

Louisville Metro Police Department

Standard Operating Procedures	SOP Number: 4.14
	Effective Date: 06/13/05 Prv. Rev. Date: 12/20/21 Revised Date: 05/29/23
	Accreditation Standards: KACP: 17.10, 21.4
Chapter: Uniforms and Equipment	
Subject: Departmental Vehicle Assignment and Usage	

4.14 DEPARTMENTAL VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT AND USAGE

4.14.1 POLICY (KACP 17.10)

The Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) maintains a 24-Hour Patrol Vehicle Program. Use of assigned vehicles is considered a privilege and not an employment right. The Chief of Police has the right to assign, deny, suspend, or remove any member from the 24-Hour Patrol Vehicle Program.

4.14.2 DEFINITIONS

24-Hour Patrol Vehicle Program: A program whereby officers are assigned departmental take-home vehicles to increase police presence in the community. Officers who are assigned take-home vehicles and while within the boundaries of Jefferson County are mandated to respond, as needed, to any calls for service as well as to render assistance to the public, in accordance with departmental policy.

Administrative Bureau: The Administrative Bureau, working in conjunction with Metro Fleet Services, is responsible for the daily operations (e.g. maintaining records of assignment, maintenance, recalls, and service) of departmental vehicles. The Assistant Chief of Police/Administrative Bureau retains the power to remove any vehicle from use if, in their opinion, further operation of the vehicle is unsafe or may cause damage to the vehicle. The Assistant Chief of Police/Administrative Bureau has the authority to make decisions regarding vehicle assignment, equipment, maintenance, repairs, or service to all departmental vehicles.

Departmental vehicle: A car, truck, van, trailer, bus, boat, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle (ATV), bicycle, Electric Standup Vehicle (ESV), aircraft, or any other vehicle owned, confiscated, leased, rented, maintained, or loaned to the department.

Take-home vehicle: A departmental vehicle assigned to a specific member that may be used during off-duty periods, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this policy.

4.14.3 ASSIGNMENT OF TAKE-HOME VEHICLE

Officers who have completed one (1) year of sworn service with the LMPD may be assigned a departmental vehicle. The following policy also applies to professional staff who are assigned a departmental vehicle. Members who are residing within the boundaries of Jefferson County, Kentucky will be allowed take-home use of their assigned vehicle. Members whose primary residence is in the contiguous counties of Jefferson County, Kentucky, are permitted to park their assigned vehicle at their primary residence while off-duty and use the vehicle for travel to and from work. These Kentucky counties include Bullitt, Spencer, Shelby, Oldham, and Hardin. Assigned vehicles are not permitted to be used outside of Jefferson County for personal use while off-duty. Members who are not residing in the Kentucky counties listed above are not permitted to drive their assigned vehicle outside of Jefferson County. Members who reside out-of-state, in another Kentucky county not listed above, or who choose not to participate in the take-home vehicle program are required to park their assigned vehicle within Jefferson County, Kentucky, in a location approved by their division/section/unit commander. Officers who are residing out-of-state, in another Kentucky county that is not contiguous to Jefferson County, or who choose not to participate in the take-home vehicle program will complete the Out-of-

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4.14.3 ASSIGNMENT OF TAKE-HOME VEHICLE

County Resident Parking Location form (LMPD #14-0009), in order to record where the vehicle is located during off-duty hours. Once this form has been completed, it will be forwarded, by the officer, either by scanning the form and emailing it, or sending it via interdepartmental mail, to the Vehicle Impoundment Unit (VIU)/Fleet Lieutenant and the Special Investigations Division (SID) Adjutant Lieutenant. In times of need, vehicles assigned to non-residents may be used as pool vehicles.

Supervisors will perform a pre-inspection and post-inspection of any vehicle used in such a fashion to be aware of any damage that may have occurred during temporary use.

4.14.4 POOL VEHICLES

Each division/section/unit maintains a fleet of vehicles for use by on-duty members who are not yet eligible for the 24-Hour Patrol Vehicle Program. These vehicles are used at the discretion of the division/section/unit commander. The division/section/unit commander may temporarily issue such vehicles to members who qualify for the 24-Hour Patrol Vehicle Program, while their assigned vehicle is undergoing maintenance. The division/section/unit commander will designate a member of their staff to oversee the maintenance schedule of these pool vehicles. Pool vehicles will not be temporarily issued to members for the purpose of secondary employment.

