



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

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| Policy #<br><br><b>Vehicle Use- Take Home Vehicle</b>   | Related Policies: Safe Storage of Firearms, Ride Along, Mobile Vide Recorder, Off-duty action, secondary employment |
| <i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i> |   |
| Applicable Oklahoma Statutes:   |   |
| CALEA Standard:   |   |
| Date Implemented:   | Review Date:  |

- I. **Purpose:** This policy is established to ensure agency-owned vehicles are used in accordance with the mission of the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office. For the purposes of this policy, Agency-owned vehicle includes any vehicle owned, leased, or rented by the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office. This policy provides for the security of the citizens of Pawnee County through an increased visibility and presence of marked and unmarked units on the streets, highways and neighborhoods; providing for expedited response of off-duty personnel called back into service due to an emergency or disaster; deterring crime through the presence of additional vehicles within the community; improving the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's ability to recruit, select and retain qualified candidates for employment.
- II. **Policy:** The Sheriff may assign take-home vehicles based on agency need such as emergency response to critical incidents, tactical deployments, increased visibility in the community and other considerations. It is the policy of the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office to assign agency vehicles to full time sworn deputies who reside within 30 miles of the County line for use pursuant to the following guidelines and procedures. The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office will also assign vehicles to full time sworn deputies who are assigned to certain positions within the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office as identified by the Sheriff. The Sheriff may at his/her discretion issues take-home units to full-time deputies living further than 30 miles from the county line.

All personnel must recognize that they are representatives of the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office and must be cognizant of the constant public scrutiny they will be under while operating their take-home vehicles off-duty. Members must at all times conduct themselves in a professional manner.

### **III. Use of Vehicles:**

- A.** Deputies will be assigned either a marked or unmarked vehicle for use according to the responsibilities of the officer's position and the needs of the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office.
- B.** Any officer on suspension is not authorized a take-home vehicle.
- C.** Upon operation of a Sheriff's Office vehicle, the operator shall inform PCSO communications by radio they are in service "10-8".

### **IV. The following rules apply to those deputies who are assigned a take-home agency vehicle:**

- a.** Deputies will maintain the vehicle in a state of readiness. The vehicle shall always have sufficient fuel to allow the officer to respond directly to the scene of an emergency.
- b.** Deputies shall not operate an agency vehicle at any time when under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- c.** Deputies while in an off-duty status and operating an agency vehicle, marked or unmarked, shall not stop at or frequent a business whose primary business is the sale of alcohol. Example: liquor store / barroom.
- d.** Deputies and passengers are prohibited from smoking/vaping tobacco products while in the vehicle
- e.** Communications equipment such as radios and MDC will remain on during all vehicle usage. Deputies will monitor the police radio at all times while operating a marked vehicle within County limits.
- f.** GPS equipment will remain on during all vehicle usage.
- g.** Deputies responding to emergency situations shall not engage in a pursuit when a civilian passenger is present in their vehicle.
- h.** Deputies are required to respond to any life-threatening call for service in their immediate vicinity and to stay on the scene until properly relieved (i.e., accident with injuries, etc.)
- i.** Deputies shall obey all traffic regulations (e.g., speed limits, parking regulations, seat belts, shoulder harnesses, and child restraint seats.)
- j.** Deputies shall not park their assigned take-home vehicle at any commercial, public, or private location for compensation, unless engaged in off-duty employment and while on a call status for the Sheriff's Office
- k.** Deputies shall not permit any other person to operate their assigned take-home vehicle (e.g., spouse, children, and friends.)

- I. Deputies shall not use their take-home vehicle to transport pets, carry excessive loads, or carry protruding objects.
- m. Deputies may use the vehicle to conduct personal business in compliance with Pawnee County policy approved by the board of county commissioners and at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- n. Deputies must notify dispatch when operating the marked vehicle.
- o. Deputies will dress appropriately when using the marked patrol vehicle.
  - i. Proper attire must be worn. Deputies will wear some type of identifying attire, i.e., Agency approved shirt, hat, or display a badge on their person.
  - ii. Deputies will not wear tank tops, flip flops, etc. Deputies shall not wear T Shirts with inappropriate wording or offensive logos
  - iii. Deputies will equip themselves with Sheriff identification, police radio, handcuffs, firearm, and spare magazines.
  - iv. When driving an assigned vehicle to and from work outside of the jurisdiction of the County deputies should avoid becoming directly involved in enforcement actions except in those circumstances where a potential threat to life or serious property damage exists.
  - v. While off duty and in civilian attire, deputies will not take traffic enforcement action unless the violation is extremely hazardous.
  - vi. Deputies may render public assistance (e.g., to a stranded motorist, warning lights, calling for tow service) when deemed prudent.
  - vii. Vehicles equipped with Mobile Video Recorders: When an officer initiates any law enforcement related citizen contact the officer will ensure the MVR is capturing the contact in its entirety.

**B. Parking:**

- a. The vehicle shall be parked in close proximity to the deputy's residence.
- b. In the event there is no residence parking the officer will park the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office vehicle in a parking space closest to the residence, preferably within eyesight of the residence and under lighting during the nighttime.
- c. Vehicles will be locked at all times.
- d. If the vehicle is not secured inside a locked garage, all firearms and weapons shall be removed from the interior of the vehicle and properly secured in the residence with the exception of long-guns, which may be necessary for immediate response, may be stored in specially designed theft-proof rack systems. If a take home vehicle is to be parked unattended for more than a 24-hour period, all firearms shall be removed and placed in a safe storage locker in the member's home or an agency facility.
- e. When the officer will be away (e.g., on vacation) for periods exceeding one week the vehicle shall be returned to the Sheriff's Office or secured in the deputy's garage.
- f. All office identification, portable radios and equipment should be secured.

**C. MAINTENANCE**

- a. Deputies are responsible for the cleanliness (exterior and interior) and overall maintenance of their assigned vehicles.
  - b. Deputies shall make daily inspections of their assigned vehicles for service/maintenance requirements and damage. It is the assigned officer's responsibility to ensure that his/her assigned vehicle is maintained according to the established service and maintenance schedule.
- D. Incident Reporting:** Officer shall report to the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office the following incidents:
  - a. All damage sustained to a vehicle
  - b. Moving violations outside the jurisdiction
  - c. Parking violations issued to the Pawnee County Sheriff's Office vehicle
  - d. Law enforcement citizen contacts made by the officer while operating the vehicle.