



**The American Legion  
Department of Georgia  
3035 Mt. Zion Road  
Stockbridge, Georgia 30281**

## **VEHICLE POLICY**

*s/s MOW*

**Melvin Weaver  
Commander, Department  
of Georgia  
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## **OVERVIEW**

Department vehicles which are provided to support and promote The American Legion, Department of Georgia and are to be used only by qualified and authorized department officers and/or employees, except as otherwise noted herein.

In all cases these vehicles are to be operated in strict compliance with motor vehicle laws of the jurisdiction in which they are driven and with the utmost regard for their care and cost-efficient use.

## **VEHICLE PURPOSE**

1. The American Legion, Department of Georgia provides a corporate vehicle for use by Elected Officers of the Department of Georgia, the Department Adjutant, the Sgt-At-Arms of the Department of Georgia, and Department Staff, subject to change by the Department Executive Committee.
2. The following individuals are authorized operators of department vehicles and will provide the Department Adjutant with a copy of their current Georgia driver's license prior to driving,
  - Department Commander & Spouse or Significant other
  - Elected Department of Georgia Officers
  - Department Adjutant
  - Appointed Sgt-At-Arms of the Department of Georgia
  - All Department Employees
3. In the case of an emergency, the primary operator of the department vehicle may authorize an individual to operate that vehicle and will contact the Department Adjutant within 24 hours to provide the individual's driver's license number.
4. Department vehicles are provided primarily for business purposes. The privilege of use may be withdrawn at any time by The American Legion Department of Georgia.
5. Department vehicles are a form of advertisement and should be used for all official travels, visits to posts and travel to place of employment, provided said employer is not a detriment to The American Legion.
6. Rules applying to use of Department Vehicles
  - Only individuals identified within this policy are authorized to operate department vehicles. Special needs may warrant additional drivers – however, these individuals must be approved in advance by the Department Commander.
  - Must meet all driver's qualifications and rules in this policy.
  - Report any accident immediately to the police and to the Department Adjutant.
  - The staff van will be housed at the Department Headquarters after business hours except when on the road and approved by the Department Adjutant.
7. Any exceptions to these rules require advanced, written approval from the Department Commander. Violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action from suspension of driving privileges to termination of employment for department employees.

## **DRIVERS LICENSING AND QUALIFICATIONS**

1. All individuals authorized to operate a department vehicle must have a valid driver's license issued by the State of Georgia and must be able to drive a vehicle. Obtaining a driver's license is a personal expense.
2. Driver qualifications are as follows for all authorized department officers, authorized drivers, employees, or personnel operating a department vehicle.
  - Must be at least 21 years of age.
  - Have at least one year of experience driving a motor vehicle.
  - Must have a valid driver's license.
3. Individuals will not be qualified to operate a department vehicle if, during the last 5 years, the driver has had any of the following experiences:
  - Been convicted of a felony.
  - Been convicted of sale, handling, possession, or use of drugs.
  - Has had automobile insurance policy canceled, declined, or not renewed by a company.
  - Has had a driver's license suspended or revoked.
  - Been involved in three (3) or more chargeable accidents.

## **REVIEW OF MOTOR VEHICLE RECORD**

1. The Georgia Department of Public Safety, Motor Vehicle Records will be used as the source for verifying driver history. Driving records will be obtained and reviewed on an annual basis for all authorized vehicle operators. Insurance carrier requires that we provide them annually with a list of names of individuals authorized to operate department vehicles; the list must provide the individual's name, address, driver's license number and date of birth.
2. Driving privileges may be withdrawn or suspended and/or the department vehicle removed from any authorized driver not meeting the requirements of the policy. In addition, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination of employment for department employees.
3. All department officers, employees and individuals authorized to operate a department vehicle will be required to complete and sign the **“DEPARTMENT OFFICER AND/OR EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION FOR DRIVING RECORD REVIEW”**.

## **DEPARTMENT VEHICLE PROCUREMENT**

1. All Department vehicles will be produced by a US Corporation, i.e., Ford, Dodge, GM, or Chrysler.
2. All vehicles will be titled in the name of The American Legion, Department of Georgia.
3. Type and specifications of the vehicle will be based on cost and availability.
4. The vehicles will be equipped with the following options as available, if not cost prohibitive
  - Air conditioning
  - Automatic transmission
  - Navigation
  - Bluetooth communications to facilitate hands free phone use
  - Tow package for the Department Van
5. Insurance, maintenance, and other normally associated expenses will be borne by the Department of Georgia, per the annual Department Budget.
6. All vehicles will bear, at minimum, the logo of “The American Legion”, “Department of Georgia”.
7. Vehicle’s replacement cycle will be modeled on the following, mindful that intervals may vary due to mileage or age of vehicle.

<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Occurrence</u>
Commander	Full/Mid-Size SUV	Every 2 years or 100,000 miles
Adjutant and Staff	Van	4 years

Department Adjutant is responsible for acquiring a minimum of three (3) bids for vehicles prior to purchase and present them to the Department Executive Board prior to purchase.

## **MAINTENANCE**

1. All department drivers are required to properly maintain the department vehicle in their possession. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect that would inhibit safe operation during current and foreseeable weather and lighting conditions.
2. Preventive maintenance such as, but not limited to regular oil changes, lubrication, tire pressure, tire replacement, brake pad and rotor replacement and fluid checks determine to a large extent whether you will have a reliable, safe vehicle to drive and support work activities. You should have preventive maintenance on your vehicle, as required in the owner’s manual, performed by a certified dealer or facility. Notify the Department Adjutant prior to large costly items being replaced or if a breakdown occur while operating the vehicle.

