

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT**

Vehicle and Equipment Management

Part 320 Motor Vehicle Management

Chapter 5 Motor Vehicle Use, Operation, and Storage

320 FW 5

5.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes how we use, operate, and store motor vehicles we own, lease, and manage through other means.

5.2 What are the authorities for this chapter? See 320 FW 1.3 for a list of authorities for all the chapters in Part 320.

5.3 Who is responsible for motor vehicle use, operation, and storage? We describe our general responsibilities for motor vehicle management in 320 FW 1.6. Following are our responsibilities for motor vehicle use, operation, and storage.

A. Regional Directors ensure that:

(1) All employees in their Regions are aware of the policy requirements in this chapter, including limitations on using Service motor vehicles.

(2) Volunteers, employees of grantees, contractors, and subcontractors:

(a) Have proper authorization before using Service motor vehicles;

(b) Use motor vehicles only to perform official Government business authorized under volunteer agreements, grants, contracts, and subcontracts; and

(c) Establish and enforce penalties for employees who knowingly use or authorize the use of Service motor vehicles for other than official purposes.

(3) Fleet charge cards for buying fuel and services are properly issued and used.

B. Accountable Officers are responsible for our motor vehicles, including:

(1) Safeguarding motor vehicles and fuel cards by establishing measures to prevent loss, theft, misuse, or abuse;

(2) Maintaining records for all the vehicles for which they are responsible; and

(3) Reporting vehicle performance information as required by Federal regulation when requested by the Regional Property Manager.

C. Vehicle Operators must:

(1) Properly operate, care for, and secure Service motor vehicles;

(2) Comply with all local, State, and Federal laws and motor vehicle operator regulations; and

(3) Comply with 243 FW 1, Safe Operation of Motor Vehicles and Motor Equipment and 321 FW 1, Operator Requirements and Responsibilities.

5.4 What is official use of a U.S. Government motor vehicle? Official use of a motor vehicle is using a motor vehicle to perform your agency's mission(s), as authorized by your agency. It is official use when we use a Government motor vehicle to:

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- A. Carry out authorized programs, including program work under contractual arrangements;
- B. Assist in major disasters or emergency situations;
- C. Perform assignments while on official temporary duty (TDY) travel as documented and approved on a travel authorization (DI-1020). This includes using a Government motor vehicle:
 - (1) Between the official duty station and temporary duty locations.
 - (2) Between residence and common carrier terminal and from the common carrier terminal (e.g, airport, train station) to the residence.
 - (3) Within the metropolitan area of the official station.
 - (4) From common carrier terminals at a temporary duty station to place of business and between such places if more than one is involved.
 - (5) From common carrier terminals at a temporary duty station to place of lodging.
 - (6) From place of lodging to place of business at a temporary duty station where reasonable public transportation is not available or where the use of a Government vehicle for such purposes would be advantageous to the Government.
 - (7) From place of lodging at a temporary duty station, where other reasonable means of transportation are not available, to obtain goods or services necessary to the health and well-being of the employee. This includes travel, of up to 25 miles, in a Government vehicle to obtain medical services, attend religious services, and to obtain goods and services at restaurants, barbershops, beauty shops, drugstores, laundries, and dry-cleaning establishments.

5.5 What are the limitations for using Service motor vehicles?

- A. You may only transport non-official passengers (non-official passengers are people not engaged in the work for which you are using the vehicle) and private property:
 - (1) During an emergency:
 - (a) As part of an overall Emergency Operations Plan that Regional management or the Accountable Officer has approved and which is designed to facilitate aid before, during, and after a major disaster, or
 - (b) When necessary to prevent serious injury, loss of life, or property.
 - (2) If the Regional Property Manager develops a policy for transporting non-official passengers and private property that the Chief, Division of Contracting and Facilities Management and the Department's Director – Acquisition and Property Management have approved.
- B. You may transport people from other Federal agencies and non-Federal employees when conducting official business when it benefits the Government and does not interfere with accomplishing your primary business.
- C. Non-official passengers in Service motor vehicles must comply with all Service policies. Transporting the passengers must:

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- (1) Be at no additional cost,
- (2) Not delay Service business, and
- (3) Not involve profit-seeking or commercial activities.

D. You must not transport family members, friends, or other people who are not conducting official business in a Government vehicle (except as section 5.5A describes).

E. You may not use Service motor vehicles for personal errands or shopping unrelated to work (unless you are on official temporary duty travel—see section 5.4C). You may use a Service motor vehicle for shopping related to work (e.g., stopping at a drug store if an employee needs sunblock while doing fieldwork).

5.6 May a Service employee use a Service motor vehicle to travel between his/her residence and permanent duty station? See 320 FW 10 for information on Home-to-Work transportation.

5.7 Can employees use their own vehicles for Government business? You may use your Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) if you have approval from your supervisor. See DI-1020, Travel Authorization, “Mode of Travel” to ensure you comply with Federal Tort Claims Act provisions. Otherwise, you use your vehicle at your own risk. We reimburse you for the use of the POV based on the costs per mile.

5.8 What are the requirements for contractors and grantees to use Government vehicles?

A. Managers who provide contractors or grantees with Government-owned or leased motor vehicles are responsible for ensuring that the contractors/grantees only use the vehicles to perform the work authorized under the contracts and grants (see 43 CFR 12 for more guidance).

B. Managers must ensure that contractors and grantees establish and enforce suitable penalties for their employees who willfully use or authorize the use of Government motor vehicles for other than official purposes.

C. Contractors and grantees assume any cost or expense for any incidents that occur when use is not related to the performance of the grant or contract.