4.14.5 REASSIGNMENT

When an officer is reassigned to another division/section/unit, their currently-assigned vehicle will remain in the division/section/unit that they are leaving. When an officer is assigned a vehicle within their respective division/section/unit, a Vehicle Change of Status form (LMPD #03-00-0065) will be completed and emailed to the Metro Fleet Services Vehicle Coordinator at "LMPD Fleet Management," located within the department's email distribution list. Any variation from this policy must be approved by the VIU/Fleet Lieutenant.

4.14.6 USE OF VEHICLE DURING LEAVE

Any member, who will be off-duty, out-of-town, or on leave for more than seven (7) consecutive days, is required to inform their division/section/unit commander in advance. If needed, the member will turn in their vehicle prior to leaving town, as directed by their division/section/unit commander.

Sworn members, with the rank of major or above, have the authority to allow a member who is on extended vacation leave in excess of seven (7) days to keep their vehicle at their residence, if they live within Jefferson County. A member who lives outside of Jefferson County must secure their vehicle at their respective division/section/unit when on leave in excess of seven (7) days.

Take-home vehicle privileges may be suspended for members in the following situations:

- Extended leave
- Light-duty

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4.14.6 USE OF VEHICLE DURING LEAVE (CONTINUED)

- Limited-duty
- Suspension

The revocation of vehicle privileges is determined by policy, the needs of the department, or at the discretion of the Chief of Police. In such cases, the vehicle will be turned in to the appropriate division/section/unit commander, or their designee.

4.14.7 VEHICLE USAGE

The following applies to all members:

- Members will adhere to all policies, procedures, laws, rules, and regulations as they pertain to vehicle usage, equipment, operation, and maintenance.
- Members will operate their departmental vehicle with due regard for public safety at all times.
- Members will maintain proper control while operating a departmental vehicle.
- Members who are using departmental vehicles in an unauthorized manner or permitting the unauthorized use of a departmental vehicle may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Members who are using a departmental vehicle should exercise good judgment and avoid any conduct likely to cause unfavorable comment or embarrassment to the department.
- No member will use a departmental vehicle to further personal interests relative to any secondary employment or enterprise without written permission from the Chief of Police.
- Members will have their assigned departmental portable radio with them, at all times, when operating their assigned departmental vehicle.
- Members who are assigned a departmental take-home vehicle for any month, or portion thereof, will be required to pay a fee, which is assessed according to the fee schedule described in SOP 2.4, to offset the cost of gasoline and wear-and-tear incurred during personal use of the vehicle for secondary employment, even if the personal use is limited to driving to and from secondary employment. This fee will be paid through payroll deduction.
- If a member loses the privilege of using an assigned departmental take-home vehicle, the member's division/section/unit commander will send an email to the Police Human Resources (HR) Director that includes notice of the loss of the vehicle privilege, the member's name, code number, and the date that the member was removed from the department's take-home vehicle program. If the member had use of the vehicle for any portion of the month, they will be assessed the usage fee.
- If a member loses the privilege of using an assigned departmental take-home vehicle, they will only borrow a departmental vehicle from another member or from a division/section/unit vehicle pool, with a commanding officer's approval, for on-duty responsibilities.
- Members will not loan their departmentally-assigned vehicle to any other member who has lost their take-home vehicle privileges.
- Members will not loan their departmentally-assigned vehicle to any other member, even for legitimate departmental use, without the approval of a commanding officer.
- Members will not loan their departmentally-assigned vehicle to any non-departmental person, except to authorized members of Louisville Metro Government for official business such as repairs, transports, or based on exigent circumstances.

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4.14.7 VEHICLE USAGE (CONTINUED)

- Members who are assigned a departmental take-home vehicle that is unavailable to the member for any reason (e.g. repairs) will not borrow a departmental pool vehicle for secondary employment, without the written approval of their division commander.
- If a member is eligible to be assigned a departmental take-home vehicle and the member decides that they do not wish to be assigned such a vehicle, they will inform their division/section/unit commander, who will send an email to the Police HR Director that includes notice of the voluntary removal from the department's take-home vehicle program, the member's name, code number, and the date that the member opted out. If the member had take-home use of the vehicle for secondary employment for any portion of the month, they will be assessed the usage fee.
- Any member who chooses not to participate in the take-home vehicle program will not use a pool vehicle for secondary employment purposes.

