

Antrim County Safe Driver Program Policy

May 12, 2005

Amended: December 13, 2012

Purpose: Antrim County places the highest value on the safety and health of Antrim County employees and the well being of its citizenry. Antrim County acknowledges the need for safe operation of County vehicles by its employees, and has established this safe driver program policy to ensure that all employees who are granted the privilege of driving a County vehicle are safe and properly licensed operators.

This policy, together with the County-Owned Vehicle Policy, provides guidelines for most issues related to the use of County-owned vehicles by employees in all Antrim County departments.

Antrim County has full authority to determine who shall drive a vehicle, to establish vehicle operator standards, and to revoke the privilege to drive for failure to meet those standards. This policy defines the minimum standards for all County employees. Nothing herein shall be construed as to limit departments from setting higher standards that may be necessary to meet the particular needs of the individual departments.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this policy, the County reserves the right to prohibit or limit any employee's use or operation of any County owned vehicle for any reason.

The specific responsibilities of an employee operating an Antrim County vehicle are:

1. Have a valid and properly classed Michigan vehicle operator's license.
2. Not drive in violation of any restrictions associated with their license.
3. Safely operate their assigned County vehicle or personal vehicle.
4. Properly use furnished seat belts and/or other vehicle safety restraints when driving or riding in a County owned vehicle.
5. Advise the department head immediately of any accident
6. Advise the department head immediately the loss of their valid operator's license by suspension, revocation, or expiration. Failure to comply may result in discipline up to and including employment termination.
7. Maintain an assigned County vehicle's cab, bed and/or body in a clean and safe condition.
8. Conduct a daily safety check prior to driving a County assigned vehicle.
9. Promptly report to the on-duty supervisor or department head any vehicle safety defect found during inspection or while operating the vehicle. Failure to report safety defects found during inspection or while operating the vehicle may result in discipline up to and including employment termination.

Failure to comply with any of these rules may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

Any employee who operates an Antrim County vehicle must complete a form provided by the County that authorizes the County to check their driving record.

Each department head is responsible to:

- Ensure all employees are informed of this policy.
- Identify all employees in their department who operate a County owned vehicle, and ensure that they are included in the County's motor vehicle record flag program.

- Ensure that all vehicle operators are trained in the safe operation of all assigned motor vehicles.
- Ensure that all assigned vehicles are inspected as required.
- Ensure the safe maintenance and operation of all assigned County owned vehicles.
- Ensure that when an employee who does not regularly use their personal vehicle in the performance of their duties, that such employee does comply with sections of this policy that applies to such employee.
- Ensure that thorough and timely accident investigations are conducted and reported.
- Maintain a record of all safety checks performed by employees in their department.
- Deliver all necessary completed forms to the Administration Office for all employees who operate any County vehicles. A list will be compiled and sent to the Michigan Secretary of State's Office for a check into the driving record of each employee.
- Ensure that any disciplinary measures taken related to this policy are consistent with the overall intent of this policy.
- Administer and enforce all County-wide and departmental policies and procedures regarding vehicle operation.

The Administration Office is responsible to:

- Maintain the motor vehicle record flag program.
- Assist the department heads with making sure that all employees within their department, who operate a County vehicle, have a valid operator's license.
- Monitor the program and motor vehicle records and report record development to the appropriate department head.
- Provide consultation and training to the departments as needed.

Anyone found not to have a valid Michigan driver's license (or is not properly classed), or driving in violation of restrictions of their license will lose the privilege to operate a County vehicle and may be subject to discipline, as applicable.

Through the Motor Vehicle Record Flag Program offered by the State of Michigan Secretary of State's Office, a check on each individual's driving record will be performed once a year. Additionally, the Secretary of State will notify the Administration Office when an infraction is posted to a given record.

General provisions:

- Only those employees who are determined to be safe operators, will be allowed to operate a County owned vehicle.
- All employees and occupants shall use seatbelts or other safety restraints provided whenever they are operating or riding in a vehicle.
- No employee shall knowingly operate a vehicle found to be in violation of a state safety code or the laws of the State of Michigan.
- An employee who does not regularly operate their personal vehicle in performance of their duties may operate their personal vehicle without review of their driving record when such operation is incidental to the performance of their duties. (i.e. driving to and from trainings, conferences, meetings, etc.) However, such employee must also comply with paragraphs 1 to 5 under "Responsibilities of An Employee Operating an Antrim County Vehicle".

Application of Antrim County Safe Driver Program Policy to employees who regularly use their personal vehicles in the performance of their duties:

- The Antrim County Safe Driver Program shall apply to any employee who regularly operates their personal vehicles in the performance of their duties, including but not limited to such departments or agencies as the Construction Code Department and the Commission on Aging.

Corrective Action Including Discipline:

Each department is encouraged to develop and implement a plan for reviewing vehicle accidents and administering appropriate corrective action. The following are minimum standards, which should be included in departmental plans:

- The goal of corrective action is to ensure that employees who are entrusted with the operation of vehicles are safe drivers. Awareness and knowledge through training are the keys to safe driving. Whenever possible, training should be a first step in a corrective action program. Discipline may also be an appropriate form of corrective action.
- An unacceptable motor vehicle driving record (see page 5-6) is one indication that an employee may not be a safe driver. The Administration office will identify employees who develop unacceptable driving records and notify the appropriate department. Departments are encouraged to immediately enroll these employees in municipal-sponsored drivers training programs, or consult with the Administration office about other appropriate training opportunities, and monitor the employees driving performance.
- Preventable accidents involving stationary objects are the most frequent and preventable form of vehicular accident. Preventable accidents involving stationary objects shall be considered unsatisfactory job performance, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.
- Failure to comply with any part of this policy shall be considered unsatisfactory job performance, which may result in disciplinary action.

