

NIH POLICY MANUAL**26101-38 - OFFICIAL USE OF GOVERNMENT MOTOR VEHICLES****Issuing Office: OM/OALM/OLAO/DLS (301) 496-4511****Release Date: 06/15/07**

1. **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This issuance establishes the NIH policy and procedures governing use of Agency assigned (either Government-owned or leased passenger and light utility vehicles) and the daily use rental vehicle program. This issuance also designates the Director, Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations, as the approving official for [Form HHS 16](#), Transportation Between Domicile and Place of Employment. This chapter changes the criteria for dedicated vehicle review to usage standards only.

2. **Filing Instructions:**

Remove: NIH Manual Chapter 26101-38 dated 08/15/02

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A. Purpose: This issuance constitutes NIH policies and procedures governing the use, maintenance and protection of agency assigned vehicles and the daily use rental vehicles.

B. Applicability: The policies in this chapter apply to all NIH locations but the procedures described apply only to NIH headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland. IC management officials will institute local written procedures to enforce these policies for agency assigned vehicles at any NIH facilities located outside of the Bethesda/Rockville area.

C. Policy:

1. Agency assigned and daily use rental vehicles are available to NIH employees for official business use locally and in the field. Federal regulations and DHHS policy prohibit the use of vehicles as transportation to or from unofficial activities including, but not limited to trips to banks, credit unions and stores. This prohibition includes stopovers for personal reasons during official trips, i.e., lunch. Vehicles are also available for use by Federal personnel from other Federal agencies stationed at the NIH installation in Bethesda.
2. Contractors and subcontractors are authorized to use agency assigned or daily use rental vehicles, for official purposes, within the scope of the contract they are employed under.
3. Special Volunteers may only operate agency assigned or daily use rental vehicles when a Government employee is in the vehicle and supervising the volunteer's operation of the vehicle.

4. Smoking is prohibited in all agency assigned or daily use rental vehicles.
5. When possible, employees traveling to and/or from the same point or general area should car pool.
6. Employees must have the following items in his or her possession while operating a Government vehicle:
 - a. A valid driver's license from a state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico or a U.S. territory/possession;
 - b. A valid agency personal identification card; and,
 - c. A [Form NIH 1382-2](#) "Motor Vehicle Trip Ticket.
7. Seat Belt and Shoulder Harness use is mandatory under Federal regulation as well as state and local laws.
8. Employees may use the Voyager Fleet Card to purchase any fuel, oil and services required to keep the agency assigned vehicle in proper operating condition. A Voyager Fleet Card is provided for each agency assigned vehicle. The operator's guide, located in the glove compartment, lists the allowable services. Car users must retain all receipts and return them to the Fleet Management Branch (FMB) with the trip ticket. The card user is responsible for any costs that are determined to be unallowable.
9. 41 CFR 101-5.35 limits the use of Government vehicles between the homes of employees and their work place to the following situations:
 - a. an immediate or imminent clear and present danger;
 - b. an immediate, unforeseen emergency;
 - c. a compelling operational consideration; or,
 - d. strictly defined field work.
10. Employees must **park** vehicles to use hand held wireless phones or other wireless devices. Use of these devices in moving vehicles is prohibited. If the operator of a Government vehicle is ticketed or involved in an accident due to the use of a hand-held phone or other device, the operator will be fully responsible for any legal action that may result.
11. The Fleet Management Branch coordinates the repair and preventive maintenance of NIH Government vehicles through local garages. In-house repair services are not available.

D. Responsibilities:

1. The Director, Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations, is responsible for overall management of the use of Government vehicles.
2. The Director, Division of Logistics Services, is responsible for day-to-day operations, including the acquisition, use, and control of agency assigned or daily use rental vehicles and the activities of the NIH Fleet Management Program in Bethesda, Maryland.

3. NIH Executive Officers are responsible for establishing written guidelines and adequate controls to ensure compliance with laws and regulations governing the use of Government vehicles. When an IC has remote locations that require establishing a separate motor pool, the Executive Officer must assure that local procedures are in place which supplement and enforce NIH policies.
4. The principal administrative office of each NIH organization is responsible for determining the most appropriate and cost-effective mode of transportation (i.e., public transportation, privately owned vehicle, rental vehicle, NIH vehicle) for NIH employees requesting assistance.
5. Individuals issued motor vehicles are responsible for the safe and proper operation of the vehicle, including:
 - a. Performing a pre-operational inspection of the vehicle to assure that all safety equipment (lights, wipers etc.) are operational and that all fluids are within operating manual requirements.
 - b. Locking and securing the vehicle when it is not in use;
 - c. Observing traffic and parking regulations (vehicle operators are responsible for any and all fines associated with traffic and parking violations);
 - d. Complying with the "Government Vehicle Operator's Guide to Operating Responsibility, Service Requirements and Emergency Procedures" booklet in the glove compartment of the vehicle. This booklet contains accident reporting procedures and instructions for paying for fuel and other services or repairs needed. The employee's organization reimburses all other incidental expenses (e.g., parking fees, tolls) through the SF 1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business.