In addition to the above LMPD vehicle usage requirements and prohibitions, Louisville Metro Government vehicle use policies state, in part, that Metro Government employees will not engage in writing, sending, searching, or reading text-based communication on electronic wireless communications devices, whether such devices are owned by Louisville Metro Government or by the employee, including, but not limited to, a cell phone/smartphone, personal data assistant (PDA), pager, laptop, or tablet (e.g. iPad), when operating a moving Louisville Metro Government vehicle, when driving a personal vehicle on official Louisville Metro Government business, or when using electronic equipment supplied by Louisville Metro Government, while driving. Talking on a cell phone/smartphone while driving is also strongly discouraged, unless hands-free methods (e.g. speaker phone, headset, Bluetooth) are utilized (refer to SOP 4.30).

Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) assigned to LMPD vehicles are considered an exempt device under the provisions of the Louisville Metro policy prohibitions, when safely used to receive, accept, or clear from calls for service or to perform other legitimate police functions (e.g. rolling license plate check). A member who is operating a departmental vehicle should not needlessly type, or otherwise manually enter data, which is not related to a dispatched call for service or other legitimate police function (e.g. text messaging or instant messaging), into an MDT while the vehicle is in motion. If the safe operation of the vehicle is impaired by the reading or viewing of the MDT screen (e.g. heavy traffic, higher speed conditions), a member should stop the vehicle in a safe location in order to use the MDT.

The following apply to all volunteers who are authorized to operate unmarked departmental vehicles:

- All volunteers must obtain prior authorization from the Community Engagement Unit Commander before being allowed to operate any departmental vehicle.
- Volunteers will adhere to all policies, procedures, laws, rules, and regulations as they pertain to vehicle usage, equipment, operation, and maintenance.
- Volunteers may only operate unmarked departmental vehicles.
- Volunteers are authorized to operate an unmarked departmental vehicle only after a thorough background check has been conducted, which includes, but is not limited to, operator license status and driving record.
- All volunteers who are driving unmarked departmental vehicles must sign the Agreement to Volunteer and Accept Workers' Compensation Benefits form.
- Volunteers are strictly prohibited from driving any departmental vehicles for personal use.

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4.14.7 VEHICLE USAGE (CONTINUED)

- The Covenant Not to Sue form (LMPD #03-08-0200) will be signed by any volunteer who is wishing to participate in a ride-along with sworn personnel. The Covenant Not to Sue form takes precedence over other forms during the ride-along.
- Division/Section/Unit commanders are responsible for verifying that volunteers under their command have a valid operator's license in their possession while operating a departmental vehicle (refer to SOP 5.1).
- Volunteers may not utilize emergency equipment, or engage in emergency vehicle operations, at any time.
- Volunteers who are involved in any accident in a departmental vehicle, or other incident requiring assistance, will notify MetroSafe as soon as possible.

4.14.8 OPERATIONAL JURISDICTIONS OF VEHICLES

Members will not operate a departmental vehicle outside of Jefferson County without proper authorization from a commanding officer.

If authorization is given, the member will immediately notify MetroSafe of the location to which they will be traveling, their car number, and the authorizing commanding officer's name.

Upon return to Jefferson County, the member will immediately notify MetroSafe of their return.

Exceptions not requiring a commanding officer's prior approval include:

- Making a turnaround to return to the jurisdictional boundaries of the department.
- The authorized pursuit of a suspect or vehicle (refer to SOP 12.1).
- Local travel (refer to SOP 4.14.9).
- The authorized use of a take-home vehicle (refer to SOP 4.14.3).

4.14.9 LOCAL TRAVEL

Trips for official business, utilizing a departmental vehicle and not requiring an overnight stay, are considered local travel. Requests for local travel must be approved by a commanding officer with the rank of lieutenant or above (refer to SOP 2.18).

Additionally, local travel may be authorized for the following reasons:

- Training
- Official business in Frankfort or Richmond
- Firearms enhancement at Jefferson Gun Club
- Firearms enhancement at Knob Creek Gun Range
- Firearms enhancement at OpenRange Indoor Gun Range
- Firearms enhancement at Silver Creek Conservation Club

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4.14.9 LOCAL TRAVEL (CONTINUED)

- Picking up departmentally-authorized uniform items from Galls in Lexington
- Picking up or dropping off departmentally-authorized firearms or equipment at Kiesler Police Supply
- Picking up departmentally-authorized uniform items from T-Box Tactical
- Investigations of crimes committed within Jefferson County
- Testifying in court cases outside of Jefferson County related to duties performed as a departmental member

Members who are seeking the use of a departmental vehicle for official business requiring an overnight or extended stay should refer to SOP 2.18.

