



ALLEN PASCUAL
Commissioner

**TOWNSHIP OF NORTH BERGEN
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
4233 KENNEDY BOULEVARD
NORTH BERGEN, NJ 07047



Robert J. Farley, Jr.
Chief of Police

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately		DIRECTIVE: General Order 24-01	
SUBJECT: Take-Home Vehicle			
REFERENCES:			
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:			
DISTRIBUTION: Police Desk All Divisions via Power DMS General Order Manual		NUMBER OF PAGES: 5	
ISSUING AUTHORITY: Robert J. Farley, Jr. Chief of Police		ISSUE DATE: 02/08/2024	REVISION DATE:

I. PURPOSE:

- A.** The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures concerning Department take-home vehicles.

II. POLICY:

- A.** It shall be the policy of the North Bergen Police Department, as owner, to determine how vehicles are used, the personnel authorized to operate, maintenance, and the manner in which vehicles are assigned. In addition, the Department reserves the right to inspect any vehicle and its content at any time.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. Eligibility and Issuance

1. Officers may be assigned a take-home vehicle when they are on Staff Duty. Assignment of a vehicle is a privilege and not a bona-fide employee benefit and specific conditions will be placed on all employees regarding the use, issuance and retention of Department owned vehicles.
2. Vehicle assignment is at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his designee.

B. Utilization

1. The use of police vehicles off-duty is intended to ensure staff duty officers can respond to critical incidents within the Township of North Bergen in a timely manner. While operating those vehicles, employees will avoid actions which could be perceived as improper or unsafe. Vehicles will be operated according to all applicable state laws.
2. Officers are expected to maintain a high professional standard while operating vehicles off-duty and will use discretion in the clothing worn while operating any police vehicle. Off-duty dress, while operating a department vehicle will be appropriate to effectively perform a police function while at the same time presenting a favorable image to the public.
3. Officers residing outside of the geographic boundaries of the Township of North Bergen will not utilize the take-home vehicle for personal business.
4. When operating the take-home vehicle, officers will monitor the appropriate police radio channel and will notify dispatch when responding to a call for service or when conducting police business.
5. Officers and passengers will wear a safety belt at all times while vehicles are in operation.
6. While operating a vehicle off-duty, at a minimum, officers will carry the following equipment to answer critical calls for service:
 - a. Department issued handgun, and
 - b. official police identification and credentials.

C. Answering Calls While Off-duty

1. While operating a vehicle off-duty, officers are expected to provide the necessary professional assistance or service to individuals or officers in need.
2. In addition, the following regulations will govern officers operation of a police vehicle off-duty:
 - a. Priority Calls – Response is required to any life-threatening call for service if, after assessing probable response time, the off-duty officer expects to arrive before other dispatched units.
 - b. Routine Calls – Officers will relay their location and response status to the shift supervisor who may authorize their response to a routine call.
 - c. Traffic Violations – Officers may stop and cite motorists for traffic violations.
 - d. Motorist Assistance – Officers are expected to offer assistance/aid to any motorist in need. Officers need only remain at the scene until appropriate aid is rendered or relieved by on-duty personnel.
3. Off-duty officers, who go in service to respond to assist motorists, handle calls or provide service, will be compensated for time spent. Officers are required to document their time and notify dispatch of their activity.
4. Any off-duty use of a vehicle which compromises the professional image of the Department may be considered cause for revoking the take-home vehicle privilege.

D. Parking and Storage

1. Officers will park the take-home vehicle at their primary residence when it is not in use.
2. Department vehicles will be returned and stored at the Department when the following conditions exist:
 - a. The conclusion of Staff-Duty,

- b. vacation or days off when an officer's residence will be vacant for more than 72 hours and the vehicle cannot be garaged or parked in a driveway,
 - c. the officer is assigned to light-duty,
 - d. suspension from duty,
 - e. maternity, paternity or extended sick leave, and/or
 - f. as a result of an administrative action.
- 3. When a vehicle is parked, out of service, or the officer is not within the immediate vicinity, officers will ensure the contents of the vehicle are locked and secured and all weapons, portable radios, and/or police identification are removed from the passenger compartment.

E. Maintenance

- 1. Officers are responsible for and the interior and exterior appearance of their take-home vehicle.
- 2. Department vehicles will have scheduled maintenance coordinated with the Fleet Manager at the appropriate intervals. Only the Township of North Bergen R&D Shops will work on Department vehicles unless precluded by an emergency, prior agreement, or warranty service.
- 3. Officers needing emergency repairs (when practical) will contact the on-call mechanic from shops.
- 4. In the event a department vehicle is taken out of service, dispatch should contact the on-call wrecker service that will tow the vehicle to the North Bergen Township Garage.

F. Damage to Vehicle/ Accident

- 1. Damage to any Department owned vehicle will be reported upon immediate discovery to the on-duty shift supervisor.
- 2. Officers involved in a Motor Vehicle Accident shall immediately notify dispatch who will advise the on-duty supervisor.

- a. If the officer is within the Township of North Bergen a Traffic Officer shall respond to the location and file the appropriate reports.
- b. If the officer is outside the Township of North Bergen they shall notify the appropriate authority and have them complete the appropriate reports.

IV. VIOLATIONS:

- A. Supervisors shall be held accountable for the enforcement of this directive.
- B. Failure to follow this directive may result in progressive disciplinary action.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Robert J. Farley, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert J. Farley, Jr.
Chief of Police