E. Procedures

1. **Obtaining a Daily Use Rental Vehicle** - The NIH provides daily use rental vehicles through a contract with a private company. Vehicles include sedans, mini-vans and full-size vans.
 - a. Requesters must call the FMB (301)496-3426 to reserve a daily use rental vehicle. Requests must specify the type of vehicle, the date and time the vehicle is needed and whether it will be used outside the local area (i.e., beyond a radius of 50 miles). Requests to reserve vehicles should be placed as soon as the need becomes apparent or at least 24 hours in advance.
 - b. Requesters must complete the applicable sections of the [NIH Form 1382-2](#) "Motor Vehicle Trip Ticket."
 - c. The FMB charges the IC organization for NIH vehicles through the Service and Supply Fund. Administrative Officers will sign the form to validate the justification for the use of the vehicle and to authorize the commitment of funds. The customer will be required to sign a standard rental agreement prior to taking control of the vehicle.
 - d. If the vehicle is to be used for transportation between home and work, the requestor must provide an additional, properly approved, HHS Form 16, Request to Use Government Furnished Vehicle for Transportation between Domicile and

Place of Employment. The HHS Form 16 must be recommended by the appropriate Administrative Officer and approved by the Director, Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations. Allow at least two weeks for processing these requests.

- e. Requesters must present a valid NIH identification card, a valid driver's license and the approved Motor Vehicle Trip Ticket to the FMB, Building 12, Room 103, MSC 5602 to obtain a vehicle.
- f. The FMB Transportation Assistant will assign the vehicle and prepare all documentation for the requester. The vehicle will be available at Building 12, Room 103. The vehicle will have a full tank of fuel. If more fuel is needed during trip, the IC is responsible for purchasing the additional fuel. The vehicle does not need to be returned with a full tank. In the case of a breakdown or other emergencies, contact information and procedures are located in the glove compartment.
- g. Regular operating hours for the FMB are Monday through Friday, between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Requesters who will operate a vehicle after hours may pick up the vehicle after hours. However, requesters must make arrangements to reserve the vehicle and pick up keys during regular operating hours. Requesters should call the FMB to arrange this service.
- h. The FMB holds a vehicle for one hour beyond the reserved pickup time. After one hour, the Transportation Assistant calls the requestor to ascertain whether he/she still needs the vehicle. Requesting organizations are charged for vehicles that are reserved, but not picked up. Cancellations must be received 24 hours in advance of scheduled pick up time to avoid being charged.

2. Returning a Daily Use Rental Vehicle

- a. Operators returning to NIH during regular hours must:
 - 1) park the vehicle at Building 12; and,
 - 2) return the keys and completed Motor Vehicle Trip Ticket to the FMB.
- b. After regular hours, operators must:
 - 1) return the vehicle to Building 12; and,
 - 2) deposit the above items in the mail slot outside the entrance. The items will fall into a secured container.

3. Obtaining an Agency Assigned Vehicle - To order a new or replacement agency assigned vehicle, the requester must:

- a. send a written request via email or memorandum to the FMB,
- b. justify the need for purchasing/leasing a vehicle,
- c. include a Project Number and a custodial code

If request is approved, vehicle will be delivered to NIH, 90 days after notifying

GSA. Agency assigned vehicles are ordered October through March every year.

4. Annual Re-Certification of Agency Assigned Vehicles - The Fleet Management Branch has changed the Annual Review of Dedicated Vehicles (ARDV) from mileage to usage standards. The usage standards that must be met to justify an IC owning a vehicle are:

- a. Passenger Carrying Vehicles (sedans and station wagons): seven days a month
- b. Light Trucks (pickups, utility vehicles and vans): seven days a month
- c. Heavy Trucks: six days a month

If these usage standards cannot be met, the IC is encouraged to use daily use rental vehicles (i.e., Fleet Management Branch) in lieu of agency assigned vehicles.

5. Obtaining Fuel for Agency Assigned Vehicles On Campus - The FMB maintains a fueling station outside of Building 12, next to the Grounds Maintenance buildings.