4.14.10 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES/INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES

Members are prohibited from:

- Operating a departmental vehicle with any measurable amount of alcohol or any other substance in their system that could impair their ability to operate a vehicle.
- Transporting any intoxicant or illegal drugs in a departmental vehicle, except as required in an official capacity.
- Parking a departmental vehicle within the proximity of any establishment that serves alcoholic beverages as its main source of income, unless in an official capacity or in an emergency.

4.14.11 TOBACCO USE

In accordance with Metro Government Personnel Policy 1.18(3), the smoking of tobacco products and the use of e-cigarettes are prohibited in all departmental vehicles, which are defined in section 4.14.2 of this policy.

4.14.12 EATING

No more than two (2) marked vehicles and one (1) unmarked vehicle may be parked, at any given time, at a restaurant or other related establishment while on-duty. On-duty members are prohibited from eating at establishments whose primary source of income is derived from the sale of alcoholic beverages. On-duty members are to refrain from eating at the bar area of any establishment.

4.14.13 USE OF SEATBELTS (KACP 21.4)

Members and volunteers are required to wear seatbelts while operating or riding in a departmental vehicle, unless a tactical situation dictates otherwise. Passengers are required to wear seatbelts, unless physical handicaps prevent proper usage. Small children and infants will always be secured in a child restraining device or seatbelt, as required by law, and will be positioned in the rear seats due to airbag concerns.

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4.14.13 USE OF SEATBELTS (CONTINUED)

Any prisoner who is being transported in a departmental vehicle should be secured with a seatbelt, unless a physical handicap or officer safety issues prevent the proper use of a seatbelt. If a seatbelt cannot be properly secured, members should request their commanding officer's assistance with arranging alternate transportation (e.g. booking van). Members should refer to SOP 10.5 for detailed information regarding prisoner transportation.

4.14.14 OFF-DUTY POLICE ACTION

Off-duty officers who are operating a departmental vehicle within the boundaries of Jefferson County, Kentucky are required to monitor the police radio and take appropriate action to offenses that occur in their presence or requests for assistance from other officers. Appropriate action is that which is both necessary, considering the totality of the circumstances, and within their ability to handle at the time (e.g. availability of weapon, radio communication, physical condition).

At a minimum, an off-duty officer will brief on-duty officers of pertinent information (e.g. license number, descriptions, circumstances).

4.14.15 PASSENGERS

A member may use their assigned vehicle while off-duty to transport persons who they might normally transport in a personally-owned vehicle, in accordance with the following:

- If possible, off-duty officers who are responding to a serious offense or emergency should have any passengers exit the vehicle at a safe and secure location before proceeding to the call.
- Members will be held accountable for the appearance and conduct of their passengers.

On-duty officers are authorized to transport the following:

- Civilian riders (refer to SOP 8.10)
- Prisoners (refer to SOP 10.5)
- Civilians under police-related circumstances (refer to SOP 7.10)
- Other departmental members

4.14.16 PARKING

Members are prohibited from parking in handicapped zones, fire lanes, no parking or stopping zones (including peak time no parking), turning lanes, tow away zones, bus stops, or reserved parking spaces (e.g. media parking only, Crime Scene Unit (CSU) parking only, MetroSafe, Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, etc.).

Members should not utilize parking meters in the downtown area unless they are on official business or they pay the appropriate parking fee. The downtown area is defined as the area bounded by Roy Wilkins Avenue (9th Street), Brook Street, Broadway, and the Ohio River. Official business is defined as handling a call for service, taking some type of self-initiated activity (refer to SOP 1.11), conducting criminal investigations, or attending

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4.14.16 PARKING (CONTINUED)

meetings at the direction of competent authority. Members who are on official business must display their "official business" parking permit on the dash of the departmental vehicle.

Official business privileges are not extended to members who are attending court, the Grand Jury, or official meetings at the Jefferson County Attorney's Office or Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

Members who are attending court or meetings near the courthouse buildings may park in the lot provided by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), via the lease agreement with Metro Government, or on a surface street or in a parking garage at their own expense.

If a member, who is in control of a departmental vehicle, receives a parking citation while not on official business, they are required to pay the fine in the same manner as a private citizen. The fine must be paid within seven (7) working days. Nothing in this policy prevents a member from appealing a parking citation, using the same appeals process as a private citizen.

If a member, who is in control of a departmental vehicle, receives a parking citation while conducting official business, they will write a memorandum that states when and where the citation was issued prior to the end of their next tour of duty. The memorandum should state the nature of the official business and the reason for parking in the particular location. The memorandum and a copy of the parking citation will be forwarded, through the appropriate chain of command, to the Assistant Chief of Police/Administrative Bureau. Any member who fails to pay a parking citation, when required to do so or to make the proper written notifications if the parking was justified, will be subject to disciplinary action.

