

South Plainfield Borough
Borough Clerk's Office
2480 Plainfield Avenue
South Plainfield, NJ 07080
Telephone (908) 286-7606
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Justin Guererro, via email

- 1) <opra+request-93422-efea5e03@requests.opramachine.com> "EZ Pass Policy"
and
- 2) <opra+request-93423-11aac452@requests.opramachine.com> "Policy for Take Home Municipal Vehicles"

July 27, 2026

RE: Open Public Records Request

Dear Justin Guererro,

Both of your Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were submitted to the Police Records Department on 07/15/2026. It was transmitted to the Custodian of Records on 7/15/2026. The seven-business-day deadline to respond to said request is 7/24/2026. This request is being provided to you on the eighth business day, 7/27/2026. Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your OPRA request. The delay was unintentional and resulted from a transition of responsibilities within our Police Department, and previously scheduled staff absences from the office, affecting the personnel responsible for locating and reviewing the responsive records. The status of the record(s) you requested is as follows:

RECORDS REQUESTED & RESPONSE:

- 1) *"Pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA), I request copies of all current and previously effective written policies, directives, general orders, standard operating procedures, administrative policies, rules or guidelines in effect from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2026 governing the use of municipal EZPass transponders, toll accounts, and the use of EZPass by municipally owned vehicles, including take-home vehicles as well as any policy reimbursement for personal toll charges."*

And

- 2) *Pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.), I request copies of all current and previously effective Borough and/or Police Department written policies, directives, general orders, special orders, standard operating procedures (SOPs), administrative orders, rules, manuals, or other written guidance governing the assignment, operation, use, maintenance, monitoring, and return of municipally owned take-home vehicles for Borough employees in effect at any time from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2026.*

This request includes, but is not limited to, policies or directives addressing:

- * Eligibility for assignment of take-home vehicles;*
- * Authorized and unauthorized use;*
- * Personal use of take-home vehicles;*
- * Commuting and geographic restrictions;*
- * Fuel usage and fuel cards;*
- * EZPass transponder use and toll reimbursement;*
- * Vehicle maintenance and service requirements;*
- * Mileage reporting or odometer documentation;*
- * Vehicle inspections;*
- * Vehicle reassignment, transfer, replacement, or return upon issuance of a new vehicle; and*
- * Recordkeeping requirements relating to municipally assigned take-home vehicles.*

Response:

- 1) *EZ Pass Policy* - Please find one responsive record attached. Please be advised that one redaction was made within said record pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1 due to emergency or security information or procedures which, if disclosed, would jeopardize the security of persons or facilities.
- 2) *Take Home Municipal Vehicles* - Please find the following responsive records attached:
 - a) 3:9.9 from the Rules and Regulations of the South Plainfield Police Department.
 - b) Borough Policy for Use of Borough Vehicles
 - c) South Plainfield Police Department General Orders related to use of vehicles.
Please be advised that one redaction was made within said record pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1 due to emergency or security information or procedures which, if disclosed, would jeopardize the security of persons or facilities.
 - d) South Plainfield Police Department Policy 86-29 related to use of vehicles.
Please be advised that one redaction was made within said record pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1 due to emergency or security information or procedures which, if disclosed, would jeopardize the security of persons or facilities.

Amy Antonides, RMC/CMC/CMR
Municipal Clerk

CC: Michael DiFazio II, Esq., Borough Attorney

(You have the right to challenge the decision by the Borough of South Plainfield, and at your option, you may either institute a proceeding in the Superior Court of New Jersey or file a complaint with the Government Records Council by completing the Denial of Access Complaint Form. You may contact the Government Records Council at 866-850-0511. All questions regarding complaints filed in Superior Court should be directed to the Middlesex County Court Clerk.)

