

**THE MILITARY DEPARTMENT
OF SOUTH CAROLINA**



State Vehicle Operator's Handbook

03 May 2022

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Refer any questions or comments concerning information contained in this handbook to:

Office of the Adjutant General
ATTN: State Operations Transportation Coordinator
1 National Guard Road
Columbia, SC 29201
(803).299-4330

Definitions

Agency – The South Carolina Military Department/Office of the Adjutant General

State Vehicle - Any vehicle owned or leased by the Agency or the State of South Carolina, self-propelled or drawn by mechanical power, designed to be principally operated on the highway in the transportation of property or passengers, except devices used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks, and requires registration and licensing in accordance with the State Code of Laws, Article 3, Section 56-3-110 through 56-3-160.

Introduction

This handbook provides general information concerning the operation and maintenance of all State vehicles by members of the South Carolina Military Department, and specific instructions concerning the use and operation of Agency vehicles. The information contained in this handbook is not all-inclusive or exhaustive. The Agency will follow the guidelines and requirements from the SC Department of Administration, Division of State Agencies Support Services, State Fleet Management.

Section I – Summary of Policies

Agency Policy

State Human Resources Policy #E24-100.09 - Use of State Vehicles (<https://scmd.sc.gov/state-operations/policies>)

Who May Drive a State Vehicle?

Only Agency employees, contractors or consultants employed by the Agency, or Agency volunteers are authorized to operate State vehicles.

In certain cases, such as illness or extreme fatigue on the part of the driver, spouses and dependents over the age of 21 may drive the vehicle for short periods in order to complete a trip. Under no circumstances shall dependent children under the age of 21 operate a State vehicle.

Official Use Only

Agency employees, Agency contract or consultant personnel, or Agency volunteers may only use State vehicles for conducting official business.

Authorized Uses of State Vehicles (include but are not limited to)

- Travel between place of vehicle dispatch and place of performance of official business
- When on official out-of-town travel status, travel between place of temporary lodging and place of official business.

- When on official out-of-town travel status between either of the above places and:
 - Places to obtain suitable meals
 - Places to obtain medical assistance, including drugstores
 - Places of worship
 - Barber/Beauty shops
 - Cleaning establishments
 - Similar places required to sustain health and welfare or continued efficient performance of the user, exclusive of places of entertainment
- Transport of officers, official employees or official guests of the State
- Transport of professional or commercial representatives when in the direct interest of the State
- Transport of materials, supplies, parcels, luggage, kits or other items belonging to or serving the interests of the State
- Transport of any person or item in an emergency situation, provided such movement does not endanger life or property

Unauthorized Uses of State Vehicles (include but are not limited to)

- Travel or task of a personal nature having no connection with the accomplishment of official business
- Transportation of items or cargo having no relation to the conduct of official business
- Performance of tasks outside the rated capacity of the vehicle (i.e., exceeding the weight or size limit)
- Transport of other persons not serving the interests of the State
- Travel between home and place of employment unless authorized by regulation. The fact an employee is “on call” does not in itself justify this authorization. The urgency of employee availability and frequency of actual recall must be factually justified in order to qualify as authorized use.
- Transport of animals or pets (with the exception of service animals)
- Transport of hitchhikers
- Transport of acids, explosives, weapons, ammunition, non-prescribed medicines, alcoholic beverages, highly flammable material except by specific authorization or by a duly commissioned law enforcement officer acting within his assigned duty
- Transport of any kind of equipment or cargo projecting from the side, front or rear of the vehicle in such a manner as to constitute a hazard to safe driving, to pedestrians or to other vehicles
- Extending the length of time or travel beyond that required to complete the official purposes of the trip

- Travel to or from social events unless acting as an official representative of the State and the Agency
- Use while in a leave status or on vacation

Use of Cooperative Agreement Funded Vehicles

Vehicles purchased or leased for the purpose of supporting Cooperative Agreement operations and mission may only be used in support of their specific Cooperative Agreement.

State employees who are members of the National Guard or Reserve and are on Individual Duty Training (IDT) or Annual Training (AT) status may not operate or utilize a Cooperative Agreement funded vehicle.

Cooperative Agreement vehicles cannot be used in support of State Active Duty (SAD)/Defense Support to Civilian Authorities (DSCA) missions.

