



PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE TITLE	NUMBER	EFFECTIVE
Permanently Assigned Motor Vehicles	#BR.01.01.P1	12/1/25

APPLIES TO	State agencies (as defined by RCW 43.19.560) and institutions including the Washington State School Directors’ Association, employees, contractors, students, and volunteer/intern drivers and passengers on official state business. This policy does not apply to any agency of the judicial branch or the Legislature.
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FIRST ADOPTED	10/08/15	LAST UPDATE	12/1/2025
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RELATED POLICY	#BR.01.01	RELATED FAQ	N/A
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REQUIRED FORM(S)	#BR.01.01.F1 , BR.01.01.F2 , BR.01.01.F3 , BR.01.01.F4 , BR.01.01.F5 , BR.01.01.F6 , BR.01.01.F8 , BR.01.01.F9 , SF 137 , Proof of Liability Insurance Washington State Agency Vehicle Continual Coverage , Standard Tort Claim Form Packet
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Background

Permanent assignment policies apply to vehicles which can be licensed to operate on public roads.

Permanent assignment policies do not apply to the following:

- personal transportation devices such as golf carts, Segways, scooters, and snowmobiles;
- speed-limited battery electric vehicles commonly referred to as neighborhood electric vehicles;
- tractors and other farm equipment;
- road construction, specialized manufacturing, industrial, and other construction equipment;
- vessels (boats);
- airplanes.

The state agency head has the ultimate responsibility for use of state-owned vehicles in compliance with these policies.

On an annual basis the agency head shall approve the agency's assigned category of use for state vehicles used by the agency and confirm that the agency is in compliance with the permanent assignment policies.

Permanent assignment criteria

The following section shows the state vehicle class category codes and the minimum annual by calendar year use/mileage requirements for permanent assignment.

If a vehicle qualifies under multiple class types, frequency of use will be the primary consideration for class assignment. Agencies may contact the State Fleet Operations for help in determining appropriate vehicle categories.

A motor vehicle that fails to meet the usage requirements noted below shall be permanently assigned only after justification for such assignment has been approved by the director of the Department of Enterprise Services.

Special purpose vehicles

Special purpose vehicles are vehicles that are generally larger than non-special purpose vehicles.

Category	Vehicle descriptions	Annual mileage requirement
Special purpose vehicles	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School buses and passenger vans with at least a capacity of 12 passengers. • ¾ ton or greater sized vehicles with towing capacity with a specialized intended use. • Crew and shuttle buses. • Step vans. • ADA-compliant vehicles. • Vehicles modified with partitions designated for the transport of those under an agency's jurisdiction. • Tractor-trailers (semis). • Project-exempt vehicles that are approved by owning agency head to support critical or high agency functions that require immediate availability and specialized use during designated times. • Cargo trucks and cargo vans. • Law enforcement and security vehicles (emergency-capable). 	Mileage exempt*

Non-special purpose vehicles

Non-special purpose vehicles fall within one of the categories in the following table.

If they are a larger vehicle but fall into one of the following categories, they can include:

- Sedans and station wagons.
- Pickup trucks (1/4 and 1/2 ton).
- Passenger vans.
- SUVs.
- Motorcycles.

Category	Vehicle descriptions	Annual mileage requirement
Statewide elected officials, state agency directors, and agency heads	Vehicles assigned to statewide elected officials in the Executive Branch of state government, state agency directors, or state agency heads.	Mileage exempt*
Specially equipped vehicles	<p>Vehicles modified for a particular function essential to an agency. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles with specialized added interior equipment that help support a core function of required state business (examples include: interior racking, water deployment equipment, racks and bin systems to hold parts and tools). • Vehicles used for investigation purposes. • Vehicles with confidential plates. 	4,000 miles per year
Local area/alternate commute mode vehicles	<p>Vehicles assigned to a specific function with a local-area responsibility that generally travel within the assigned city or county. Vehicle use is frequent, but the typical trip is short. Use of a vehicle is deemed essential to the job function.</p> <p>Includes vehicles used to provide transportation for accommodation to employees or clients.</p>	4,000 miles per year and used 75% of working days**
Campus, institution, park, or hatchery	<p>Vehicles assigned to a state institution, college campus, park, or hatchery where the volume of trips and use is high, but the distance is minimal.</p> <p>Use of a vehicle is deemed essential to the job function.</p>	2,000 miles per year or used 80% of working days**

General use	All other vehicles assigned to an agency, office, individual, or position that has statewide travel.	10,000 miles per year
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*While exempt from specific mileage requirements, agencies must maximize efficient and effective use of state-owned vehicles when determining the number and nature of vehicles required.

**Seasonal fluctuations and employee availability (leave, temporary vacancies) are factors in determining work days available.

Waiver requirements

Agencies may request a waiver by submitting a memorandum with a list of vehicles not meeting the above mileage requirements to DES between January and June by email: vehicleapproval@des.wa.gov. The list of vehicles must include all of the following:

- License plate number,
- year, make, and model,
- location,
- category,
- annual mileage or total days used out of the year, and
- justification for keeping each vehicle.