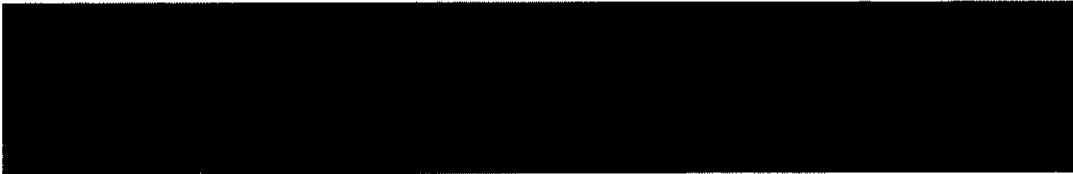
SOUTH PLAINFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS		
SUBJECT: VEHICLE OPERATION AND CALL RESPONSE GUIDELINES		
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 26, 2026	NUMBER OF PAGES: 16	
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: 3.5.1	BY THE ORDER OF: Chief Peter J. Papa	

PURPOSE The purpose of this general order is to maintain clear guidelines for general vehicle operation and responding to calls for service.

POLICY It is the policy of the South Plainfield Police Department to evaluate the urgency requiring a response to any situation and to respond accordingly in an effective, efficient, and expeditious manner. As a rule, no matter how urgent the response, officers are required to always operate department vehicles in a safe and controlled manner, while taking into consideration the characteristics of the roadway, weather conditions, and the potential actions of other civilians. The priority of call response is to arrive safely at the scene with minimal disruption to the public.

It is further the policy of this department that officers shall operate vehicles in a safe and courteous manner consistent with all applicable rules, regulations, general orders, policies, statutes, guidelines, and ordinances.

See this agency's general order on *Employee Involved Motor Vehicle Collisions* for procedures regarding employee responsibilities in a collision.

- G. Officers receiving a summons or uniform traffic ticket while on duty or while operating a South Plainfield vehicle, whether parking or moving, shall immediately notify their division commander through the chain of command in writing. The circumstances shall be documented in an email and a photocopy of the summons attached to the email.
1. PARKING VIOLATIONS: If a parking summons is issued to the vehicle and unless extenuating circumstances exist, the individual who is utilizing the vehicle is personally responsible for legally satisfying the summons.
 2. NON-MOVING VIOLATIONS: If a non-moving violation summons is issued to the individual utilizing the vehicle, the division commander and the Chief of Police shall review the circumstances. If the Borough is directly responsible for the violation (e.g., equipment violation, etc.), the Borough will take responsibility of legally satisfying the summons. If not, the individual utilizing the vehicle is responsible.
 3. MOVING VIOLATIONS: If a moving violation summons is issued to the individual utilizing a department vehicle, that individual is responsible for legally satisfying the summons.
- H. EZ Pass will be maintained by the Administration Division. Any intentional violations, abuse, or misuse may result in disciplinary action.
- I. Emergency vehicle operation shall not relieve the driver of the emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provision protect the driver from the consequences of their careless or reckless disregard for the safety of others (N.J.S.A. 39:4-91).
- J. Personnel operating departmental vehicles shall exercise due regard for the safety of all persons. No assignment shall be of such importance and no task shall be expedited with such emphasis, that the principles of safety become secondary. There are no tasks in the department of such importance that they justify the reckless disregard of the safety of innocent persons.
- K. Personnel operating sport utility vehicles (SUVs), unmarked vehicles, truck chassis vehicles, vans, pickup trucks, vehicles towing trailers, military surplus vehicles, utility task vehicles, bicycles, and non-law enforcement undercover or forfeiture vehicles shall remain cognizant of the performance limitations of these vehicles (e.g., increased roll over potential, decreased visibility, decreased maneuverability, etc.) and shall operate with enhanced prudence regardless of the type of call.
- L. Generally, calls for service are classified into two categories:
1. Emergency; and
 2. Non-emergency.
- M. 

3:9.6 Damaged or Inoperative Property or Equipment

Employees shall immediately report to the Chief of Police or designee any loss of or damage to department property assigned to or used by them. The Chief of Police or designee shall also be notified of any defects or hazardous conditions existing in any department equipment or property.

3:9.7 Care of Department Buildings

Employees shall not mark or deface any surface in any department building. No material shall be affixed to any wall in department buildings without specific authorization from the Chief of Police.

3:9.8 Notices

Employees shall not mark, alter, or deface any posted notice of the department. No notices or announcements shall be posted on bulletin boards without permission of the Chief of Police, except those areas designated for use by the collective bargaining unit(s). No other form of communication of notices or announcements, including electronic communication of non-official police business shall be made unless authorized by the Chief of Police. No notices, pictures or other written communications may be posted that are degrading, obscene, or considered detrimental to the good order of the Police Department.