Service Members who are on Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) in support of Cooperative Agreement operations may utilize/operate Cooperative Agreement funded vehicles/equipment as long as the equipment is being used to support the Cooperative Agreement to which it belongs and the Service Member meets all other State requirements to operate a State Vehicle.

Requirements to Operate a State Vehicle

1 – Possess a valid, current South Carolina driver's license appropriate to the type vehicle being operated.

- New Agency employees who have recently relocated to South Carolina may operate a State-owned vehicle using a valid driver's license from their former state for up to 90 days, at which time they must obtain a South Carolina driver's license.
- Agency Contract or consultant personnel who reside outside South Carolina, but must operate a State-owned vehicle while engaged in State business, may do so using a valid driver's license from their home state during the period in which their services are employed by the State of South Carolina.
- Agency employees who are spouses of active duty military personnel stationed in South Carolina, and Agency employees permanently residing in adjacent states, but employed in the State of South Carolina, may operate a State-owned vehicle using a current, valid driver's license from their state of residence.

2 - Successfully completed the SC Department of Administration's Driver Improvement Program.

- Agency employees whose State positions require them to be routine drivers will complete the full eight-hour driver training course within ninety (90) days of date of employment and must complete the 4-hour refresher course every third (3rd) year thereafter. New employees who have previously completed an approved Driver Improvement Program course within three (3) years of date of employment may not be required to attend another course until the third anniversary of their attendance.

- Employees who are permanently assigned a State-owned vehicle must complete the full 8-hour driver training course within ninety (90) days of the date of such vehicle assignment, and must complete the 4-hour refresher course every third (3rd) year thereafter as long as the employee is permanently assigned a vehicle.
- Other Agency employees, Agency contract or consultant personnel, or Agency volunteers must complete the full 8-hour driver training course prior to operating a State vehicle. These individuals must complete the 4-hour refresher course every third (3rd) year thereafter.

3 - Maintain a safe driving record.

- Agency employees, Agency contract or consultant personnel, or Agency volunteers whom an Agency accident review board finds at fault in a preventable State vehicle accident must successfully complete the full 8-hour Driver Improvement course within ninety (90) days of such finding. If the individual fails to complete the training within the 90-day period, the Department Head or the Program Manager will terminate the individual's State Vehicle driving privileges until the individual completes the required Driver Improvement Program training.
- Agency employees, Agency contract or consultant personnel, or Agency volunteers found to have accumulated 9-10 traffic violation points or two (2) State vehicle accidents on their motor vehicle record must successfully complete the 8-hour driver training course within ninety (90) days of the discovery of their driving history. If the individual fails to complete the training within the 90-day period, the Department Head or the Program Manager will terminate the individual's State Vehicle driving privileges until the individual completes the required Driver Improvement Program training.
- If the Department Heads or Program Managers determine that an Agency employee, Agency contract or consultant personnel, or Agency volunteer is not operating the State vehicles in a safe manner, they may require the individual to attend additional Driver Improvement training and/or suspend/terminate the individual's State Vehicle driving privileges.

4 - Comply with the requirements of the State Vehicle Use Policy (see E24-100.09 - Use of State Vehicles at <https://scmd.sc.gov/state-operations/policies>) and this Handbook (see State Vehicle Operator's Handbook at <https://scmd.sc.gov/state-operations/regulations>).

Individual Vehicle Assignments

No Agency Department or Program is authorized to assign vehicles to individuals (other than the Adjutant General) by virtue of their position or office.

The Adjutant General, the Deputy Adjutant General, and the State Operations Chief of Staff may authorize assignment of a State vehicle to an individual for exclusive use based on the following criteria:

- Vehicles are essential to the performance of official duties by individuals whose remote location or total official business use requirements are such that they preclude shared or part-time use by members of the same or other work units
- Highly specialized vehicles and heavy equipment where operator training or technical skill requirements preclude use of the vehicle by individuals not possessing such training or skills

- Circumstances, as determined by the Adjutant General, the Deputy Adjutant General or the State Operations Chief of Staff, warrant individual assignment in the best interests of the State

Agency employees who use a permanently assigned State vehicle to commute from their permanently assigned work location to and from the employee's home must reimburse the Agency in accordance with IRS regulations based on guidance from the Office of Comptroller General which must use the cents per mile rule, unless they are exempted from such reimbursement by applicable IRS regulations.