4.14.17 UNATTENDED VEHICLES

Members should not leave departmental vehicles unsecured or running unattended. If circumstances are such that the officer is unable to secure the vehicle, the vehicle will be secured as soon as possible and MetroSafe should be notified of the location and circumstances.

4.14.18 IDLING

Members should not leave vehicle engines idling for extended periods, unless required for operational reasons, such as for the safety of police canines or human occupants or the active use of emergency lighting. Members should adopt fuel conservation practices, including reducing unnecessary engine idling.

4.14.19 VEHICLE APPEARANCE

Members are responsible for the appearance and cleanliness of their vehicle, regardless of whether the vehicle is temporarily or permanently assigned.

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4.14.19 VEHICLE APPEARANCE (CONTINUED)

Members may take their vehicles to a vendor under contract with Metro Government no more than once every two (2) weeks. Members may also wash and clean the vehicles themselves or pay, at their own expense, for a commercial car wash, as needed.

Some vehicles may require detailed cleaning. In such cases, the member will complete a Vehicle Detailing Request form (LMPD #17-0006) and submit it, through the appropriate chain of command, to the VIU/Fleet Lieutenant for approval. If the vehicle requires decontamination, members will clean the vehicle themselves if it is not severely contaminated and does not require detailed cleaning (refer to SOP 12.2). Departmental vehicles will not be used for the transportation of bulk material(s) protruding from the trunk or interior compartment. Exceptions to this standard would include departmental equipment or evidence.

4.14.20 DAMAGE TO/COLLISIONS INVOLVING DEPARTMENTAL VEHICLES

When a departmental vehicle is involved in a collision or damage is caused to a departmental vehicle, it will be reported on the Vehicle Damage or Collision Report form (LMPD #03-07-0190). Collisions must be reported even if there is no apparent damage to a departmental vehicle. If criminal charges are filed, damage to any property will be noted in the arrest/citation narrative. Members will obtain a copy of the property damage appraisal or the Newburg Road garage invoice and present to the prosecutor in order to request restitution for the damages. The request for restitution should be part of the plea agreement or sentencing. If a member alleges that a mechanical defect or failure was a factor in the collision, the departmental vehicle will be immediately towed to Metro Fleet Services for a mechanical inspection. Under no circumstances will a member operate a vehicle that is alleged to have a mechanical defect or failure. The vehicle in question must first be inspected and cleared by Metro Fleet Services before it can be operated again.

In cases where minor injuries, if any, occur as the result of a collision involving a departmental vehicle, a commanding officer from the division where the collision occurred will respond to the scene and complete the collision report and a Vehicle Damage or Collision Report form, as soon as possible following the incident (refer to SOP 7.7). In cases where very serious or life-threatening injuries occur as the result of a collision involving a departmental vehicle, the Traffic Unit will respond to the scene and complete the collision report. A commanding officer from the division where the collision occurred will respond to the scene and complete a Vehicle Damage or Collision Report form, as soon as possible following the incident (refer to SOP 7.7). In cases where the severity of injuries are unclear, or the collision scene is extremely complex, commanding officers will confer with the Traffic Unit to determine who will investigate the collision. The investigating officer will also create a diagram of the collision.

The Vehicle Damage or Collision Report form, including the collision report number, if applicable, will be forwarded electronically, no later than the end of the commanding officer's tour of duty, to "LMPD Vehicle Damage Notification," located within the department's email distribution list. The original report will then be forwarded through the appropriate chain of command. Photographs of all damaged vehicles are to be taken by the investigating or responding supervisor, the collision investigator, or the Crime Scene Unit (CSU). These photos will be uploaded into the Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS), and copies attached to the original Vehicle Damage or Collision Report form. Any other paperwork (e.g. uniform citation, collision diagrams, etc.) associated with the damage will be submitted with the form (refer to SOP 7.7).

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4.14.20 DAMAGE TO/COLLISIONS INVOLVING DEPARTMENTAL VEHICLES (CONTINUED)

Members with damaged departmental vehicles will contact the Metro Fleet Services supervisors within seven (7) days of the damage to arrange for the vehicle's evaluation and/or repair estimate. Members with rental vehicles will contact the leasing vendor within seven (7) days of the damage. Once the property damage assessment is complete, members have seven (7) days to schedule the needed repairs through the Metro Fleet Services supervisors. Officers will be responsible for keeping their scheduled appointment.

4.14.21 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Members should refer to SOP 4.15 for departmental vehicle maintenance procedures.