



# LINCOLN COUNTY FLEET MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Adopted: March 4, 2015  
Amended: October 22, 2024

## Article I. APPLICABILITY OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES.

This Fleet Management Policy and Procedures (the "Policy") shall apply to all passenger-type vehicles owned by Lincoln County. Section IV shall be applicable to the purchase, replacement and disposal of OFM Vehicles operated by the Sheriff's Office, but the Sheriff's Office shall be excluded from the remainder of this Policy and shall be subject to their internal policies and procedures related to vehicles and fleet management.

## Article II. DEFINITIONS. The following definitions shall apply throughout this Policy.

**Commuting.** Use of a County-owned vehicle by an employee of the County for travel between home and office, while not in "travel status."

**Department Transportation Officer (DTO).** A designated individual(s) in each County department that oversees vehicle management and reporting and serves as the link for that department with OFM. If no specific DTO has been established in a County department then it shall be assumed that the DTO is the Department Director

**Employee.** Any individual authorized to operate an OFM vehicle on behalf of Lincoln County, which includes part-time and full-time employees.

**Fleet Administrator.** The Director of Facilities Management.

**Office.** The facility/official workstation where the employee routinely reports for duty.

**Office of Fleet Management (OFM).** A division of the Purchasing Department which establishes fleet management policies and procedures for all vehicles owned by Lincoln County, to ensure safe, reliable and cost-efficient vehicular resources are available to County departments and its employees.

**OFM Vehicle.** Any county owned vehicle with a title held by the County that includes but is not limited to sedans, station wagons, minivans, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles, or vans used primarily for the transportation of the driver and no more than 15 passengers.

**Vehicle.** Any OFM passenger-type vehicle registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles that includes but is not limited to sedans, station wagons, minivans, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles, or vans used primarily for the transportation of the driver and no more than 15 passengers.

## Article III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES.

**Section 3.01 Purchasing Agent.** The Purchasing Agent shall be responsible for developing policies and procedures for purchase, use, storage, maintenance and repair, and disposal of county-owned vehicles.

**Section 3.02 Office of Fleet Management (OFM).** The OFM shall be responsible for the management of the fleet and for developing, administering, monitoring, and enforcing all policies and procedures concerning vehicle assignment, utilization, maintenance, repair, and replacement. Also, OFM shall be responsible for overseeing accident reporting and citizen inquiries.

**Section 3.03 Directors.** Department Directors shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcing, within their department(s), these policies and procedures governing the assignment, use, maintenance and repair of OFM vehicles. Directors shall ensure the timely submission of OFM reports, as required. Each Director shall also designate a DTO to serve as a liaison between their department and OFM.

**Section 3.04 Department Transportation Officers (DTO).** The DTO shall be responsible for carrying out the duties and responsibilities as assigned by their Director to comply with these policies and procedures regarding the management and operation of OFM vehicles. Such duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Establishing internal department procedures to assure vehicles are maintained and operated in accordance with these policies and procedures. Departments may develop internal policies and procedures to supplement and strengthen OFM policies and procedures.
- (b) Consulting with employees to assure vehicle drivers are aware of OFM policies and procedures, and of their individual responsibilities concerning the use of a vehicle;
- (c) Keeping OFM advised of any changes pertaining to vehicle assignment and/or location;
- (d) Submitting vehicle reports to OFM, as requested or required.

*Information Updates.* The DTO shall be responsible for maintaining all information regarding the assigned employee, location and designated use. If the assigned employee for a OFM Vehicle should change, then it is the responsibility of the DTO to update this information with OFM.

*Annual Report.* The DTO shall be responsible for submitting a report, a template which is supplied by OFM through the FMX Platform, for each vehicle within its Department. This report is due prior to November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

**Section 3.05 Employees/Vehicle Drivers.** Employees are responsible for reviewing and conforming to all policies and procedures pertaining to the use, maintenance and operation of a OFM vehicle.