3:9.9 Use of Department Vehicles

Employees shall not use any department vehicle without the permission of the Chief of Police or their designee.

3:9.10 Operation of Department Vehicles

When operating department vehicles, employees shall not violate traffic laws, except in cases of emergency and then only in conformity with state law and department written directive regarding same.

3:9.11 Transporting Non-Employees

Non-employees shall not be transported in department vehicles, except as necessary in the performance of official police duties. Such transportation will be done in conformance with department written directive or at the direction of the supervisor or communications center.

3:9.12 Reporting Accidents

Accidents involving department personnel, property, equipment and vehicles must be reported in accordance with department written directive.

3:9.13 Inspection

Department property and equipment is subject to entry and inspection without notice. This includes, but is not limited to any vehicle, desk, filing cabinet, and/or locker, the use of which is provided to the employee by the department.

USE OF BOROUGH VEHICLES

Borough vehicles are to be used for Borough business and for Borough related activities only. Borough vehicles are not for personal use.

Some examples of personal uses are: transportation of spouses, children, friends or relatives. Transportation to places of public accommodation such as theaters, shopping centers, golf courses, churches, restaurants, vacations, etc. This listing is not all-inclusive, however, it does emphasize the Borough's intent and each employee should exercise good judgment and be guided accordingly.

Borough vehicles are to be used only if considered the most efficient and economical means of transportation when compared with other available means of transportation.

Borough vehicles are to be driven by Borough employees only. Department head approvals are to be obtained prior to using Borough vehicles.

Borough vehicles used for out of town business are to be used only during business hours and only for official Borough business.

Any passengers of Borough vehicles are limited to either Borough employees or individuals who have an official Borough business reason requiring transport.

Employees driving Borough vehicles must have a valid driver's license, must observe federal, state and local motor vehicle laws and regulations and must personally assume responsibility for payment of fines for violations committed.

Employees are encouraged to wear seat belts at all times while operating or riding as a passenger in a motor vehicle on Borough business.

Borough vehicles are to be returned immediately after they have served their purpose. Employees using vehicles shall not keep them overnight.

Dedicated Vehicles

Borough vehicles will only be assigned to specific individuals for full-time take-home use where the individual is subject to the following conditions:

Subject to call-out at any hour to maintain vital services through handling of emergencies.

Such dedicated use is limited to a daily, one-way commute of 35 miles or less.

Dedicated use is limited to:

Police Chief
 Fire Chief
 Deputy Fire Chief
 (1) Fire Inspector
 Emergency Management Coordinator

Any other dedicated use must be pre-approved by the Mayor and Council.

Use of Personal Vehicles

Personal vehicles may be used on Borough business when such use is necessary provided prior approval is obtained from the employee's department head. Each instance should be considered individually. A personal vehicle is defined as an employee-owned personal vehicle that is properly registered with the appropriate state authority in the name of the employee or a member of the family. All employees using a personal motor vehicle for business purposes shall maintain a valid policy of vehicle liability insurance. Minimum liability coverage for all employee-owned vehicles used for Borough business shall be \$50,000/\$100,000 bodily injury and \$10,000 property damage. Copies of the declaration page of the employee's vehicle liability policy shall be kept on file by the Borough Clerk's office and updated annually or semi-annually to reflect any changes to the coverage provisions or as changes are made.

Going to and coming from work shall not be considered Borough use of personal vehicles.

Reimbursement for travel expenses shall be at the current IRS allowable rate. Effective April 3, 1993, the travel allowance of 28 per mile shall be paid. These expenses shall be recovered through the use of the normal petty cash fund.

The Borough maintains via an umbrella policy, coverage for claims for bodily injury and property damage not otherwise covered by employees' coverage for accidents involving Borough use of personal vehicles.

A Borough employee involved in an accident with a personal vehicle while on Borough business shall report the accident immediately to his/her insurance carrier and to his/her department head.