Overnight Use of a State Vehicle

Program Managers or Department Heads (or their designated representative) are authorized to approve an Agency employee taking a State vehicle home overnight if the employee is leaving directly from their residence and/or returning after business hours, and the route/destination is away from their Permanent Place of Employment.

- This is solely for the benefit of the State to reduce overall cost, assist in ensuring the safety of the employee, and to limit the employee's time spent away from their primary mission.
- Employees are not authorized to utilize the vehicle to conduct personal business.

Passengers

Operators of State vehicles may transport such passengers as are necessary to conduct official State business. Transportation of persons or items/cargo having no connection with the accomplishment of official business or not serving the interests of the State is prohibited

The immediate family of a State employee may accompany the employee on official out-of-town trips provided:

- The State incurs no additional cost or expense for such travel, and
- The employee receives prior approval from the Department Head or Program Manager

Vehicle Identification

Agency vehicles are identified through use of permanent State government license plates and State decals. Agency decals may be substituted for the State Seal decal if prior approval is granted by the Department of Administration. No vehicles are exempt from these requirements for identification except those approved by the Department of Administration.

Section II: SC Military Department Vehicle Operation

Required Driving Practices

Agency employees operating State vehicles will abide by applicable State and Federal laws and posted speed limits, and are responsible for the safe operation and security of the vehicle. The Agency employee is responsible for all speeding and traffic violations, and is personally liable for any resulting fines.

Prohibited Driving Practices

- Smoking or the use of tobacco products in a State vehicle (this includes chewing, dipping, vaping, etc.)
- Operation after the use of or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances
- Use of radar detectors

Safety Belts

Agency employees and other occupants of State vehicle will wear a safety belt at all times when operating or being transported as a passenger in a State vehicle. It is unlawful to remove any safety belt or render it inoperative.

Use of Electronic Devices

Drivers will not operate an Electronic Device (e.g., cell phones, multi-media enabled smart phones, MP3 players, GPS devices, laptop computers, tablet computers, etc.) while the vehicle is in drive or in motion unless the Electronic Device is being operated via a hands-free mode.

- Drivers are prohibited from watching the screen of an Electronic Device while operating a State vehicle unless the vehicle is in park. This includes reading, sending, and/or receiving text or email messages.
- An exception to this policy is an emergency call placed to 911 for situations such as a fire, traffic accident, road hazard, or medical emergency. In such cases, the communication should be as short as reasonably necessary to communicate the nature of the emergency, location, etc.

Engines

Drivers will turn off the engine of a State vehicle before exiting the vehicle.

Pushing and Towing

Contact the State Fleet Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP) Office (1-800-277-3686) for towing services.

Pushing and towing another vehicle with a State vehicle is not allowed. Only in an emergency should you attempt to push a State vehicle with another vehicle.

In the event a State vehicle requires towing, front-wheel drive should be towed from the front with its rear wheels on the ground to prevent undue wear on the transmission and front end. Rear wheel drive vehicles should be towed from the rear with the front wheels on the ground.

Security

When State vehicles are unoccupied, vehicle operator will remove the ignition key and ensure the vehicle is locked and windows closed. If possible, lock luggage and personal items in the trunk. The Agency does not insure personal belongings in case of fire or theft.

Vehicle Control and Monthly Trip Logs

Operators of State vehicles are required to keep monthly trip logs (State Fleet Management Trip Log - Form SASS-003C) for the operation of the vehicle, and to keep a record (with receipts) of all fuel purchases.

The vehicle operators or the Department or Program Transportation Coordinators will forward the completed trip logs and fuel card receipts to the State Operations Transportation Coordinator on a monthly basis. The Transportation Coordinators can find copies of the State Fleet Management Trip Log (Form SASS-003C) at <https://www.admin.sc.gov/fleet/forms>.

Section III: Fuel Credit Card Purchases

General

The Agency has provided a South Carolina Fuel Credit Card for each State vehicle. Each operator must have their own, unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) or Driver ID number in order to utilize the card. Contact the State Operations Transportation Coordinator (State Property Book Officer) to obtain a PIN. The Requestor will need to provide their full name and birthdate.