#### **Article IV. VEHICLE PURCHASING, REPLACEMENT AND DISPOSAL.**

**Section 4.01 Vehicle Purchasing.** All vehicle purchasing shall be completed in accordance with the Lincoln County Purchasing Policy. To ensure full and proper utilization of vehicles, OFM vehicles are purchased for a department and managed by the DTO in coordination with the Director. All orders shall be delivered to OFM for preparation for service and released to departments upon completion, which includes decals and installation of specialty equipment.

- (a) **Decals on OFM Vehicles.** All OFM Vehicles will be marked as follows:
  - (i) County seal shall be placed on both front doors with department name below the seal.
  - (ii) Vehicle number shall be placed on the front fenders and the rear of the vehicle.
  - (iii) County's website will be placed on the rear of the vehicle.

- (iv) Vehicles that make frequent stops or stops in active roadways will have a yellow and red chevron on the rear with "Caution: Frequent Stops"
- (v) Decals shall be installed by an OFM approved vendor.
- (vi) Vendor shall be notified the day the vehicle is ordered and given an approximate date of arrival to ensure all material is readily available.
- (vii) Vendor shall be notified 24 to 72 hours in advance of vehicle delivery and an appointment will be scheduled.
- (viii) Vehicle will be taken to vendor's shop for decal application.

**No other decals or bumper stickers are allowed on OFM owned vehicles.** This shall not apply to special use and emergency services vehicles.

**Exception.** Certain County departments are permitted to operate unmarked OFM Vehicles, with approval of the Fleet Administrator, or the County Manager.

**(b) Installation of Special Equipment.** Departments requiring special equipment to be installed on OFM vehicles may do so by following these guidelines:

- (i) Installation must be done by an approved installer.
- (ii) The department requesting the equipment must pay for the equipment, installation cost, maintenance and removal of equipment.
- (iii) Radar detectors are not allowed in county vehicles.

**Section 4.02 Replacement of OFM Vehicles.** A request for replacement shall be submitted to OFM and is required to meet the following two criteria: (1) funds are available for the replacement vehicle in the department's approved budget for the then-fiscal year, and (2) the vehicle being replaced meets the criteria for disposal or the vehicle is being assigned to a different employee in the same department or transferred to another department.

**Section 4.03 Expansion of Fleet / Purchase of Additional OFM Vehicles.** Any requests for the expansion of a department's fleet (i.e. purchasing an additional vehicle) shall require County Manager approval, unless the expansion has already been approved and adopted by the Board of Commissioners in the CIP for the then-current fiscal year, and the funds are readily available.

**Section 4.04 Disposal of OFM Vehicles.**

**(a) Minimum Criteria for Disposal.** OFM vehicles will not be considered for disposal until they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- (i) Vehicle has more than 125,000 miles (gas) or 225,000 miles (diesel);
- (ii) Vehicle is more than 10 years old;
- (iii) Vehicle has damage or needs repair that is greater than 50% of the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) value;
- (iv) Fleet Administrator has determined that the overall condition of the vehicle has deteriorated to an "un-repairable" state; or
- (v) Department has determined that vehicle is no longer needed and is in excess of their needs

These represent minimum criteria only. Actual replacement mileage may vary at the discretion of OFM.

**(b) Disposal Process for OFM Vehicles.** Once an OFM vehicle has met the minimum disposal requirements and the OFM has notified the Department, the following steps shall be followed:

- (i) All seals, decals, and equipment shall be removed from the vehicle.
- (ii) Vehicle will be cleaned inside and out, and all trash removed.
- (iii) The vehicle shall be returned to the OFM.
- (iv) If the vehicle is not drivable, OFM shall plan for the vehicle to be transported.

## **Article V. SAFETY PROGRAM.**

**Section 5.01 Driver Eligibility.** A driver of an OFM Vehicle must be an employee of Lincoln County and must have a valid driver's license, which is an employment requirement of the County.