In the event that an employee's vehicle is damaged as a result of an accident when said vehicle is being used for Borough business and said vehicle is not covered by the owner's collision policy, the Borough shall pay to the employee the appraised value of the vehicle less its salvage value when said vehicle has been damaged beyond repair. The employee shall subrogate all rights he/she might otherwise have regarding said property damage to the Borough in consideration of this collision coverage.

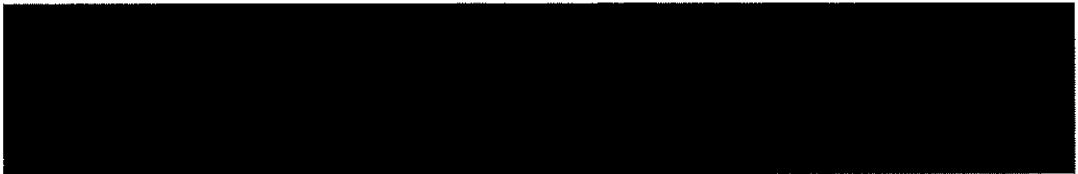
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- L. Generally, calls for service are classified into two categories:
1. Emergency; and
 2. Non-emergency.
- M. 

South Plainfield Police Department Policy 86-29		
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT VEHICLES – ISSUES RELATED TO AND INSPECTIONS OF		
CROSS REFERENCE: -Policy 86-2 (Accident/pursuit Review Board) -Policy 93-1 (MVR/BWC-Procedures for Operation) -Absorbs Policy 86-69 (Patrol Vehicles-Inspection of)	# OF PAGES: 7 Accreditation Standard:	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 05/18/2021 REVIEW DATE: 12/19/2025	BY THE ORDER OF: Chief Peter J. Papa	

I. BACKGROUND

In order to place accountability on the appropriate personnel regarding the use and care of departmental vehicles, policy has been established.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the SPPD that all members comply with the following guidelines governing departmental vehicles.

III. ACTION

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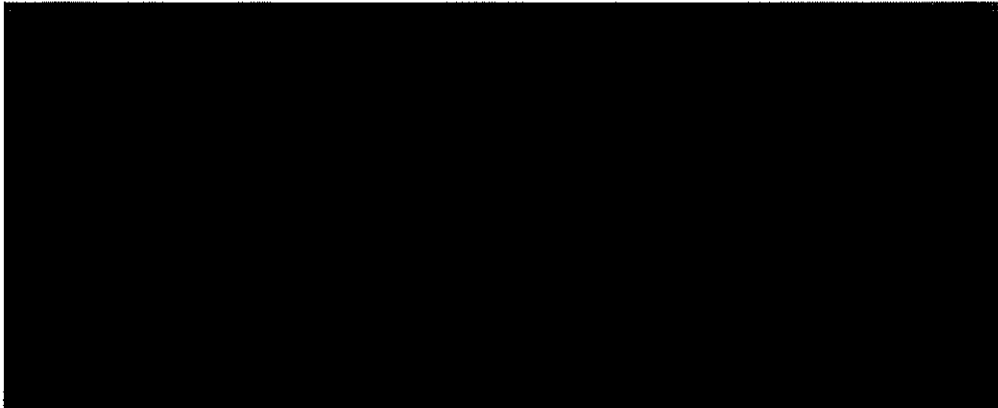
A. **INSPECTIONS OF PATROL VEHICLES**

1. **PHYSICAL DAMAGE:**

- a. **UNREPORTED:** At the beginning of each tour of duty, it is the responsibility of each officer and supervisor to thoroughly check his/her assigned vehicle to ensure that there is no physical damage or missing equipment. Should any damage be discovered, the officer shall immediately notify his/her supervisor and document via department email, who will check the discovered damage

2. **SUPERVISORS VEHICLE**

In addition to the equipment in Patrol Vehicle, the Supervisors Vehicle shall be checked for the following additional equipment:



C. VEHICLE OPERATIONS:

1. **JUMP STARTS:** Departmental vehicles will not be used for jump-starting non-departmental vehicles, unless an emergency situation exists and the supervisor grants approval. Utilize the jump start unit in the equipment room if possible.

2.



