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## Board of Commissioners Policy

### **Vehicle Use Policy**

(Adoption Date: August 2, 1995)

(Updated: August 1998)

(Updated: June 4, 2003)

(Updated: February 3, 2021)

(Updated: May 5, 2021)

### **Employees/Officials Only May Operate**

Only Town employees and elected officials of the Town are authorized to operate Town vehicles. Members of the Nags Head Volunteer Fire Department may do so in training and emergency situations only. NEST representatives are authorized by agreement to operate their designated ATV.

### **Valid Operators Permit Required**

It shall be required for anyone operating Town-owned vehicles or equipment to have a current, valid operator's license.

### **Age Requirement to Operate Vehicles/Equipment**

All authorized vehicle and equipment operators of the Town, be they regular, part time, temporary (seasonal), elected or volunteer, shall be 18 years or older to operate any Town-owned equipment. Such equipment shall include, but not be limited to, vehicles, ATV's, jet skis, trailers, boats, etc.

### **Town Business Only**

Town vehicles and equipment shall be used for Town purposes only. They are not to be used for personal business. For those individuals assigned vehicles for commuting purposes, they may make incidental but not habitual stops while commuting. These individuals who take Town vehicles home shall see that the vehicle is made available for Town use during any period of vacation or other extended leave. Town vehicles shall not be used for the transport of personal property.

### **Safety**

Every authorized operator of Town owned vehicles or equipment has an obligation to adhere to safe driving practices. All federal, state, and local laws governing vehicles and public roads will be adhered to. Any citation issued to a Town employee while operating a Town owned vehicle will be reported to the Department Head within 48 hours.

### **Cell Phone Usage While Driving**

It is against the law in North Carolina to text or email while driving. However, to ensure the safety of our employees and other drivers, Town of Nags Head employees may not use cell phones (including hands free devices) or any other mobile electronic devices while operating a Town vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to, answering phone calls, engaging in phone conversations, reading, or responding to emails and text messages. Emergency Services such as Police and Fire will follow best practices as outlined by their individual departments and state/federal guidelines.

### **Authorized Passengers Only**

Only authorized persons are to be transported in Town owned vehicles. This includes Town employees, elected officials, elected officials from other agencies, employees of other governmental agencies, members of Town boards and committees, members of the Nags Head Volunteer Fire Department during approved training and approved Public Safety ride-alongs with liability waiver on file. The only exceptions are emergency situations.

### **Accidents**

Any accident involving a Town owned vehicle or equipment will be reported immediately to a supervisor and as soon as practical to the Town Managers Office (within 24 hours or next business day). If you are involved in an accident in a Town vehicle, stop immediately, alert other drivers to any hazard, contact the police, make no admission of fault to anyone, be courteous but do not discuss the particulars with anyone except the police, exchange name and insurance information with other drivers, write down license numbers of all vehicles involved, obtain witness information, do not move the vehicle until instructed by the police. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to complete and transmit the accident report. Failure of an employee to report an accident, no matter how minor, may be grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Inclement Weather**

Town vehicles shall burn headlights during periods of inclement weather. Individuals required to drive a Town vehicle home but not required to remain in Town during an evacuation are permitted to drive such vehicles out of the evacuation area so that they may return as soon as possible to begin disaster recovery efforts. While out of the evacuation area, all Town policies regarding vehicle use will be applied.

### **Tobacco Products Banned**

No tobacco product use is allowed in any Town owned vehicle at any time. This ban includes smoking, chewing tobacco, snuff, etc.

### **Assigned Vehicles/Vehicle Use**

The Town Manager may assign vehicles to employees for commuting purposes when there is an interest of the Town to do so for purposes of improved response time, preparedness, and on-call status, etc. Additionally, Town vehicles may be used for employee car-pooling to promote energy conservation and efficiency. Take home vehicles may be approved to address housing availability for employees within the mileage standards established by the Town Manager and approved by the Board of Commissioners. An Administrative policy will address those assignments.