The SC Fuel Credit Card has a Wright Express affiliation and is honored at fuel stations displaying the Wright Express logo. The card can also be used at State of South Carolina fueling sites.

How to Use the Card

The SC Fuel Credit Card requires the use of a PIN or Driver ID number. Insert the card into the card reader on the pump. Follow the instructions as prompted on the display and enter the operator's six-digit PIN and the odometer reading when requested.

- In some cases, the operator may also be prompted for a vehicle number - enter the vehicle card number located in the center of the card.
- If the operator tries unsuccessfully twice or more to use the card, the operator should call the phone number on the back of the card (1-800-842-0071).

If the facility does not have "pay at the pump" dispensers, pump the fuel and present the card to the cashier to pay for the purchase. The cashier may require you to enter your PIN and the vehicle odometer reading.

Authorized Purchases

The SC Fuel Credit Card may only be used to purchase fuel:

- Regular Unleaded gasoline (87 octanes) from self-service pumps only
- Diesel fuel (for those vehicles with diesel engines) from self-service pumps only
- Any alternative fuel (E-85 or CNG) (for those vehicles that are equipped to operate on alternative fuels) from self-service pumps only

For all other items, the vehicle operator or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator must contact the State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686) for authorization or instructions. This includes oil changes, tire repair, tire replacement, wiper blade replacement, etc.

Fuel Prices

State Fleet Management has secured a prearranged price for self-service fuel purchased with the fuel card so the price is the same regardless of the pump prices shown. This means State employees should never deviate from their route to obtain fuel for State-owned vehicles.

Missing Fuel Credit Cards

State vehicle operators will protect their Fuel Credit Card against loss or theft. State vehicle operators will immediately report missing fuel cards through their chain of command to the State Operations Transportation Coordinator (State Property Book Officer).

Section IV: Maintenance & Repairs

Operator Preventive Maintenance and Inspections

Vehicle operators will inspect the vehicle for damage and/or deficiencies prior to operations and will notify their Department/Program Transportation Coordinator of any damage, deficiencies or issues.

This includes those basic items any operator can check to ensure proper and safe function of the vehicle. An example is included in Appendix A (Operator Weekly Preventive Maintenance Checklist).

Scheduled Service

State Fleet Management has established 5,000 miles or one year (regardless of mileage) as the normal interval for vehicle services.

The State Fleet CVRP Office will coordinate all vehicle services and service locations.

The vehicle operator (for a permanently assigned vehicle) or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator is responsible for coordinating to ensure the vehicles are serviced on time.

The vehicle operator or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator will schedule vehicle services by contacting the State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686).

Repairs

The State Fleet CVRP Office will coordinate all estimates, repairs and repair locations. This includes major or minor repairs necessitated by vehicle breakdown or involvement in an accident.

- The vehicle operator or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator will contact the State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686) for a repair authorization number and repair location.
- The vehicle operator or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator will notify the SC Military Department Transportation Coordinator will coordinate further actions with the insurance company (American Southern) as necessary

Emergency Repairs and Towing

Emergency repairs are defined as those repairs and services that cannot be anticipated and that require immediate attention during holidays, weekends, or after normal duty hours.

The State Fleet CVRP Office will coordinate all towing services, estimates, repairs and repair locations.

- The vehicle operator or the Department/Program Transportation Coordinator will contact the State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686). The State Fleet CVRP Office will need the name and phone number of the person requesting the service, vehicle tag number, vehicle odometer reading, location and detailed description of the problem.
- The Department/Program Transportation Coordinator will notify the State SC Military Department State Operations Transportation Coordinator on the first following business day. Be prepared to provide the license plate number, odometer reading, vendor, date of repair, nature of repair, and estimated cost.

Section V: Insurance and Accident Reporting

Insurance

The Agency provides for insurance for its State owned vehicles to protect the State and its employees against claims resulting from an accident. The liability limits are equal to the maximum amount for which the State can be held liable, so there is no requirement for employees to obtain their own supplemental liability insurance. The State self-insures its vehicles with respect to unrecoverable losses from collision, fire, vandalism, and theft.

The Agency's insurance company does not insure collision and/or comprehensive losses. Depending on the circumstances of the accident, the Agency may have to file a claim to recover the cost of repairing the State vehicle. This is separate from any personal claim for injury and/or medical expense. Consult with the State Operations Transportation Coordinator so the proper claims can be filed against other drivers or their insurance companies.