3. **VEHICLE SECURITY:** Due to the valuable equipment maintained in each vehicle, all patrol units will be secured anytime the operating officer is away from the vehicle on any type of call for service/detail. This includes when the vehicles are parked at the end of tour of duty in the station parking lot.

D. CARE & MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES:

1. **GENERAL OPERATION:** Vehicles will be operated with care and in a reasonable manner, based upon the circumstances at that particular moment. Departmental personnel will not knowingly, purposely, recklessly or negligently abuse the vehicles and/or equipment.
2. **MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS:** All mechanical checks shall be conducted by the Department of Public Works.
 - a. **Patrol Vehicles:** Patrol vehicles shall be mechanically checked at least once per tour (Monday-Friday), between 0700 hours-0900 hours, if possible.
 - b. **All Other Vehicles:** At a minimum, all other vehicles shall be mechanically checked monthly.
3. **INTERIOR MAINTENANCE:** At the completion of the working shift, it is the responsibility of each individual officer to ensure that his/her vehicle is free of all debris, i.e., coffee spills, cigarette ashes, newspapers, discarded paperwork, etc.
4. **EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE:** Departmental vehicles shall be taken to the designated car wash on a regular basis (at least once during the three day tour).

- E. PERIODIC INSPECTIONS:** Periodic inspections of all patrol, traffic and detective vehicles shall be conducted and documented by the Training Division. Any deficiencies, such as damaged/non-functional/missing equipment, dirty conditions, etc. will be reported to the respective division commander for follow-up. It shall be implied that

unreported missing/damaged equipment is the responsibility of the last officer in possession of the vehicle.

- F. FUELING OF VEHICLES:** At the end of each tour of duty, members of the Patrol Section shall be responsible for fueling the unit that they utilize. It is preferred, that the unit be refueled in the last hour of the tour. If, due to extenuating circumstances, the officer is unable to fuel the vehicle, his/her supervisor shall be verbally advised, and the information passed on to the on-coming supervisor. Members assigned to any other section of the Department shall maintain a minimum of one quarter (1/4) of a tank of gas in their assigned vehicles.
- G. DISPOSITION OF SUMMONSES ISSUED AS A RESULT OF OPERATING A DEPARTMENT VEHICLE:**
1. **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** Anytime a summons is issued to a department vehicle or an individual utilizing a department vehicle is issued a moving/non-moving summons, the individual shall immediately notify his/her Division Commander in writing. The circumstances shall be documented in an email and a photocopy of the summons attached to the email.
 2. **PARKING VIOLATIONS:** If a parking summons is issued to the vehicle and unless extenuating circumstances exist, the individual who is utilizing the vehicle is personally responsible for legally disposing of the summons.
 3. **NON-MOVING VIOLATIONS:** If a non-moving violation summons is issued to the individual utilizing the vehicle, the Division Commander and the Chief of Police shall review the circumstances. If the Borough is directly responsible for the violation (i.e., equipment violation), the Borough will take the responsibility of legally disposing of the summons. If not, the individual utilizing the vehicle shall be responsible.
 4. **MOVING VIOLATIONS:** If a moving violation summons is issued to the individual utilizing a department vehicle, that individual is responsible for legally satisfying the summons.
- H. SEAT BELT USAGE:** The operator and all passengers riding in a departmental vehicle are required to utilize the safety restraining devices contained within the vehicle (lap belt and/or shoulder harness). This applies to police employees, citizen passengers and prisoners. The supervisor for specific situations in which the efficiency of the operation outweighs the safety benefit can authorize exceptions to this requirement.
- I. TRANSPORTATION OF ANIMALS IN VEHICLE:** Animals merely reported to be running at large will normally not be transported in Departmental vehicles. Under extenuating or unusual circumstances, permission to transport animals in Departmental vehicles can be granted by the supervisor/OIC. Deceased animals can be transported for storage with the permission of the supervisor/OIC.
- J. USE OF VEHICLE OUTSIDE OF JURISDICTION:** The use of official Departmental vehicles outside the agency's primary jurisdiction shall occur only under the following circumstances:
1. If attempting to stop a motor vehicle violator on the border of town or suspect in a crime (pursuit);
 2. With the permission or under the direction of the supervisor/OIC (i.e. schools, special details);
 3. In an official capacity or function.