Definitions:

Motor Vehicle Record Flag Program: A program provided by the Secretary of State's office by which a court print driving record can be automatically produced and sent to an enrolled municipality when a conviction, accident or suspension is posted to a given record.

Preventable Accident: Any vehicle accident in which the driver/operator failed to do everything he/she reasonably could have done to prevent the accident.

Vehicle Accident: Any occurrence involving a County-owned, rented or leased motor vehicle, motorcycle, snowmobile, ORV, ATV, personal watercraft or vessel as defined by MCL 324.80184(e)(q), trailer or any other motorized contrivance now known or invented in the future, which results in a death, personal injury or property damage.

Employee: Any regular full-time or part-time or temporary full-time or part-time employee, elected officials, volunteers or any other person who has reason to operate a County vehicle.

County Vehicle: Any County owned, rented or leased motor vehicle, motorcycle, snowmobile, ORV, ATV, personal watercraft or vessel as defined by MCL 324.80184(e)(q), trailer or any other motorized contrivance now known or invented in the future and used by an employee for County business.

Applicant Screening Guide

Conviction of law violations or civil infractions may serve as a basis for disqualification of the privilege to operate a County vehicle or personal vehicle used by an employee for County business. The applicant's total record will be evaluated; the applicant must have at least two (2) years of documented driving experience. The pattern of law violations, the seriousness, the surrounding circumstances, the number, and how recent the violations are will be considered for both an applicant and an employee. For example, multiple convictions of the same offense can be disqualifying as they indicate a pattern of inadequate responsibility and disregard for law and order, which may affect safety. Likewise, traffic misdemeanors which do not carry points (e.g., improper plates, expired plates) or civil infractions may be considered when determining qualification as exhibiting a lack of ability to follow rules and a disregard for the law. The County may also consider convictions arising not only from the operation of a motor vehicle, but also from the operation of a motorcycle, snowmobile, ORV, ATV, personal watercraft or vessel as defined by MCL 324.80184(e)(q) or any other motorized contrivance now known or invented in the future.

For purposes of determining disqualifying violations, Antrim County will consider only those offenses followed by a conviction (forfeited bond, jailed, fined, "let off with a warning," order to attend traffic school). For purposes of establishing time frames for disqualification, the County will use the date of the actual violation.

The Convictions Noted Below Will Be Cause for Automatic Disqualification:

1. Conviction of a driving related felony.
2. Loss of driving privilege through suspension or revocation of license due to an unsatisfactory driving record as defined by the Michigan Department of State driver's license point system.
Exception: *Applications from those who maintain a driving record free of license suspension or revocation and moving violation conviction(s) or civil infraction determination(s) in the five years previous to making application to the County will be accepted, or in the case of an employee, five years from the date of disqualification.*
3. An at-fault accident resulting in a fatality. An at-fault accident is defined as one in which the applicant had been fined, sued and received an adverse judgment, applicant's insurance company settled for damages to other party or applicant settled out of court, or otherwise was determined to be liable arising from the operation of a motor vehicle, motorcycle, snowmobile, ORV, ATV, personal watercraft or vessel as defined by MCL 324.80184(e)(q) or any other motorized contrivance now known or invented in the future.

The Conviction Noted Below May Be Cause for Automatic Disqualification:

1. An at-fault accident resulting in a serious impairment of a body function as defined by MCL 257.58c. An at-fault accident is defined as one in which the applicant had been fined, sued and received an adverse judgment, applicant's insurance company settled for damages to other party or applicant settled out of court, or otherwise was determined to be liable arising from the operation of a motor vehicle, motorcycle, snowmobile, ORV, ATV, personal watercraft or vessel as defined by MCL 324.80184(e)(q) or any other motorized contrivance now known or invented in the future.

Disqualification if Five Years Prior to Application or within 5 years of Approval:

1. If Applicant has accumulated more than six (6) points on his/her driving record, the application will not be processed for consideration.
2. If an employee has accumulated more than six (6) points on his/her driving record, the County shall revoke driving privileges under this policy. The County, at its sole discretion, may allow such employee to submit an application for consideration of reinstatement of driving privilege before the expiration of five (5) years. However, the County is not required to approve such an application.
3. If Applicant has any alcohol/drug related convictions, application will not be processed for consideration.
4. If an employee, after being approved under this policy obtains any alcohol/drug related convictions, the County shall suspend driving privileges for five (5) years.
5. If Applicant has any conviction of driving while license was suspended or revoked, application will not be processed for consideration.
6. If an employee, after being approved under this policy obtains any conviction of driving while license was suspended or revoked, the County shall revoke driving privileges under this policy. The County, at its sole discretion, may allow such employee to submit an application for consideration of reinstatement of driving privileges before the expiration of five (5) years. However, the County is not required to approve such an application.

Disqualification if One Year Prior to Application or Within One Year of Approval

1. If Applicant has accumulated more than three (3) points on driving record, application will not be processed for consideration. If an employee has accumulated more than three (3) points on driving record, the County may suspend driving privileges under this policy.

I have been provided with, read and understand the **Antrim County Safe Driver Program Policy**

Signature

Date

Please print name

**Antrim County
Safe Driver Program
Authorization Form**

I hereby authorize Antrim County to review my driving record through the State of Michigan Secretary of State office.

Name *(exactly as it appears on your driver's license)*

Date of Birth

Michigan driver license number

Signature

Date