

Administrative Policy 3-5-8

DISTRIBUTION: City Manager, All Departments

SUBJECT: Defensive Driving

PURPOSE: To establish the policies, procedures and guidelines for defensive driving to those employees who may be authorized to operate a City of Muskogee vehicle and who are required to acquire and maintain an Oklahoma driver's license. It is a requirement for employees operating vehicles to follow safe driving practices. This includes steps to ensure the driver's total concentration and safe operation of vehicles such as determining directions before departing, clearance when approaching obstructions and/other vehicles or during backing processes, refraining from operating equipment such as mobile phones or other communications equipment while the vehicle is moving, and not operating a vehicle when the driver's ability is impaired. Drivers are expected to consistently follow defensive driving principles and driving regulations.

BACKGROUND: see purpose

POLICY/

PROCEDURES: Defensive Driving

A. Safe Driving Practices

1. Authorized drivers shall follow safe driving practices. Safe driving practices include steps to ensure the driver's total concentration and safe operation of vehicles and equipment which include, but may not be limited to:
 - a. Safe speed
 - b. Attentive driving
 - c. Communicating intentions
 - d. Watching distance between vehicles
 - e. Using seatbelts and other safety features
 - f. Use of musical ear buds, head phones and other distractions
 - g. Vehicle maintenance
 - h. Use of an individual as a backer at all appropriate times (when available)
 - i. Following all rules of the road

2. Drivers are expected to follow defensive driving principles and shall comply with all traffic laws and regulations at all times. Defensive driving for purposes of this policy shall be defined per the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving definition, i.e. "driving to save lives, time and money, in spite of the conditions around the driver and the actions of others". The City expects employees to take all possible and reasonable precautions to avoid accidents and vehicle related damage to the best of the employees abilities as a performance factor, in spite of unsafe driving by others and/or adverse driving conditions.

3. The following actions will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct:
 - a. Drinking alcohol or being under the influence of drugs while driving
 - b. Driving while disqualified, under suspension, or not correctly licensed for the vehicle being operated
 - c. Reckless, careless or dangerous driving
 - d. Failing to stop after an accident
 - e. Texting, using cell phones or other similar devices while driving, excluding hands-free devices
 - f. Any actions that warrant suspension of license
 - g. Inattentive driving due to passenger interaction, eating or drinking, tobacco use (Smoking Policy 3-5-2), etc.

B. Safe Speed

1. Drive within the speed limit at all times.
2. Drive at speeds that are safe for road and weather conditions; at times, this may be at a speed that is lower than the posted speed limit.
3. Be conscious of surroundings, road conditions/weather, and potential impact or possible collision with other road-users who may be particularly vulnerable such as pedestrians, motorcycles and bicycles.
4. Observe special speed limitations in unenforced areas and/or where visibility is poor and pedestrian activity may be high. This may result in driving slower than the posted speed limit.

C. Attentive Driving

1. Responsible drivers need to do all they can to avoid accidents. This means looking out for other drivers who are less responsible.
2. Take extra caution at intersections.
3. Avoid other driver's blind spots.
4. Think ahead and make appropriate maneuvers to avoid having to act suddenly.
5. Be prepared to stop, maneuver or take an alternative path suddenly to avoid a collision or lessen the possible damage.

D. Communicating Intentions

1. Be certain to signal early, signal continuously and cancel signal when move is complete.
2. Signal before lane changes and turns, in accordance with the Oklahoma Rules of the Road.

E. Watching Distance Between Vehicles

1. When driving under normal road and weather conditions, the vehicle should be at least two seconds behind the vehicle in front.
2. Do not tailgate.
3. Utilize another individual as a backer whenever there is any doubt whatsoever about clear space to back a vehicle, ensuring use of a backer at all times when any truck is in use that exceeds $\frac{3}{4}$ ton, has a load or equipment in place or is attached to a trailer.

F. Using Seatbelts and Other Safety Features

1. Driver and all passengers shall wear seat belts at all times; this is an Oklahoma law. Exemptions will be allowed as stated in Section C of Administrative Policy 3-5-7, Seatbelt Use.
2. If equipped with daytime running lamps, they should be used at all times.

G. Avoiding Distractions

1. Do not read or write while driving.
2. Pull over to read maps, instructions and work orders after ensuring the vehicle is placed such as to not create a hazard.
3. Do not attend to personal hygiene while driving, i.e. make-up, shaving, hair, etc.
4. Texting while driving is prohibited in City vehicles and commercial vehicles by Oklahoma law and use of cell phones or other similar devices is against City policy when operating a moving City vehicle. The use of City mobile radios or hands free communication devices (such as Bluetooth) shall be considered acceptable as long as the employee maintains proper attention to vehicle movement.

H. Vehicle Maintenance

1. Maintain the maintenance recommendations as stated in vehicle owner's manual.
2. If the vehicle breaks down while on the road, follow these rules:
 - a. Move the vehicle off the road in a safe location so as to avoid creating a hazard.
 - b. Park the vehicle so it can be seen for a safe distance (200 feet, if possible) in each direction.
 - c. Turn on emergency flashers.
 - d. Contact supervisor and any other persons who would be involved with removing vehicle from the road (example, towing company).

I. Discipline

1. Employees found to be in violation of the defensive driving policy or defensive driving principles shall be subject to disciplinary action.
2. Employees involved in an accident and found to have neglected to follow the defensive driving principles or who have violated State, local or federal traffic laws or regulations shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
3. Employees found to have violated a serious breach of conduct listed in Section A-3 shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

REFERENCES : National Safety Council
Oklahoma Department of Motor Vehicles Rules of the Road
47 O.S. 2011, Sections 6-205.2 and 11-901c
Administrative Policy 3-5-7 Seatbelt Use
Administrative Policy 3-5-2 Smoking Policy

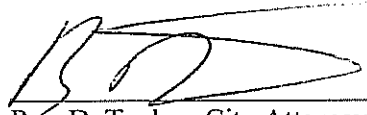
EFFECTIVE DATE: This policy shall be effective on and after November 15, 2012

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Human Resources


Greg Buckley, City Manager

12-26-12
Date

APPROVED as to form and legality this 2 day of January, ²⁰¹³~~2012~~.



Roy D. Tucker, City Attorney