

Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

HR/LF POLICY



POLICY TITLE:	Driving District Vehicles
POLICY NUMBER:	2-61-PO-00
REVISION:	11
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BOARD APPROVAL SIGNATURE:	<i>Richard Buckley</i>

This Policy applies to all Members who drive District vehicles. Only District Members may drive District vehicles, unless specifically authorized by the Fire Chief or designee.

I. Drivers' Training & Certification Program: The District acknowledges that safe driving is a responsibility that requires special knowledge, skills, and abilities; therefore, the District shall maintain a Drivers' Training & Certification Program (Program).

- a) The Fire Chief shall appoint a Program Manager.
- b) In lieu of requiring a commercial driver's license (CDL) to drive Heavy Vehicles, the District has adopted emergency vehicle incident prevention (EVIP) program approved by the State of Washington.
- c) Only those Members with an Acceptable Driving Record may participate in the Program.
- d) A *Driver/Operator's Training Task Book* and testing process will be prepared and administered by the Program Manager.
- e) Only those Members who have successfully completed their written examination and practical evaluation may be certified as a Driver/Operator.
- f) Non-certified Drivers may only drive District Light Vehicles and shall not operate such vehicles in Emergency Mode.

II. Definitions: for the purposes of this Policy, the following shall apply:

- a) **Acceptable Driving Record:** Based upon information provided by the Department of Licensing 5-year *Abstract of Complete Driving Record* and specific Washington State CDL restrictions, a record free of:
 - Suspension, revocation, cancellation or surrender of the Member's Washington State Drivers' License;
 - Conviction or deferred prosecution for driving a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
 - Arrest for driving a non-commercial vehicle with blood alcohol content of .08 or more (.02 or more if driver is under age 21), or a commercial vehicle with blood alcohol content of .04 or more;
 - Refusal to submit to a breath or blood test while driving a motor vehicle;
 - Leaving the scene of an accident involving a motor vehicle; and
 - Conviction for using a motor vehicle in the commission of any felony.
- b) **Certified Driver/Operator:** a Member that meets all requirements established in Policy Section III and IV below.
- c) **Emergency Mode:** traveling in a District vehicle while making use of visual and audible signals.
- d) **Heavy Vehicles:** All vehicles with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) over 26,000 lbs. (e.g. engines, tenders etc.).
- e) **Light Vehicles:** vehicles with a GVW of 26,000 lbs. or less (e.g. utility vehicles, rescue,

brush vehicles etc.).

- f) **Non-certified Driver:** A Member that meets requirements established in Policy Section III.
- g) **Serious Traffic Offenses:** defined by the State of Washington as:
 - Speeding in excess of 15 mph above the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions present;
 - Reckless or negligent driving;
 - Any traffic violation (other than parking) that results in a fatal accident;
 - Following too closely;
 - Failing to stop or yield the right-of-way;
 - Improper lane changes or travel;
 - Improper overtaking (passing) on the right or left; and/or
 - Improper driving to the left of center of the roadway.

III. Non-certified Driver Responsibilities: in order for a Member to drive a District vehicle, they shall:

- a) Possess a valid Washington State Drivers' License and allow annual or more frequent reviews of their 5-year *Abstract of Complete Driving Record*;
- b) Maintain a driving record that allows the Member to be insurable under the District's insurance policy, and notify their supervisor or the Program Manager immediately if they have received any notice of infraction (citation) against them for any Serious Traffic Offense and/or if their driver's license has been in any manner restricted, suspended, revoked or canceled by the State;
- c) Not smoke and wear seatbelts when operating or riding in any District vehicle at any time;
- d) Advise their supervisor or the Program Manager if they are taking any prescription medication or over-the-counter drugs that may impair their driving and not drive a District vehicle while under the influence of any controlled substances or alcohol; and
- e) Not engage in behaviors that would place the District in a position of unacceptable risk or liability and shall be personally responsible for the cost of any and all traffic and criminal traffic violation costs, penalties or fines incurred as a result of the Member's operation of a District vehicle.

IV. Certified Driver/Operator Responsibilities: in addition to meeting all requirements identified in Section III above, to be a Certified Driver/Operator, a Member shall:

- a) Maintain an Acceptable Driving Record;
- b) Successfully obtain and maintain current EVIP certification; and
- b) Successfully complete their written examination and practical evaluation based on the *Driver/Operator's Training Task Book* by vehicle type and be approved by the Program Manager:
 - Fire engine type: Member will be trained to the Firefighter level with qualification to operate in an environment of potentially dangerous to life and health ("IDLH");
 - Tender type: Member will be qualified under the Operations Support Program (refer to *Policy 2-30 "Operations Support Program"*) and/or trained to the Firefighter or EMT level;
 - Brush truck type: Member will be trained to the Firefighter or Wildland Firefighter 2 level; and/or
 - Aid unit type: Member will be trained to EMT or Firefighter level and be in compliance with Washington Department of Health and Thurston County Medic One restrictions for aid unit and ambulance vehicles.

V. Program Manager Responsibilities:

- a) The Program Manager shall manage the provisions of the Program, including reviewing the

- program from time-to-time and recommend any necessary changes to the Fire Chief.
- b) The Program Manager shall ensure the program is compliant with State EVIP standards and prudent risk management practices.
 - c) On an annual or as-needed basis, the Program Manager shall review each Member's 5-year *Abstract of Complete Driving Record* from the Department of Licensing.
 - d) The Program Manager shall maintain records of all driver certifications & testing.

VI. Post-Incident Alcohol & Drug Testing: The Fire Chief or designee may require that a Member involved in any on-duty incident be tested for alcohol & drug impairment. Testing for alcohol & drugs is allowed under District *Policy 3-06 "Controlled Substances & Alcohol"*. Generally, testing will be performed if:

- A District vehicle is involved, and it or any vehicle is disabled or sustains major disabling damage;
- A fatality has resulted;
- An injury that requires medical attention from a licensed provider away from the scene was sustained; or
- Reasonably suspicious circumstances apply.

When testing is indicated, alcohol testing must be completed within 8 hours post-incident, and drug testing must be completed within 32 hours post-incident. The Fire Chief or designee shall ensure the Member(s) being tested are transported to a qualified testing facility.

VII. Violations: If any Member is found to have two or more Serious Traffic Offenses arising from separate incidents, the Program Manager shall suspend the Member's driving certification as follows:

- Second serious traffic offense within 3-year period: 60-day suspension; and
- Third serious traffic offense within 3-year period: 120-day suspension.

The Program Manager shall notify the Fire Chief and Member's supervisor of any Member driving suspensions. If a Member violates any of the responsibilities listed in Policy Section III or IV above, the Program Manager shall recommend appropriate action in suspending driver certification and/or pertinent disciplinary action to the Fire Chief. Any disciplinary actions and appeals shall be in accordance with District *Policy 3-07 "Disciplinary Process"*.