

## ESCAMBIA COUNTY FIRE-RESCUE

*Standard Operating Guidelines*

*K.W. Perkins*, Fire Chief

1215.005

Staff Vehicle Use

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### **PURPOSE**

To provide personnel with guidelines that define the authorized use and maintenance of staff vehicles assigned to members of Escambia County Fire-Rescue.

### **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure all staff vehicles are used and maintained in a proper manner, and prevent personnel from utilizing staff vehicles in a way that can be interpreted by the public as fraudulent, wasteful, abusive, operated for personal gain, or used for business not related to County fire protection.

### **SCOPE**

All Personnel

### **GENERAL**

For the purpose of responding to emergency scenes and conducting legitimate County fire protection business, it is standard practice to assign staff vehicles to Chief Officers throughout Escambia County. This is a great privilege, but one which carries significant responsibility.

All Fire-Rescue vehicles attract the attention of the public. Any improper, unsafe, or un-courteous action taken by the driver of a staff vehicle can reflect poorly upon the entire organization. For this reason, personnel should avoid placing themselves in any situation that might lead to the appearance of County vehicle misuse, or abuse of privilege.

### **DRIVERS' LICENSE**

All personnel driving staff vehicles must possess a valid Florida drivers' license and be in compliance with all driving guidelines and policies established by Escambia County Fire-Rescue.

Failure to comply with the established drivers' license guideline will result in the revocation of all Fire-Rescue driving privileges. Other disciplinary action may be taken against personnel that are required to operate Fire-Rescue vehicles in performance of their regular duties.

### **STANDARD APPEARANCE AND REPAIR**

All staff vehicles will be marked with the approved decals, striping, and lettering. Additionally, staff vehicles will be outfitted with the approved warning package. The County Fire Chief must approve any deviations or additional equipment.

At all times, staff vehicles will be kept clean and in good repair. Station Chiefs will ensure their assigned staff vehicles are maintained on a continuous preventative maintenance

program. Vehicles with worn tires, poor brakes, or other mechanical conditions that may jeopardize the safety of its occupants or the public, shall be removed from service until proper repairs can be made. In addition, line apparatus and vehicles (squads, rescue vehicles, brush trucks, etc.) shall not be substituted as staff vehicles.

### **AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS**

Unless authorized by the County Deputy Chief, or in extreme emergency situations, staff vehicles are permitted for the use and transport of Fire-Rescue personnel and associated County employees only.

However, in the delivery of customer service, citizens may occasionally need to be transported in staff vehicles. In these cases, personnel will advise dispatch they are transporting a citizen and request a "public assistance" incident. Additionally, personnel will transmit their current vehicle mileage to dispatch. Upon reaching the destination, personnel will notify dispatch of their arrival, transmit their ending mileage, and close out the incident.

### **LOCAL USE**

Staff vehicles are to be used for official Fire-Rescue business only. Official Fire-Rescue business is considered to be response to emergencies, travel to and from Fire-Rescue related training or meetings, or travel to retrieve, deliver, or mail Fire-Rescue items and supplies. Other travel within Escambia County may be authorized, provided personnel are available to respond, in a timely manner, to all emergencies assigned to their station.

### **OUT OF COUNTY TRAVEL**

Occasionally, staff vehicles may need to be used on official Fire-Rescue business outside of Escambia County. Travel to training events, conferences, and information gathering missions are vital to the operations of Escambia County Fire-Rescue. Personnel should review the established guidelines regarding out of county travel and training prior to conducting such activities.

### **REQUIRED EQUIPMENT**

As a minimum, staff vehicles must carry the following equipment:

- 1) Two-way radio
- 2) Full bunker gear and SCBA
- 3) ABC fire extinguisher (minimum 10 lb.)
- 4) First aid kit with appropriate body substance isolation equipment
- 5) Binoculars
- 6) Scene tape
- 7) Appropriate maps, guides, and reference materials

### **OBEDIENCE TO TRAFFIC LAWS & RESPONSE GUIDELINES**

At all times, personnel will observe applicable traffic laws and regulations, and operate their vehicle in a proper, safe, and courteous manner. It is of the utmost importance that staff vehicle operators exercise extreme caution while operating their vehicle under the exemptions afforded to emergency vehicles by Florida law. Vehicle operators will be

responsible for following all guidelines set forth by Escambia County Fire-Rescue regarding emergency vehicle response.

**INTOXICANTS**

Under no circumstances will personnel be authorized to operate Fire-Rescue staff vehicles while under the influence of any intoxicating drug or alcoholic beverage. The transport of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance is strictly prohibited in any staff vehicle.

**RECORDED USE**

Personnel must be able to account for any excessive mileage, fuel consumption, or repairs related to their assigned vehicle. Upon request of the County Fire Chief, personnel may be required to submit a detailed report outlining such excesses. For this reason, it is recommended that personnel keep a record regarding the use and maintenance of their assigned vehicle.

**LOSS OF DRIVING PRIVILEGES**

If any Fire-Rescue personnel are found to have violated any of the above guidelines, or abused the privilege of being assigned a staff vehicle, the County Fire Chief may take appropriate disciplinary action. This action may include, but not limited to revocation of the responsible individual's staff vehicle privileges.