

POLICY STATEMENT No. 2002-002 (P)
COUNTY OF TRINITY DRIVING POLICY

I) GENERAL POLICY

Employees whose job duties necessitate operation of vehicles in the course and scope of their employment must maintain certain acceptable standards of driving. The privilege of driving is granted through the issuance of license by the California State Department of Motor Vehicles. Certain proficiencies and physical requirements must be met prior to the granting of such license. The failure to meet these requirements results in revocation or non-issuance of a State License.

It is Trinity County's policy to institute and enforce the employee driving eligibility standards as set forth in this Policy Statement.

If the provisions of federal, state or local laws or regulations, or those contained in other departmental policies, are more stringent than the provisions contained herein, those more stringent requirements shall prevail. Employees of both the Sheriff's Department and the Department of Transportation, for example, are subject to various types of laws and regulations which may impose stricter requirements or very specific requirements governing their specific areas of responsibility.

The operation of a County owned vehicle is a privilege that may be withdrawn at any time for cause. In order to operate a County vehicle, or to operate a private vehicle on County business, an individual must have completed the following:

- ✓ Have in his or her possession a current and valid California Driver's License;
- ✓ Read, understand and sign the Trinity County Driving Policy and insurance requirements and procedures;
- ✓ Have in his or her possession proof of current private automobile insurance satisfying the minimum standards of the Financial Responsibility Law of the State Vehicle Code. He or she shall provide proof of private automobile insurance coverage to his or her supervisor.

It is further the policy of the County that no employee will voluntarily, or be directed to, operate a vehicle for which he or she does not have the appropriate classification of driver's license. Some vehicles may require a commercial license and possibly additional certifications. In addition, no employee shall drive or be instructed to drive any vehicle which he or she has not been adequately trained to operate, or operate a vehicle that is unsafe in the assignment he or she is performing.

II) GENERAL VEHICLE USE

It is the policy of the County that:

- 1) Any driver of a vehicle for County business must have in his or her possession a valid California Driver's License.
- 2) Any driver who drives a vehicle in the course and scope of County business must have proof of private automobile insurance within the minimum standards of the Financial Responsibility Law of the State Vehicle Code.
- 3) While operating or riding in a vehicle on County business all occupants shall use safety belts properly adjusted and securely fastened. The driver of the vehicle shall ensure that all passengers are properly wearing seat belts.
- 4) A County vehicle shall not be used for any purpose other than County business or in the performance of a duty as a County employee, without prior approval from the County Administrative Officer (CAO).
- 5) Employees on County business shall observe all traffic rules, regulations, and courtesies at all times.
- 6) Employees are prohibited from carrying hitchhikers. Family members, or other unauthorized persons may be carried in a County owned vehicle, with prior permission of the County Administrative Officer (CAO).
- 7) County owned vehicles shall not be used to push another stalled vehicle or be used for other activities that may cause damage to the County vehicle.
- 8) Vehicle keys shall never be left in unattended vehicles, even when parked in a secured enclosure.
- 9) County vehicles must be locked and the parking brake set at all times when not in use, including when parked in the designated County parking areas for each department.
- 10) Smoking is prohibited in County vehicles.

III) EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Employees shall comply with all State of California driving laws.
- 2) Employees shall comply with all sections of the Trinity County Driving Policy.
- 3) Employees with three at-fault accidents or moving violations within the last two years will not be allowed to drive in the course of their employment. The County may impose disciplinary action on an employee for any at-fault violation while operating a vehicle on County business up to and including dismissal from employment in accordance with the personnel policies and regulations of the County.

- 4) All employees hired subsequent to the adoption of this policy having any of the following within the last five (5) years may be prohibited from driving in the course of their employment:
 - ✓ One driving while under the influence (DUI) offenses;
 - ✓ One driving while license is suspended or revoked offenses;
 - ✓ One reckless driving or speed contest violations;

- 5) Trinity County has zero tolerance for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Any employee having committed any of the following offenses may be subject to disciplinary action as determined by a committee composed of their department head, the County Administrative Officer and the County Counsel:
 - ✓ One DUI offense;
 - ✓ One driving while license is suspended or revoked offense;
 - ✓ One reckless driving or speeding contest violations;
 - ✓ Hit and run violations;
 - ✓ Homicide or assault arising out of the operation of a vehicle.

Disciplinary action can be up to and including dismissal from employment with the County of Trinity.

- 6) The provisions of Section III, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, which impose restrictions or prohibitions on operating a vehicle, shall apply regardless of whether the at-fault accident, violation or conviction, was or was not in the course of employment or whether it involved or did not involve the use of a County vehicle.

- 7) Each employee who operates a vehicle regularly or occasionally on County business is required to immediately report suspension or revocation of his/her license to his/her supervisor, who will in turn advise the Risk Manager of this fact. *FAILURE TO REPORT A CHANGE IN LICENSE STATUS MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION UP TO AND INCLUDING TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.*

IV) NEW EMPLOYEES

Prospective employees whose jobs require driving in the course of their employment are required to conform to the standards as detailed in this policy statement. Further, all employees will be required to provide the information and authorization necessary for the County to obtain an up-to-date Motor Vehicle License check. Applicant's driving record must conform with job requirements concerning licensing in order to be considered for County employment.