5.9 May volunteers use Service-owned and leased motor vehicles? Yes. Volunteers may use Service motor vehicles if they:

- A.** Receive written authorization from the Project Leader,
- B.** Have a valid State driver’s license, and
- C.** Comply with Service motor vehicle operator requirements in Parts 320 and 321.

5.10 What are the penalties for unauthorized use? With the Director’s approval, your supervisor may suspend you without pay if you willfully misuse or authorize someone else to misuse a Service vehicle. Your supervisor may suspend you from duty immediately, and the suspension must be for at least 30 days.

5.11 What are the standards of care vehicle operators should take when driving? Operators must take good care of Service vehicles at all times and may lose the privilege of driving Service vehicles if they

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do not take care of them.

A. Misconduct and improper operation include but are not limited to:

- (1)** Operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs,
- (2)** Willful abuse or misuse of a vehicle, and
- (3)** Driving the vehicle in a willfully negligent or careless manner, including not paying attention and not adjusting driving speed to compensate for visibility, road conditions, and inclement weather.

B. If you damage a vehicle because of misconduct or improper operation, you may be financially responsible for the damage.

5.12 What rules do vehicle operators have to follow? Table 5-1 describes several, but not all, of the requirements for operators of Service motor vehicles (also see 243 FW 1 and 321 FW 1).

Table 5-1: Operator Requirements
When driving Service vehicles, operators must...
A. Carry a valid driver's license from the State, territory, or other government for the class of vehicle they are operating.
B. Carry a valid Service personnel identification card.
C. Follow all applicable driving rules (local, State, and Federal).
D. Wear a safety belt or other restraint system provided and ensure that all passengers also buckle up.
E. Not operate the vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
F. Not pick up hitchhikers or give rides to strangers.
G. Lock motor vehicles when unattended.
H. Take precautions to protect Government personal property stored in the vehicle. If possible, remove property from the vehicle when you park it overnight.
I. Ensure safety and emergency repair equipment are in the vehicle and in working condition.
J. When available, park or store the vehicle in a place that protects it from theft or damage.

5.13 How do operators pay for fuel and vehicle services when traveling?

A. In most circumstances, operators should use the fleet charge card provided by the Regional Property Manager to buy fuel and services from participating service stations. Operators may only use the fleet charge card for the vehicle to which the card is assigned.

B. Although the fleet charge card is our preferred method for obtaining supplies and services, you may use other methods—imprest funds and purchase charge cards—only if necessary and only if you follow the requirements associated with those methods. For example, when a participating service station is not in reasonable proximity or when the identification of a motor vehicle as a Government vehicle would interfere with a law enforcement investigation, you may use another method of obtaining fuel and services, if necessary.

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5.14 Who controls the use of fleet charge cards?

A. The Regional Property Manager orders new and replacement fleet charge cards using the Electronic Account Government Ledger System. He/she must establish procedures to:

- (1)** Destroy cancelled or expired fleet charge cards, cards no longer needed, and cards that have an invalid license plate number;
- (2)** Ensure the paying office receives notification whenever a fleet charge card is lost or stolen; and
- (3)** Issue a replacement card if a fleet charge card is lost, stolen, or damaged.

B. The Accountable Officer must:

- (1)** Review fleet charge card purchases to ensure they are for official use. Fleet charge cards may only be used to purchase fuel and supplies for the vehicle identified by the plate number on the fleet charge cards. The license plate number or property number (for motor vehicles or equipment without tags) is embossed on the fleet card.
- (2)** Establish administrative controls, such as training and periodic reviews of charge card invoices, to prevent unauthorized use of the cards.

5.15 What are the parking and storage requirements for motor vehicles? Vehicle operators:

- A.** Must follow all Federal, State, and local parking laws and regulations.
- B.** Are responsible for citations and paying fines for violations. Repeated offenses may result in disciplinary action.
- C.** When available, must park or store the vehicle in an area that offers reasonable protection from theft or damage.

5.16 What happens if a duty station has to move a vehicle it bought through the GSA Fleet Management Center to a location in another GSA-defined area?

A. GSA Interagency Fleet Management System Center vehicles typically remain in the area of jurisdiction of the local Fleet Management Center (see 320 FW 3). When we need to move a vehicle from a GSA area for a period of more than 90 calendar days, the Accountable Officer must notify the Fleet Management Center of the following:

- (1)** The new location of the vehicle,
- (2)** The first date the vehicle was used at the new location, and
- (3)** The expected date the vehicle will return to the original location.

B. The original Fleet Management Center may transfer the accountability for the vehicle to the Fleet Management Center serving the new location.

5.17 What happens if there is a manufacturer's recall on a vehicle?

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A. The Receiving Officer gets recall notifications by mail and gives them to the Accountable Officer. Accountable Officers should make arrangements to take the motor vehicle to the servicing dealer for recall repairs.

B. Accountable Officers should not depend entirely on manufacturers' and state registration records for recall notifications. When recalls are announced in the news media, Accountable Officers should review their vehicle fleets for the subject makes, types, and vehicle identification numbers. If they are reasonably certain that some vehicles are involved and the notices do not arrive within a reasonable time, Accountable Officers must contact the appropriate manufacturer's service office.

C. You can get the latest recall information on vehicles on the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Web site.

5.18 What insurance is required for operating a Service-owned vehicle traveling in Canada? The U.S. Government's "self-insured" status on motor vehicles is not recognized in Canada. Accountable Officers must coordinate with their Regional Property Manager and Contracting and General Services office to obtain insurance for Government vehicles traveling in Canada.

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