

BATON ROUGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Order
No.138

Effective Date
11-01-1997

Revised Date
04-12-2018

Subject: Vehicle Use and Maintenance

Reviewed 4/12/18

POLICY

It is the policy of this department to ensure that all vehicles owned or leased by the Baton Rouge Police Department are properly maintained and operated to promote operator safety, prolong the vehicle's useful life and to present a positive image to the citizens of Baton Rouge.

PROCEDURES

I. Vehicle Use

- A. Baton Rouge Police Department vehicles may be used for the following reasons only:
 - 1. Regular on-duty work;
 - 2. Approved extra-duty or overtime programs;
 - 3. Court appearances;
 - 4. Any assignments or exemptions (i.e. on call personnel) previously approved by the Chief of Police.
 - 5. Approved department mandated or voluntary training (pistol range, physical fitness, classroom, or in-service)
- B. Non-sworn personnel are prohibited from driving a Departmental vehicle except in an emergency or in the course of official business where authorized by the Chief of Police, Metropolitan Council, or Mayor-President.
- C. Non-sworn personnel shall not be transported in a police vehicle except in the official performance of duties or when authorized by the City-Parish Auto Committee, or in an emergency.
- D. Seat belts shall always be used in all police vehicles. Doors shall be kept locked while the vehicle is unattended.
- E. When operating a departmental vehicle, officers shall dress appropriately for the assignment to which they are enroute. Workout attire can only be worn for in-service training or to and from the gym. The attire cannot interfere with your ability to perform required responsibilities. The attire shall contain no offense wording or images that would be deemed as offensive to someone or would be considered a disgrace to the Department and the City of Baton.
- F. No one shall operate a police vehicle while drinking or under the influence of alcohol. No one shall operate a police vehicle while transporting alcohol or illegal drugs, unless required in the performance of his duties.

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- G. All sworn personnel absent from work more than 70 consecutive scheduled work hours due to leave, including military leave, vacation, illness or injury, shall deliver their assigned unit to the Fleet Management section after 70 consecutive scheduled work hours unless otherwise authorized by the Chief. Personnel placed on suspension, temporary restricted duty or worker's compensation status will surrender their unit immediately.
 - 1. It will be the responsibility of the officer's supervisor to have the officer's unit transported or towed to the Fleet Management section. Supervisors will, at a minimum, secure all valuables in the trunk of the unit at the time it is surrendered unless other arrangements to secure them are made.
 - 2. It will be the responsibility of the individual officer, at such time as he/she is deemed able to return to duty, to contact Fleet Management and arrange to take delivery of his/her unit prior to returning to duty.
- H. Police employees driving police vehicles will be held responsible for the cost of damage and repair for the unauthorized use of the vehicle.
- I. Any City-Parish employee that drives a police vehicle must immediately notify the department or agency head if his/her driver's license is revoked or suspended.
- J. Any person convicted of moving violations or preventable accident violations in this General Order within a twelve (12) month period are subject to additional disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Code and the following: on the first offense shall forfeit take-home privilege seven (7) days; on the second offense shall forfeit take-home privilege for thirty (30) days; and on the third offense the person shall forfeit take-home privilege for one (1) year.
- K. Any personnel in violation of usage guidelines, as specified in I(A) above, shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or loss of unit privileges.

II. Vehicle Maintenance

- A. Fuel and oil shall be checked regularly by the vehicle operator and maintained at proper levels. Fuel and oil shall only be obtained at authorized fueling facilities. Oil shall be changed at 3,000 mile intervals or as prescribed by Fleet Management.
- B. The interior and exterior of vehicles shall be kept clean, and wear or damage shall be reported to the Fleet Management division.

