow passengers and some limited personal use.

**Island Transit** says... We don't have a written policy, but our general policy is that these vehicles are not used for personal use other than stopping by the market on your way home. No personal passengers are allowed. Although I suppose there may at some point in time be an exception, this is the general rule.

**Jefferson Transit** says... No personal use at any time.

**Kitsap Transit** says... We have a SCOOT Car program here at Kitsap Transit. I have attached the basic rules and regulations for you. Most of the information is on our website. Here is a link for your convenience. <http://www.kitsaptransit.org/Vanpool/scoot/index.htm>



**Link Transit** says... We have staff vehicles available for use but do not actually assign vehicles to individuals nor do we allow them to take them home.

**Mason Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to its employees, but offers company vehicles for business use only, and we have no policy at this time.

**Pacific Transit** says... We do not assign any vehicles.

**Pullman Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to employees. We do have staff cars, but they are used by everyone as needed.

**Skagit Transit** says... We only have staff cars that employees use while on duty. They don't bring staff cars home.

**Twin Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to employees. Employees do drive the company van or truck and we do have parameters that it be used for business only.

**Valley Transit** says... We do not assign vehicles to employees. We do not have company cars.

**Whatcom Transit** says... The GM is the only one who has a car actually assigned to him during non-working hours. And, I don't think he really takes it home all of the time. He usually parks it at/near the downtown bus station and rides the bus to and from home. --Walking (or riding) the public-transportation talk, as it were! We don't have a written policy about the use of vehicles. I know when we are using a vehicle for work (say going to a conference or just running an errand) we are not supposed to have any non-WTA passengers (like picking up your kids at school). Does it happen once in awhile though? Probably, but obviously not enough to have addressed it formally.