

## Administrative Policy

# VEHICLE & DRIVER POLICY

### A POLICY ON SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE DRIVING, INSURABILITY, AND VEHICLE USAGE

#### PURPOSE

To promote safe and responsible driving by all Housing Authority (LHA) employees and guarantee liability protection and insurance coverage in the event of a work related vehicular accident.

#### INSURABILITY

Driving a vehicle (personal or Housing Authority owned) is a necessary duty and job requirement for a number of Housing Authority staff positions. Driving on Housing Authority business also involves significant responsibility. This is due to the potential bodily injury and property damage associated with vehicular accidents along with the Authority's potential liability in the event of an accident. Pursuant to this responsibility and potential liability exposure, insurance carriers have adopted standards as to the type of driver they will insure. The Housing Authority's automobile insurance carrier is no different. They have standards defining who is a safe driver and who they will insure. **The "Unacceptable Driver Criteria" set forth by the Housing Authority's current automobile insurance carrier is attached hereto as EXHIBIT A.** The Housing Authority has a moral and legal responsibility to enforce their standards with respect to employees who drive on Authority business so that public safety is promoted, our insurance coverage is maintained, and to help guarantee coverage in the event of an accident.

The Housing Authority is committed to a Policy of "safe and responsible driving". It requires all employees who drive on Housing Authority business to:

- do so in a safe manner; and
- observe standard safety practices and all traffic laws when driving; and
- possess a driver's license that is current and in good standing; and
- have a driving record that meets the Housing Authority's insurance carrier's standards (See Exhibit A attached); or
- be able to obtain and maintain at their own cost and expense other insurance coverage acceptable to the Housing Authority.

Pursuant to the above, the Housing Authority has established the following Basic Requirements and Practices for implementing this Policy and for monitoring compliance. An employee's inability to meet the requirements of, or to comply with, this Policy is grounds for suspension, demotion, and/or termination.

#### 1. BASIC REQUIREMENTS AND PRACTICES

- 1.1. An employee whose position requires that he/she have a valid driver's license shall immediately notify their Supervisor or the Executive Director in the event of any change in their driving record, driver's license status, and/or personal automobile insurance coverage (e.g. driver's license revocation, suspension, restriction, auto insurance cancellation, etc.) which would cause he/she to be in non compliance with this Policy and/or the HA automobile insurance carrier's insurability standards.
- 1.2. An applicant for an LHA position that requires driving on LHA business must submit to a Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) driving record check and evaluation as a condition of employment. If the applicant's DMV record does not meet the LHA's insurance carrier's

standards or is inconsistent with this Policy, the applicant will not be offered employment, or will have the employment offer withdrawn, in the case where an employment offer has been made pending the DMV record check.

- 1.3. An employee who applies for a promotional or transfer opportunity/position that requires driving on HA business (and their current position does not), must also submit to the DMV record check and evaluation as set forth in 1.2 above.
- 1.4. All employees will be subject to an annual DMV driving record check and evaluation as a condition of continued employment. In the event that an annual review or other form of notification reveals that an employee's driving record and license status does not meet the insurability standards set forth by the Housing Authority's automobile insurance carrier, the requirements set forth in Section 2 below shall apply.
- 1.5. Employees who use their personal vehicles for Authority purposes shall keep required Washington State insurance coverage on their vehicle at all times and shall present proof of this coverage whenever requested. Use of personal vehicles on Authority business should be "Incidental" only and is subject to all applicable Vehicle Usage rules and standards found in Paragraph 3.

## **2. REQUIREMENTS/OPTIONS FOR NON INSURABLE EMPLOYEES**

An employee who becomes uninsurable, as determined by the Housing Authority's automobile insurance carrier, shall immediately cease driving on Housing Authority business until such time that an alternate resolution, or decision with respect to continued employment, is made and approved by the Executive Director. An uninsurable employee may, at the Housing Authority's option, be offered the following alternate resolutions.

- 2.1. Demotion or transfer to an available position that does not require driving on Housing Authority business if the employee meets the qualifications for the position and it is determined by the Executive Director that such a demotion or transfer is in the best interest of the Housing Authority.
- 2.2. The opportunity to purchase, at the employee's own cost and expense, alternate automobile insurance coverage acceptable to the Housing Authority. Such coverage must name both the Housing Authority and the employee as insured, carry a minimum liability limit of \$1,000,000, and be written by a company that is acceptable to the Housing Authority.

