

HEALTHWEST

PROCEDURE

No. 07-002

Prepared by:
Environment of Care Committee

Effective: October 1, 1992
Revised: April 3, 2024

Approved by:

Subject: Staff Travel and Use of
County Vehicles

DocuSigned by:

Rich Francisco

Rich Francisco, Executive Director

I. PURPOSE

To establish a system for the effective use of County vehicles for individuals receiving services and other Agency business consistent with the "Vehicle Assignment and Utilization" policy of Muskegon County.

II. APPLICATION

All employees, volunteers, interns and contract staff of HealthWest.

III. PROCEDURE

A. The Agency will, as resources permit, provide County vehicles for staff to conduct out-of-office business in the order of priority listed:

1. Transportation of individuals receiving services.
2. Out-of-county travel.
3. In-county travel.
4. If all vehicles are assigned, then higher priority requests will supersede lower priority requests and the vehicles will be reassigned accordingly.

B. Agency staff shall not operate a County vehicle when the employee knows or should know of a physical condition affecting his/her ability to safely operate the vehicle.

C. The following are specific practices prohibited while operating a County vehicle:

1. Under the influence of alcohol/non-prescribed controlled substances;
2. Transporting alcohol or non-prescribed controlled substances;
3. Violation of traffic regulations; and

4. Careless or negligent operation.
- D. The Director or designee may assign or authorize non-Agency individuals the use of County vehicles under the following conditions:
1. The user is a County employee or County elected official doing business directly related to the Agency or to/for the individuals it serves.
 2. The individuals or agencies are under contract with the Agency and have transportation needs that are not obligated under the contract for service but are related to the Agency or to/for the individuals it serves.
 3. The organizations will provide specific, non-routine transportation to/for individuals served by the Agency of a clinical or personal benefit confirmed by their Agency primary worker or case manager.
 4. The individual or agency completes and agrees to the conditions listed in the Authorization for Non-HealthWest Agency Driver Use and obtains the authorized signature.
 5. WEX fuel cards may not be issued to non-Agency staff.
- E. Staff, or any other individual, who operates a County vehicle must have a valid Michigan driver's license.
1. The Employee Resource Coordinator will monitor to assure drivers licenses are current and valid and forward information as necessary to each supervisor.
 2. Staff assigned to schedule vehicles will obtain a copy of a valid Michigan driver's license of any other individual authorized to use a vehicle. The scheduling staff will attach the copy to the Authorization Record and maintain the copies for six months.
 3. Staff will not provide keys or schedule use of County vehicles to any individual who does not present a valid Michigan driver's license.
- F. Staff, or any other individual, will only use County vehicles for work-related purposes and not for personal or non-Agency business unless listed below:
1. If staff is working in the field and a return to the normal place of work is impractical, a County vehicle may be used for transportation to obtain a meal.
 2. Staff, or any other individual, authorized to use a County vehicle for overnight, out-of-county travel, may only use the County vehicle locally for personal activities such as obtaining personal supplies or meals.
 3. Staff may not take County vehicles to their home overnight for out-of-county travel before 8:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m., without permission from the Agency Director/designee.

- G. Staff must use County vehicles for transporting individuals receiving services. Exception to this rule may occur only in the case of an emergency.
- H. Staff are expected to use personal vehicles to conduct necessary job duties when County vehicles are not available. Personal vehicles must be licensed, insured, and safe for use.

The Agency will compensate staff for using personal vehicles to conduct Agency business at the current County approved mileage reimbursement rate.

- I. County of Muskegon insurance covers employee legal liability and vehicle damage in case of an accident involving a County vehicle. County of Muskegon insurance may provide employee liability beyond the limits of a personal insurance policy in the event of an employee accident with a personal vehicle while conducting Agency business. Muskegon County does not cover vehicle damage in case of an accident involving a personal vehicle. Employee medical costs and wage loss benefits are covered through normal workers compensation procedures for any vehicle accident that occurs while conducting Agency business.
- J. The Director or designee will designate clerical staff to schedule all general use vehicles as well as assign County vehicles to specific programs.
 - 1. Staff who have scheduled a County vehicle must provide immediate notification to the staff responsible for vehicle schedules if a change in the schedule occurs. Staff calling in sick must cancel a County vehicle they have scheduled.
 - 2. County vehicles not taken at scheduled times will be held no longer than 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, the County vehicle will be made available for use by others. A County vehicle will be held no longer than 30 minutes past its scheduled pick up time if a request for the delay is received.
 - 3. Staff requesting a County vehicle must inquire availability at their work site, if applicable. If no vehicle is available, staff will inquire at another Agency site which has assigned fleet.
- K. Those programs assigned County vehicles will designate staff to coordinate and report all scheduling and vehicle maintenance issues to the Property Specialist. Those programs assigned County vehicles may not schedule any County vehicle for use by other than Agency staff.
- L. Staff may pick up keys on the previous day for an early morning departure. Staff assigned scheduling responsibility must designate the drop-off location for keys returned during and after normal working hours. For vehicles obtained at the Mental Health Center, keys may be placed in the after-hours drop box.