V) CURRENT EMPLOYEES

Current employees failing to meet the requirements for a valid Drivers License shall not be permitted to drive a vehicle on County business until such time that the employee meets at least those minimum standards. Commencing the effective date of this policy, all County employees who must drive in the course of their employment, shall be required to meet all the standards set forth in this policy. An employee failing to meet the standards of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from Trinity County employment.

VI) DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND MEDICATION

Trinity County is a drug free workplace. No employee, while in the course of employment, shall operate any motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance. If an employee is taking over-the-counter medications, or prescribed medications which cause drowsiness or other impairment, the employee shall not operate a County vehicle, or a private vehicle being used in the course of employment. Violations of this requirement may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from Trinity County employment.

If an employee is involved in an accident while under the influence of alcohol, medication or drugs, the employee faces a possibility of not being covered under Worker's Compensation laws for any injuries he or she receives (see Labor Code Section 3600[4]). Employees need to be aware that in such a situation, the County cannot be held responsible for punitive damages, but an individual can be.

VII) VEHICLE USAGE AND SAFETY INSPECTION


- 1) Before the initial use of any vehicle each day, the driver will walk around and inspect the vehicle for damage, inoperable lights, loose hardware, tire condition, fluid levels, or any other condition which might create an unsafe condition. If a detectable malfunction is identified, it is the employee's responsibility to assure that it is safe to continue driving.
- 2) Prior to operation of the vehicle, and during operation of the vehicle, the driver shall insure that windows, headlights, taillights, and windshield wipers are clean and in operating order.
- 3) Any mechanical deficiency of a County owned vehicle must be reported to an employee's supervisor immediately. It will be the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that appropriate action is take to correct the problem. In the case of a County Motor Pool vehicle, any mechanical deficiency must be reported to the General Services Director, or his/her designee.
- 4) Turn signals shall be in working order and utilized by all drivers at all times in ample time to warn oncoming or following vehicles of driver intent.
- 5) Headlights shall be utilized for night driving and as needed during daylight hours depending on the weather and/or road conditions.
- 6) Pickup truck tailgates shall be up and locked while the vehicle is in motion. If a vehicle's function requires that the tailgate be lowered while in motion, a red flag will be attached to the tailgate or the load's overhang in accordance with state law.
- 7) Backing of vehicles when the driver does not have a clear view of the entire area behind the vehicle shall be done with the assistance of a guide. If a second person is in the vehicle, he/she shall guide the vehicle using appropriate hand and voice signals. If the driver is alone, he/she shall get out of the vehicle and inspect the area behind before backing and then back with extreme caution.
- 8) Trailers shall be fastened securely to hitches using the appropriate method for utilization of safety pins, safety chains and locks.
- 9) The driver of any county owned vehicle may transport no more than the maximum allowable passengers based on the vehicle size and available seat belts. At no time shall passengers be transported in a County vehicle without an available seat belt (exceptions apply to commercial vehicles or the transport of prisoners by safety personnel).

VIII) REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS OR MOVING VIOLATIONS

If the operator of a vehicle being operated on County business is involved in an accident, the California Highway Patrol, or appropriate authority, must be contacted to determine if it is necessary for that agency to be called to the scene to make a report of the accident. The County Risk Manager or Deputy Risk Manager shall be immediately notified if an employee is involved in any vehicle accident while on the job or involved in a incident that results in the employee being ticketed. Failure of the employee to report such an occurrence may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment. All damage to County property shall be reported verbally, as soon as possible, to the employee's department head and followed by a written report within 24 hours of the damage occurring. All information should be included in the report; i.e., witness information, damage incurred, etc.

Drivers of a vehicle being operated on County business who are involved in an accident shall give all necessary drivers license information and insurance information to the other party involved. Drivers of County owned vehicles, however, shall only give their drivers license information to the other party and shall advise any other drivers involved in the accident that the County of Trinity is self-insured and that all communications regarding losses, injuries, etc. are to be directed to the Risk Manager of the County at: PO Box 1613, Weaverville, CA 96093; (530) 623-1325.

DATE OF ADOPTION: 1/15/02



J. C. Erikson, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

COUNTY OF TRINITY
DRIVING POLICY CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT:

1. I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE TRINITY COUNTY DRIVING POLICY;
2. I POSSESS A CURRENT AND VALID CALIFORNIA DRIVER'S LICENSE;
3. I MAINTAIN INSURANCE FOR THE USE OF MY PRIVATE AUTOMOBILE, THE COVERAGE OF WHICH MEETS THE MINIMUM STANDARDS AS REQUIRED BY THE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LAWS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

I UNDERSTAND THAT ANY RESTRICTION OR CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF MY DRIVER'S LICENSE OR ANY CHANGE OR LOSS OF INSURANCE COVERAGE MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO MY SUPERVISOR. FAILURE TO REPORT ANY CHANGE OR LOSS COULD BE GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

I HAVE ATTACHED A COPY OF MY VALID CALIFORNIA DRIVER'S LICENSE AND A COPY OF MY CURRENT INSURANCE CERTIFICATE TO THIS CERTIFICATION.

Employee name (print) _____

Signature _____

Department _____

Date _____

California Driver's License Number _____