Insurance Identification Cards

The Agency provides insurance cards for its State owned vehicles. The State vehicle operator is responsible for ensuring the current insurance card is in the vehicle prior to operation.

Contact the State Operations Transportation Coordinator immediately to request a replacement for a lost or missing insurance card.

Accident Review Board

If an Accident Review Board (ARB) determines the loss or damages to a State vehicle occurred due to the negligent or unlawful operation of the vehicle, the operator may be held liable for up to \$200 of the resulting damage, and may be suspended from operating State vehicles.

If the ARB finds the accident occurred while the operator was under the influence of alcohol or drugs and the ARB determines that the operator's impaired condition substantially was the cause of the accident, the operator may be held liable for the entire amount of damage to the State vehicle.

Accident Procedures

- Turn ignition off and evacuate the vehicle. Assist any passengers in your vehicle to evacuate as well.
- Render first aid to any injured persons.
- Call for medical assistance or ambulance if needed.
- Call local, municipal or county law enforcement, SC Highway Patrol, or Public Safety to report the accident (dial 911).
 - **Do Not Admit Responsibility For Any Accident**, but provide the facts to the law enforcement personnel.
 - Obtain a copy of the Motor Vehicle Accident Form (FR-10) issued by the investigating Law Enforcement Officer.
- Take photos of all damage to all vehicles or property involved in the accident as well as the other driver's license, vehicle registration and insurance card.
- Give the other driver your name and the Agency's name and address.
- Obtain data concerning other vehicle, driver and passengers.
- Have vehicle towed if not drivable. Contact the State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686) for towing services.
- Complete a Vehicle Accident Report Form (see "State Vehicle Accident Report Form" at <https://scmd.sc.gov/state-operations/forms> in the "Safety" section).
- Report accident through your Chain of Command to the State Operations Transportation Coordinator (State Property Book Officer) as soon as possible.
- Turn in the Vehicle Accident Report Form, FR-10 and copies of all documentation, photographs, statements, etc. to your Supervisor as soon as possible. The Supervisor will forward the information to the State Operations Transportation Coordinator.
- When an Agency employee suffers a vehicular accident that damages vehicles, equipment or property, they are required to submit to a drug screen within 48 hours of the incident.

- The State Fleet CVRP Office (1-800-277-3686) will be the POC coordinating with adjustors for damage estimates and repairs.
- The SC Military Department Transportation Coordinator will be the POC for communications with and providing information to the insurance company (American Southern).

Appendix A

Daily/Weekly Operator Preventive Maintenance Checklist

Operators will check the following as a minimum:

- Head lights, tail lights, turn signals, brake lights, hazard flashers, etc.
- Horn
- Air Conditioner - Run for 15 minutes each week (even in winter) to keep system and seals lubricated.
- Engine oil level
- Radiator coolant level
- Windshield washer fluid level
- Transmission fluid level
- Brake fluid level
- Power steering fluid level
- Battery connection
- Air Filter
- Belt tension and condition
- Hose condition
- Tire pressure, to include the spare tire
- Tire wear

Appendix B Telephone Numbers

Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

Columbia Area.....	(803) 745-4000
Lexington County.....	(803) 359-2521
Richland County.....	(803) 254-3061
Emergency	911

Emergency Vehicle Services

Vehicle Emergency Service (State CVRP Office).....	(800) 277-3686
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Law Enforcement

SC Highway Patrol (Columbia Area).....	(803) 896-9621
SC Highway Patrol (Charleston Area).....	(803) 740-650
SC Highway Patrol (Greenville Area).....	(803) 768-1503
Richland County Sheriff.....	(803) 691-9000
Lexington County Sheriff.....	(803) 785-8230
Columbia City Police.....	(803) 252-2911
Charleston City Police.....	(803) 577-7074
Emergency	911

SC Military Department State Operations

State Operations Transportation Coordinator.....	(803) 299-4330
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State Fleet Management

Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP).....	(800) 277-3686
Commercial Vendor Repair Program (CVRP) Contracts Manager.....	(800) 277-3686
State Fleet Management Accident Coordinator.....	(803) 737-1982

State Vehicle Insurance

American Southern Insurance Company.....	(800) 713-2205
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