1. All staff and passengers must use seat belts.
 - a. Children under age sixteen (16) must be buckled in regardless of where they are seated.
 - b. Children under age four (4) must be in an approved safety seat. For children less than twenty (20) lbs., the child or infant seat must face the rear of the vehicle according to the standard in the code of Federal Regulations, and be in the rear seat.
 - c. Children under age twelve (12) should be seated in the rear seat of the vehicle to avoid potential injury from an air bag in the event of a crash.
 2. The Driver and passengers are prohibited from smoking in County vehicles.
 3. The Driver is responsible for payment of fines and costs resulting from traffic violations that occur while operating either a County vehicle or a personal vehicle during Agency business.
 4. The Driver will remove all items not assigned to a County vehicle after each use and clean it of any refuse or spillage.
 5. The Driver will remove the keys and lock and secure a County vehicle in any location.
- M. Staff may use a Handicapper Parking Permit, if needed, for individuals receiving services or for staff who qualify for the permit. Staff must follow the Michigan Department of State regulations regarding permits.
- Staff may not:
1. Display the permit while driving.
 2. Use photocopies of the permit.
 3. Use the permit when not transporting individuals receiving services with handicaps.
 4. Alter, modify, loan, or sell a permit.
 5. Park in a handicap area unless leaving the vehicle.
- N. The fee to replace a lost permit is \$10.00 and is the responsibility of the employee to whom it was assigned.
- O. Staff transporting individuals receiving services, must have a portable communication

device, (cell phone) with them. Staff may use their personal cell phone and provide the phone number or use an Agency cell phone and follow the assignment procedure.

- P. Staff must immediately report any mechanical or perceived problems that would affect the safety of future drivers to the Property Specialist. An Agency Supervisor shall be notified in the absence of the Property Specialist if a mechanical problem is an immediate safety hazard.
- Q. After contacting the local authorities, staff will immediately report any County vehicle accident by telephoning the Property Specialist and then will submit a County of Muskegon Accident Report to the Employee Resource Coordinator. Contact information for the Property Specialist is laminated to the vehicle log clipboard in every vehicle.
- R. Staff may complete normal car services such as fueling. Staff are responsible for reviewing and following the owner's manual for any such service.
1. Staff may use road service or a service provider to complete services if they are physically restricted or unable to complete the service, are experiencing inclement weather conditions, are in unsafe areas, or have substantial unfamiliarity with providing service to the County vehicle.
 2. **Staff are expected to fuel County vehicles before returning them any time they have ¼ of a tank or less.** Staff who need assistance in the use of WEX fuel cards should contact the Property Specialist or a Supervisor for training.
 3. If staff requires road service or maintenance service, the Agency will reimburse necessary charges for use of cash, personal road service, or charge cards.
 - a. Staff will submit all road service and maintenance service records with their Travel Voucher in order to obtain reimbursement.
 - b. Service maintenance, if practical and available, should be provided by authorized WEX service providers using WEX cards as payment.
- S. In the event the County vehicle is non-operational, or the staff is unable to operate the County vehicle:
1. The keys must be removed and the vehicle secured and locked.
 2. Staff shall, as soon as possible, call the Property Specialist for direction and assistance and to provide the location and condition of the County vehicle.
 3. Staff shall arrange for towing of the County vehicle to an authorized WEX service provider or appropriate Chrysler, Ford, or GM dealership.
 4. Before accruing unusual expenses, including overnight accommodations or vehicle rental, during working hours, staff must receive prior authorization by contacting their supervisor for assistance. Supervisors will consult with the

Director or designee as soon as possible.

5. During non-working hours, staff may take reasonable and necessary actions to assure their personal and vehicle safety.
- T. For emergencies, staff will use the emergency kit located within the County vehicle. The emergency kit consists of a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and a road hazard sign. If the vehicle becomes non-operational, the road hazard sign will be properly placed alerting traffic. The fire extinguisher use is limited to aid occupants from exiting the vehicle only. Emergency kits will be inspected yearly for proper placement, inventory, and expiration date by the Property Specialist.
- U. Staff will notify the Property Specialist when supplies are used from the emergency kit.
- V. For private vehicle use: Staff must be the owner, lessor, or bailee (custodian or holder of the vehicle for another person) of the vehicle and operator of all mileage for which reimbursement is claimed.

IV. REFERENCES

County of Muskegon Administrative Policy "Vehicle Assignment and Utilization", December, 2007.

Michigan Department of State, "Handicapper Parking Permit Application".

Code of Federal Regulations 49 CFR 571.213.

Michigan Vehicle Code Section 257.710d and 257.710e.

NB/hb