- (a) Monitoring.** The Human Resources Department is responsible for monitoring the N.C. Department of Transportation notification system to ensure that all employees' driving privileges remain in good standing while being assigned an OFM Vehicle.
- (b) Mandatory Reporting.** Each employee is required to report any moving violation incurred while operating a OFM Vehicle to their supervisor within 3 business days. Further, if an employee is charged with any violation, while operating a motor vehicle, that impairs their ability to retain their professional status or results in the loss of a driver's license, the employee shall be required to report under this Section.
- (c) Exception for Emergency Services.** In emergency situations, individuals not employed by Lincoln County may be required to operate ambulances or other emergency response vehicles in the event that all Lincoln County emergency personnel are unable to do so. In these situations, it is the responsibility of the Lincoln County emergency personnel to certify that the individual is qualified to operate the OFM Vehicle.

Failure to meet the requirements set forth herein may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment subject to the terms of the Lincoln County Personnel Policy.

**Section 5.02 General Operation of OFM Vehicles.** Drivers are required to practice safe driving by anticipating and observing the actions of other drivers and controlling the vehicle in a manner to avoid accidents. All drivers shall perform a walk around visual inspection of a OFM Vehicle prior to moving.

- (a) Official Use Only.** Drivers shall use OFM vehicles for official county business only.
- (b) Non-County Employees.** Anyone not employed by Lincoln County, including family members of a county employee, are prohibited to ride in OFM vehicles unless the individual's presence is related to official county business.
- (c) Patients or Clients of the County.** Individuals who are considered patients or clients of Lincoln County are permitted to ride in OFM Vehicles, when the purpose of the trip is the provision of service to that client.
- (d) Animals in OFM Vehicles.** Animals are not permitted to be transported in OFM vehicles unless the vehicle is designated for that purpose.
- (e) Cellular Phones or Handheld Devices.** All Drivers shall implement hands free access for phone calls taken while operating an OFM Vehicle, unless the substance of the call is considered confidential and must be completed in a non-hands-free way. Further, it shall be unlawful to use a mobile phone for text messaging or emailing while operating an OFM Vehicle pursuant to N.C.G.S. §20-137.4A (this is not applicable to law enforcement or emergency personnel operating an ambulance).
- (f) Compliance with Motor Vehicle Laws.** It is the responsibility of each individual driver to observe all motor vehicle laws of North Carolina. Drivers must not knowingly operate vehicles that do not

comply with legal requirements. All violations and fines, including parking citations, are the responsibility of the assigned driver at the time of such violation. Abuse of motor vehicle laws by a driver may result in the loss of the privilege of an OFM vehicle.

- (g) **Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs.** Under no circumstances may a Driver operate an OFM Vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating beverages, drugs or other substances. Further, any conviction of any alcohol or drug related offenses shall result in the loss of the privilege of an OFM Vehicle. No county vehicle may be used to transport alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or other substances.
- (h) **Commuting in OFM Vehicles.** All OFM Vehicles which are assigned to individual employees of Lincoln County may be driven to the home of the individual employee, if the employee resides in Lincoln County. The County Manager may authorize the allowance of individual employees to drive their assigned OFM Vehicle to their home outside of Lincoln County. If the assigned employee uses the OFM Vehicle for commuting, then a deduction will be taken by payroll at an amount that equates to the benefit derived. Said amount is established by the Finance Department.
- (i) **Parking and Storage of OFM Vehicles.** If an OFM Vehicle is not assigned to an individual employee, or not permitted to be driven home by the assigned employee, then the assigned Department shall ensure that the vehicle is located in a County-owned or operated parking lot overnight or have other agreed upon arrangements that do not require payment for parking of said vehicles.
- (j) **Toll Charges.** Toll charges incurred during travel in an OFM vehicle are the responsibility of the department.
- (k) **Out-of-State Travel.** The use of OFM vehicles outside of North Carolina must be coordinated in advance of the travel with the DTO, who should take into consideration the mileage and age of the Vehicle prior to approving out-of-state travel. The Driver shall be responsible for verifying fuel card acceptance with the commercial establishment prior to authorizing purchasing fuel. This shall not preclude any prior approval required under the Travel Policy.
- (l) **Driving Under Adverse Weather Conditions.** Drivers who drive an OFM vehicle during adverse weather conditions are cautioned to take extreme care to ensure the safety of driver and passengers.
- (m) **Tobacco Use.** The use of tobacco or any tobacco products is prohibited in any OFM Vehicle pursuant to Chapter 30.03 of the Lincoln County Code of Ordinances.
- (n) **Keys.** For every OFM Vehicle, there shall be one key issued to the department or assigned driver, and one key retained by OFM. Any costs for additional duplicate keys, locksmith services or damages resulting from forced entry shall be the responsibility of the department assigned the vehicle.
- (o) **License Plates.** All OFM Vehicles shall have license plates installed prior to release to the assigned department. If an OFM Vehicle is required to be unmarked and have a private license plate, then the department is required to consult with OFM and Finance for the issuance of said plate pursuant to N.C.G.S. §20-39.1.
- (p) **Fuel.** Drivers are required to use only unleaded regular fuel in gasoline powered OFM Vehicles and #2 diesel in diesel powered OFM Vehicles. Mid-grade or premium blends may only be used when regular is not available or the manufacturer requires the use of high-octane fuel in the vehicle. E85 fuel may be used in Flex-Fuel vehicles where available.