An employee who has an assigned HA owned vehicle may be given the option of either securing alternate coverage for the HA vehicle assigned to him/her or using their personal vehicle (assuming it is adequate for the performance of their duties) and upgrading their personal automobile insurance policy in a manner acceptable to the HA. This must include adding the Housing Authority as an insured. In the case where an employee opts to buy alternate coverage for an HA assigned/owned vehicle, the HA's regular cost for insuring the assigned vehicle shall be credited towards the employee's expense for alternate insurance. The Housing Authority's Finance Department will be responsible for determining what is acceptable alternate coverage and the method for guaranteeing that it is paid for and is in full force and effect.

In the event that the above options are not possible, not appropriate, or are unacceptable to the Housing Authority and/or the employee, the employee will be terminated.

### 3. VEHICLE USAGE

All employees when driving on Housing Authority business have certain obligations to operate and maintain the vehicle they are driving in a safe and responsible manner. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following.

- For Housing Authority business only. No HA owned or leased vehicle shall be used for any purpose other than HA business or related activities, unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Director.
- Observe Traffic Rules. All employees driving on HA business are responsible to safely operate the motor vehicles. He/she shall observe all traffic laws, regulations, and courtesies at all times. Traffic fines, parking tickets, and/or penalties levied for violations of law and for which the employee is directly responsible shall be paid for by the employee.
- Valid Driver's License and Insurability. An employee driving on HA business must have in his or her possession a valid Washington (or Oregon if applicable) driver's license **and must be insured pursuant to this Policy.**
- Seat Belts. HA Policy and Washington law requires that all drivers and vehicle occupants wear seat belts when driving or riding in a motor vehicle. The driver is responsible to see that this HA Policy and Washington law is adhered to at all times.
- No Unauthorized Persons. Employees are prohibited from transporting hitchhikers or any other unauthorized persons in HA vehicles.
- Abuse of Vehicles: HA vehicles, other than those specified for such purposes, shall not push stalled vehicles nor be used for other activities that may damage the vehicle.
- No Smoking. Smoking is not permitted in HA owned or leased vehicles at any time.
- Personal Responsibility. An employee operating an HA vehicle in a negligent manner may be held personally responsible for any damage or harm that is caused by such negligent action.

All employees using an HA owned or leased vehicle are responsible for seeing that vehicle has sufficient oil, water, air, etc. when using said vehicle. An employee may be held liable for damage to an HA vehicle if their failure to maintain the vehicle was obviously negligent and could have easily been prevented.

An employee who has an assigned HA vehicle is required to keep their vehicle clean, washed, gassed, and serviced on a regular basis. Any problems with respect to an assigned vehicle must be reported to the employee's supervisor as soon as possible.

- Loss of Personal Items. The Housing Authority shall not be responsible for loss of or damage to personal items left in HA vehicles.
- Right to Search. The Housing Authority has the right to search any HA owned or leased vehicle at any time without notice.
- Reporting Accidents. Any work related accident or damage to an Authority vehicle should be reported as soon as possible, and in all cases within 24 hours, to the Executive Director and the driver's direct supervisor.

Failure to comply with the above Vehicle Usage obligations may result in disciplinary action, including termination, and/or revocation of the right to operate an HA vehicle.

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT TO TERMINATE EMPLOYMENT  
OR  
OPTION TO PROCURE SUITABLE INSURANCE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This letter is to inform you that our automobile insurance carrier notified the Housing Authority on \_\_\_\_\_ that you will no longer be covered under the Authority's automobile liability coverage. The reason for this action are the citations you received on \_\_\_\_\_.

Attached is a copy of the Authority's Policy on Vehicle Usage and Statement of Insurability. In accordance with article 1.4 you must provide the Housing Authority with evidence of insurability in an amount not less than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ coverage, with both yourself and the Housing Authority named as insured for the Housing Authority vehicle you drive or have your employment with the Housing Authority terminated for lack of insurability.

At this point, we have no option but to inform you officially that this letter constitutes your termination of employment notice effective \_\_\_\_\_. Notwithstanding any of the above action, you shall retain any and all grievance and appeal rights as set forth in Housing Authority of the City of Longview policy and State and Federal Law.

If you obtain coverage and meet with us to set up a payment arrangement for the premium prior to the effective date of this notice, your employment with the Housing Authority may be continued.

Sincerely,

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE  
CITY OF LONGVIEW

(Supervisor)