## **EMPLOYEE USE OF OTHER THAN COMPANY OWNED VEHICLES FOR BUSINESS USE**

1. The Department does not assume any liability for bodily injuries or property damage the employee may become personally obligated to pay arising out of an incident occurring in connection with the operation of other than company owned vehicles. The reimbursement to the employee for the operation of other than department owned vehicles on company business included the allowance for the mileage, normal wear and tear, operating expenses to include the expense of automobile insurance, in accordance with current IRS rates.
2. You are required to have the minimum liability limits as required by Georgia State Laws. The Department does not specify and assumes no responsibility for any other coverage employees carry on the vehicles used since this is a matter of individual status and preference. The employee is responsible for providing proof of coverage to the Department Adjutant on an annual basis.

## **TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS**

1. Fines for parking or moving violations, towing, storage, or impoundment are the personal responsibility of the assigned operator. The Department will not condone nor excuse ignorance of any motor vehicle violations that result in court summons being directed to itself as driver of the vehicle.
2. Each driver is required to report all moving violations to the Department Adjutant within 24 hours. This requirement applies to all violations involving the use of any Department vehicle. Failure to report violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action, including revoking driver privileges and possible termination of employment for Department Employees.

## **ACCIDENTS / THEFT INVOLVING DEPARTMENT VEHICLES**

1. In the event of an accident:
  - Contact the Departments insurance carrier immediately.
  - Contact the Department Judge Advocate immediately, prior to making any verbal or written statements.
  - Contact the Department Adjutant and turn over all information within 24 hours.
  - Call the appropriate law enforcement on all accidents and obtain a copy of the police report.
  - Do not admit negligence or liability.
  - Do not attempt settlement, regardless of how minor.
  - Get the name, address and phone number(s) of all parties, any injured persons and witnesses.
  - Exchange vehicle information, insurance company name and policy numbers with the other driver(s).
  - Take a photograph of the scene of the accident, if possible.
  - Complete the accident report in your vehicle.
  - The Department Adjutant will contact the Department Commander to inform him/her of the accident.
2. In the event of theft of a Department Vehicle, notify appropriate law enforcement and Department Adjutant immediately.

## DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each driver is responsible for the actual possession, care and use of the Department Vehicle in their possession. Therefore, a driver's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Operating of the vehicle in a manner consistent with reasonable practices that avoid abuse, theft, neglect, or disrespect of the equipment.
  - Obey all traffic laws.
  - The use of seat belts and shoulder harness is mandatory for drivers and passengers.
  - Adhering to manufacturer's recommendations regarding service, maintenance, and inspection. Vehicles should not be operated with any defect that would prevent safe operation.
  - Attention to and practice of safe driving techniques and adherence to current safety requirements.
  - Restricting the use of vehicles to approved authorized drivers only.
  - Always be courteous to other drivers and pedestrians.
  - Report the occurrence of moving violations to the Department Adjutant.
  - Accurate, comprehensive, and timely reporting of all accidents or theft of a Department Vehicle to the Department Adjutant.
2. Failure to comply with any of these responsibilities will result in disciplinary action or suspension of driving privileges and up to termination of employment for Department Employee.
3. The driver of a department vehicle shall not consume any alcoholic beverages 4 hours prior to or while operating a department vehicle.
4. Department vehicles will not be used to campaign for any office in The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion or American Legion Riders.
5. Department vehicles will only be driven outside of the state for official Legion business, examples may include i.e. – National NEC Meetings, National Convention, National Washington Conference, National Membership Workshop, or Legionnaire Insurance Trust Meetings.

## PREVENTABLE ACCIDENTS

1. A preventable accident is defined as any accident involving a Department Vehicle, whether being used for department or personal use, or any vehicle being used on company business that results in property damage and/or personal injury, and in which the driver in question failed to exercise every **reasonable precaution** to prevent the accident.
2. **Safety Guideline to Prevent Accidents**
  - Do not follow too closely. Do not pass improperly.
  - Do not drive too fast for conditions. Do not fail to yield.
  - Do not fail to observe clearances Do not back up improperly.
  - Do not fail to obey signs Do not fail to obey traffic signals or directions.
  - Do not make improper turns Do not exceed the posted speed limit.
  - Do not fail to reduce speed. Do not fail to observe signals from other drivers.
  - Do not park improperly. **Do not operate any Department Vehicle after the**
  - Do not fail to reduce speed **consumption of alcoholic beverages.**

**DEPARTMENT OFFICER AND/OR EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION  
FOR DMV REVIEW AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
DEPARTMENTS OFFICIAL VEHICLE POLICY**

1. As a Department Officer, current employee or prospective employee, I understand a Motor Vehicle Review will be ordered and reviewed to assess minimum eligibility to determine driving privileges.
2. As a driver of a department vehicle or my own vehicle on the Department of Georgia behalf, I understand that it is my responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner and to drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage. Drivers must have a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle to be operated and keep the licenses(s) with them at all times while driving. All drivers must comply with all applicable regulations.
3. I also understand that The American Legion, Department of Georgia or their insurance representative will periodically review my Motor Vehicle Record to determine continued eligibility to drive a department vehicle or operate my own vehicle on the company's behalf. In accordance with the Fair Credit Reporting act, I have been informed that a Motor Vehicle Record will be periodically obtained on me for continued driving purposes.
4. I acknowledge the receipt of the above disclosure and authorize The American Legion, Department of Georgia or its designated agent to obtain a Motor Vehicle Record Report. This authorization is valid as long as I am a Department Officer, employee or candidate for employment and may only be rescinded in writing.
5. I have read and will abide by the conditions as stated in the Departments Official Vehicle Policy regarding the operation of any vehicle for Department business.

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Name (Print)

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Driver's License Number

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Signature

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Date

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Reviewer's Signature & Date  
(Sign and retain the original copy in the Department officer or employee's file)