**Section 5.03 Waiver of Liability.** The County waives any liability for the loss or damage of any personal property or belongings being transported in an OFM Vehicle.

**Section 5.04 OFM Vehicle Accidents.**

- (a) **Reporting.** Any driver that is involved in a motor vehicle accident involving an OFM Vehicle, must immediately report the accident by dialing 911 and reporting it to the DTO. The individual driver's

supervisor, or their designee, shall report to the scene upon notification. It shall be the responsibility of the DTO to coordinate towing and transportation of the driver, if necessary. If damage is discovered after the fact, the damage shall be reported to the DTO immediately.

- (b) **Post-Accident Drug Testing.** Any post-accident drug testing shall be completed pursuant to Section 11.13 of the Personnel Policy.
- (c) **Completion of Accident Report.** Any driver involved in an accident while operating a OFM Vehicle shall be required to complete an Automobile Accident Report within 10 business days of the accident and provide to the OFM and the Finance Department.
- (d) **Denial of Liability.** Drivers are cautioned against accepting responsibility for an accident/incident or discussing it with anyone other than their supervisors, law enforcement officers, or a representative of an insurance company representing Lincoln County. No Driver has the authority to settle any matter related to an accident on behalf of the County.
- (e) **Repairs and Cost.** Any OFM Vehicle shall be taken to a repair shop specified by OFM for the securing of estimates and/or repair. The DTO will secure the necessary estimates per the County Purchasing Policy and provide copies to OFM. Any cost incurred will be assessed to the assigned department.

## Article VI. MAINTENANCE AND CARE OF VEHICLES.

**Section 6.01 General Maintenance and Responsibility.** Vehicle maintenance is the responsibility of the assigned department. The DTO is responsible for monitoring and controlling the routine maintenance and repair of vehicles within its department. Drivers are responsible for coordinating maintenance and repairs with the DTO. OFM Vehicles shall be maintained pursuant to this policy and vehicle specific preventive maintenance schedules. All service and maintenance shall be obtained through a commercial facility as authorized by OFM. Recalls and warranty repairs shall be taken to the nearest dealership as soon as practicable. ALL MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS MUST HAVE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION WITH THE DETAILS AND AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST, EXCLUDING WARRANTY REPAIRS.

**Section 6.02 Routine Maintenance and Washing.** Drivers of OFM vehicles or the DTO shall routinely check the OFM Vehicles to ensure proper oil level, water and antifreeze for radiators, wear on belts and proper inflation of tires. This service should be performed at least weekly or at the time of fueling and shall be logged in the FMX Fleet Module. The exterior of the vehicles shall be washed, the interior vacuumed and the windows cleaned, so they are free of dirt, marks and unwanted material, as often as needed. It is the responsibility of the driver to maintain the appearance of the OFM Vehicle.

**Section 6.03 OFM Vehicle Servicing.** It is the responsibility of the DTO to ensure OFM Vehicles are serviced at scheduled intervals established by the vehicle manufacturer. The proper schedule for this maintenance is provided for each vehicle by OFM at the time of assignment. Service should be performed within -500 miles of the schedule. This service frequency should be more often if the vehicle is routinely operated in dusty or dirty environments. The driver or the designee shall communicate with and follow the instructions from the DTO for vehicle services. Such servicing is to include an oil and oil filter change, an inspection of the air filter, chassis lubrication and a visual inspection of the belts, hoses and tires.