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- C. Safety equipment shall be checked prior to each shift by the assigned vehicle operator to insure that items such as the spare tire, lug wrench, jack, safety flares, cones, and fire extinguisher are available and properly maintained. All safety belt assemblies including retractors and attaching hardware shall be inspected after any collision. Any safety belt assembly used during a collision shall be replaced unless the collision was minor and a qualified technician finds the safety device operational. If the belt or hardware shows damage of any kind, the belt and hardware shall be replaced.
- D. The cooling system shall be inspected periodically and kept clean and full.
- E. The battery, if not sealed and maintenance free, shall be inspected when the vehicle is fueled, and the fluid electrolyte shall be maintained at a proper level. Battery terminals shall be inspected and maintained free of corrosion by maintenance personnel, at the request of the vehicle operator.
- F. Tire air pressure shall be checked prior to each tour of duty and kept properly maintained. Tires shall be inspected at least weekly for nails, cuts, excessive wear, or defects. Flat tires shall be changed by the driver of the vehicle.
- G. Vehicle defects or items requiring service shall be promptly reported to the Fleet Management division.
- H. Vehicles which are not operable shall be towed directly to the City Lot facility or to the appropriate repair facility authorized by the Fleet Management supervisor.
- I. The Fleet Management division shall retain authority to "deadline" a vehicle upon determination that continued operation may constitute a safety hazard and/or cause further vehicle damage.
- J. The Fleet Management division shall conduct a thorough inspection of vehicles being turned in to insure that the vehicle is clean and that any damage has been reported by the assigned operator.
 - 1. If unreported damage is discovered, the Fleet Management division shall take appropriate action.
 - 2. No unit will be assigned to an officer until the vehicle being delivered to Fleet Management has been properly cleaned. If the unit being turned in is not properly cleaned, including but not limited to drink spills and smoking odors, and mechanically functional, i.e. needs maintenance work, Fleet will not issue the officer another unit till Fleet determines the unit is clean and ready to be reissued to another officer.

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- K. Scheduling of preventative maintenance shall be the responsibility of assigned vehicle operators. Vehicles shall be driven to the City Lot garage or contracted service provider for preventative maintenance at scheduled service times. The City Lot technicians shall be responsible for conducting maintenance inspections of vehicles during the 3,000 mile oil changes.

III. Authorized Equipment

- A. All personnel will be prohibited from using non-issued equipment in their vehicle without prior written authorization from Fleet Management. Anyone requesting to use equipment such as CB radios, video cameras, monitors, etc., shall write a letter to Fleet Management requesting to do so. A record of equipment in each officer's vehicle will be kept by Fleet Management. Televisions are prohibited in police vehicles while on regular duty.
- B. Any alteration to the exterior of the vehicle is also prohibited unless specifically authorized by Fleet Management or the Chief of Police. This includes unauthorized license plates, bumper stickers, or decals.
- C. Tinting of Windows of Vehicles
 - 1. Prior to having window tint installed, the officer will report to the Fleet Management Office and complete an "Additional Equipment Installation Form", which requires a Fleet Management supervisor's approval.
 - 2. After completion of tint installation, Officer shall return to Fleet Management Office for inspection of the applied window tint at which time an approval form will be placed in their assigned vehicle file.
 - 3. Window tinting will be subjected to inspection with a Tint Meter.
 - 4. Any window tint not meeting the following guidelines will be removed immediately, at the officer's expense:
 - a. Only smoke colored tint will be allowed.
 - b. NO Limo, colored, or mirror tint will be allowed.
 - c. Tint will not be placed on the front windshield.
 - d. Tint is to be applied to the side and rear windows only.
 - e. Only legal tint as prescribed in LRS 32:361.1, for privately-owned vehicles, will be allowed.
 - f. Deteriorated and or improperly installed window tint will not be allowed.
 - 5. The officer may use a vendor of his choice, as the officer will be responsible for payment of work completed, as well as the up keep of window tint.
 - 6. In the event a window must be replaced, the officer will be responsible for its replacement.
 - 7. Window tinting is elective by officers wishing to participate. The Baton Rouge Police Department will not reimburse costs associated with an officer's participation in this program.

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- D. Mechanical or electrical repairs or alterations shall not be made by vehicle operators. Removing equipment from other units to repair another unit shall not be done unless authorized by Fleet Management of the Chief of Police. Such repairs or alterations shall be performed by City Lot, the City-Parish Radio Shop or a facility authorized by Fleet Management.
- E. Assigned vehicle operators are required to remove personal equipment from vehicles delivered to City Lot for repairs or scheduled maintenance. Firearms and other dangerous weapons shall be removed from the vehicle. The Fleet Management division shall not be responsible for the loss or damage of personal equipment left in vehicles by assigned operators.

IV. Vehicle Inspections

- A. The Fleet Management division will conduct periodic inspections for vehicle maintenance and cleanliness. It shall also be the responsibility of field and shift supervisors to ensure that personnel under their command maintain vehicle maintenance and cleanliness.
- B. Inspections shall consist of a check of all department-issued equipment, a periodic check of fluids (i.e. oil, windshield washer, battery, etc.) and the overall cleanliness of the vehicle's interior and exterior.
- C. Anyone found to be in violation of proper maintenance procedures or vehicle cleanliness will be reported to Fleet Management for recommendation to the Chief of Police.