Fleet use data reporting

When submitting a waiver request, agencies must include complete fleet use data for agency-owned vehicles at each location where requesting a waiver. DES will use this data along with data for DES-owned vehicles to assess agency waiver requests.

The data should include the total days used for state business during the calendar year, and explain how it is more cost effective than using outside transportation methods including:

- Personally owned vehicles.
- Other underused vehicles in the same stored vicinity.
- DES daily rentals for short-term vehicle needs.
- Non-state rental car platforms available on the statewide contract.

Automatic waivers

DES will grant automatic waivers when the agency demonstrates that keeping an underused vehicle is more cost-effective than renting a similarly sized vehicle. This determination is based on the number of days the vehicle was reported as being used compared to rental costs under current statewide vehicle rental contract rates, versus the vehicle's annual lease or carrying cost.

State or federal declared emergencies

DES may waive annual minimum mileage requirements during state or federal declared emergencies.

Consolidation exemption

Fleets exempt from consolidation by [RCW 43.19.600](#) are also exempt from waiver requirements.

Timeline for waiver submissions

Agencies must ensure that state-assigned vehicles meet the required annual mileage benchmarks, measured over a two-year biennial cycle. For each category of use, vehicles must average at or above the required threshold across the biennium.

Example

A general-use vehicle, with required use of 10,000 miles per year, must accumulate at least 20,000 miles between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2026, to satisfy the requirement.

Waiver submission period

- Waivers for underused vehicles are accepted on a biennial cadence, between January and June of each odd-numbered calendar year (2027, 2029, and so on).
- Waivers should be based on the average performance of the vehicle across the prior biennium.

Before requesting a waiver

If a vehicle does not meet the annual days of use or mileage requirements in a calendar year, the agency shall review the vehicle use to decide the cause. The agency is allowed a three-month grace period (March-May) to prove that the vehicle can meet the usage requirements.

If the vehicle meets 25% of the annual use or mileage requirement during the three-month grace period, continued permanent assignment is allowed. If the vehicle fails to meet 25% of the annual use and/or mileage requirements, the agency may choose one of the following:

- Return the vehicle to the State Fleet Operations for reassignment.
- Request a waiver.

For vehicles that were in operation for less than one year, agencies have two options:

- Annualize the mileage based on the average monthly mileage for the months in service, or
- Request the three-month grace period (March-May) to prove that the vehicle can meet the usage requirements.

Employee residence travel

The permanent assignment of a vehicle to an employee for use on official state business is not itself sufficient justification to use that vehicle for travel between official duty station or other place of work and home.

Travel between official duty station or other place of work and official residence may be approved by the agency head or authorized designee for any one of the following reasons:

- When storing the vehicle at an employee's residence is more advantageous or economical to the state than the purchase, lease, or rental of a commercial garage or other parking facility. The

security and safety of state property is to be considered in determining the storage location of state-owned or leased vehicles.

- When an employee’s home is also the official station.
- When an individual starts a trip prior to the opening time of a Fleet Operations or when the individual returns from or completes a trip later than the closing time of the state or agency Fleet Operations.
- When there are safety concerns such as darkness, late hour, isolated location, the area has a record of crime, there is a threat to the personal security of the employee, or there is a reasonable basis for fear or uneasiness of personal safety in returning a motor vehicle to a Fleet Operations or to its customary storage area.
- When it is economical or advantageous to the state to allow such incidental travel in a state-owned or leased motor vehicle, or as part of a commute trip reduction program as required by state law ([RCW 70.94.551](#) and [RCW 43.19.630](#)).

Exceptions

Agencies should submit requests for exceptions to the above criteria to the director of the Department of Enterprise Services, with justification for each exception.

Exemptions

The following situations of travel between official duty station or other place of work and official residence are exempt from the provisions above:

- Use of motor vehicles by statewide elected officials in the Executive Branch of State Government.
- Use by commissioned law enforcement personnel.
- Use by other law enforcement or investigative employees or emergency highway maintenance employees who are on 24-hour call and whose duties require use of assigned motor vehicles during what would be classified as other than scheduled working hours. In this situation, actual off-duty calls requiring use of the motor vehicle must average a minimum of 10 times per month per calendar year.

Summary of tasks

ACTION BY	ACTION
State agency head	1. Annually approve the agency’s assigned category of use for state vehicles used by the agency.
	2. Annually confirm that the agency is meeting the permanent assignment policies.

ACTION BY	ACTION
DES director	1. Review and approve or deny agency utilization waiver requests

History

Amended

Dec. 1, 2025 – Technical and administrative updates to transfer to the current procedure template and change the vehicle use waiver reporting cycle from one to two years, minor changes to vehicle definitions to align with current practice.



Need a copy of a prior version of this procedure? Email Policy@des.wa.gov.