**Section 6.04 OFM Vehicle Repairs.** Mechanical trouble or deficiencies concerning an OFM Vehicle shall be brought to the attention of the DTO. All needed repairs or vehicle component replacements are to be managed by the DTO. Drivers will notify the DTO when emergency repairs are needed, and follow instructions provided by the DTO. The DTO should be contacted for authorization prior to having any repairs performed by commercial establishments. Brake pads shall be replaced when they reach a thickness of 3mm. Tires shall be replaced when the depth of the tread is at 3/32.

**Section 6.05 Annual Inspections.** State law requires all motor vehicles to be inspected for safety, annually. It is the responsibility of the assigned driver or department to ensure that the vehicle is up to date on inspections. All OFM vehicles will be inspected within the months of September and October.

## **Article VII. FUEL PROGRAM.**

**Section 7.01** Fuel for OFM Vehicles shall be obtained from a County fuel card accepting commercial station.

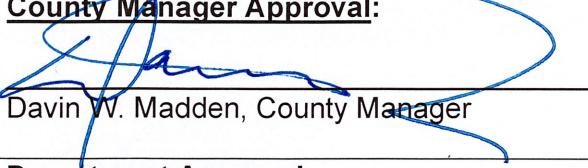
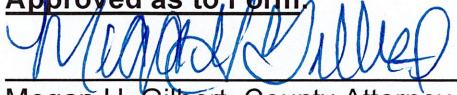
**Section 7.02 Fuel Card Management.** This Fuel Card program shall be managed in a manner consistent with applicable County accounting policies and procedures related to the use of cards. Departments assume ultimate responsibility for employees' use of the card, as well as the accountability for the physical security of the fuel cards.

- (a) Fuel Cards.** A Fuel Card may only be used for the purchase of fuel. A Fuel Card may not be used for the purchase of food or beverages, parts and labor, and all other goods or services.
- (b) Department Responsibilities.** The DTO shall be responsible for the following:
  - (i) Reviewing monthly statements for all OFM Vehicles assigned to it for appropriateness of card usage.
  - (ii) Reporting infractions to the department management.
  - (iii) Maintaining records of all card usage, receipts, or other applicable documents
  - (iv) Ensure that cards are used only for appropriate purchases, and in conjunction with County business.
- (c) Fleet Administrator Responsibilities.** The Fleet Administrator shall be responsible for monitoring Fuel Card usage activity for delinquent activity, inactive cards, inappropriate purchases, and ensuring that departments receive appropriate training and support for Fuel Cards.

**Section 7.03 Employee Fuel PIN.** Upon employment, all new employees will be issued a fuel PIN if that employee is going to have an assigned OFM Vehicle, or access to a departmental OFM Vehicle. PINs are user specific, being the last four (4) digits of the employees Social Security number followed by "00" (123400). If a new employee has the same last four (4) digits as a current employee, their PIN will end in "01" (123401). It shall be the responsibility of the DTO to request a PIN to be issued from OFM prior to the start of the employee's employment.

Upon separation of an employee with the County, the department will immediately notify Finance and Fleet Management via email of the separation and request the employee be terminated in the fuel card system.

**Section 7.04 Mileage.** Mileage for OFM vehicles is collected and reported to OFM through the fuel card readers at commercial fueling sites. Drivers **MUST** enter correct odometer readings, no tenths, into the card readers at all commercial fueling sites. Fuel cards shall not be swapped between vehicles.

OFFICIAL APPROVAL	
<u>County Manager Approval:</u>  Davin W. Madden, County Manager	Date Approved: <u>10/22/24</u>
<u>Department Approval:</u>  John Henry, Facilities Management Director	Date Approved: <u>10/22/24</u>
<u>Approved as to Form:</u>  Megan H. Gilbert, County Attorney	Date Approved: <u>10/22/2024</u>