The fuel pumps are completely automated and open 24 hours a day. Operators dispensing fuel will:

- a. Confirm the vehicle is NIH property.
- b. Slide gas card through gas reader.
- c. Enter mileage.
- d. Enter gas pump numbers(1,2,3,).
- e. Begin pumping fuel.
- f. Slide card through reader and press yes for receipt.

6. Obtaining Unscheduled Repair Service for Agency Assigned Vehicles

a. Within the Washington Metropolitan Area

1) If the required repair is minor and does not require that the vehicle be removed from service for safety or operational reasons, operators should report the required repair on a Motor Vehicle Defect Report when they return it to the FMB.

2) If the vehicle is not operational, operators should call the FMB on (301) 496-4511 and report the breakdown. The FMB will arrange for towing and repair of the vehicle.

b. When operating a vehicle outside the Washington Metropolitan area, vehicle operators are provided the Voyager Fleet Card for fuel and emergency repair service in order to keep the vehicle operational. If the vehicle repair is required or indicated during regular business hours (7:00 AM Eastern-4:30PM Eastern), they should contact the FMB on (301) 496-4511. If the repair is needed after

business hours, the repair must be reported during business hours, the next business day. All receipts, repair tickets, estimates and other documentation must be retained and returned with the Trip ticket.

F. NIH Vehicle Preventive Maintenance Program: The FMB is responsible for managing the Preventative Maintenance Inspection (PMI) Program for NIH agency assigned vehicles. Quarterly vehicle maintenance inspections are crucial to vehicle safety and performance. The PMI offers a systematic approach to NIH vehicle inspections. The PMI program has three objectives: reduce vehicle downtime, reduce vehicle repair expenses and extend vehicle life.

1. The FMB will schedule regular maintenance for all vehicles in the NIH fleet.
2. During the last week of any month, the FMB will provide a schedule of all vehicles projected for service during the coming month to the IC/operator of the agency assigned vehicles.
3. If the vehicle is out of service for an extended period of time the IC may rent a vehicle by contacting (301) 496-3426. The IC is responsible for all costs associated with the vehicle rental.
4. IC officials will make agency assigned vehicles available for service according to the maintenance schedule.
5. Agency Assigned Vehicle Billing - Each IC provides a Project Number for its agency assigned vehicle when the vehicle is initially ordered. The FMB charges all expenses, including maintenance, to the Project Number through the NIH vehicle tag number. The OFM processes the data at the conclusion of each month. OFM issues a monthly Billing Statement of FMB expenses to every IC. The Statement provides the date of FMB services, a description of the service, the cost of each repair and the total cost of monthly FMB expenses.

G. Security Procedures for Vehicles: Security of Government vehicles is, primarily, the responsibility of the operator. All vehicle operators will:

1. Lock the vehicle when it is not in use.
2. Remove keys from the ignition of an unattended vehicle.
3. Close all the vehicle windows when it is not in use.
4. Park the vehicle in a well-lit area.
5. Immediately report any suspicious activity to the NIH police or the local police department if the vehicle is located off-campus.

H. References:

1. 41 CFR 102-34 Motor Vehicle Management
2. DHHS Logistics Management Manual, Part 103-38 Motor Vehicle and Watercraft Management
3. NIH Manual Chapter 1130, Delegations of Authority, [Property: Personal No. 1](#), Government Motor Vehicles

I. Records Retention and Disposal: All records (e-mail and non-e-mail) pertaining to this chapter must be retained and disposed of under the authority of [NIH Manual 1743](#), "Keeping and Destroying Records, Appendix 1, NIH Records Control Schedule," Item 2600-D-7, Motor Vehicle Operation Files.

1. NIH e-mail messages (messages, including attachments, that are created on NIH computer systems or transmitted over NIH networks) that are evidence of the activities of the agency or have informational value are considered Federal records. These records must be maintained in accordance with current NIH Records Management guidelines. Contact your [IC Records Officer](#) for additional information.
2. All email messages are considered Government property, and, if requested for a legitimate Government purpose, must be provided to the requester. Employees' supervisors, NIH staff conducting official reviews or investigations, and the Office of Inspector General may request access to or copies of the e-mail messages. E-mail messages must also be provided to members of Congress or congressional committees if requested and are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Since most e-mail systems have back-up files that are sometimes retained for significant periods of time, e-mail messages and attachments may be retrievable from a back-up file after they have been deleted from an individual's computer. The back-up files are subject to the same request as the original messages.

J. Management Controls: The purpose of this manual issuance is to establish the NIH policy and procedures governing use of agency assigned and daily use rental vehicles and to designate the Director, Office of Logistics and Acquisition Operations, as the approving official for Form HHS-16, Transportation Between Domicile and Place of Employment.

1. **Office Responsible for Reviewing Management Controls Relative to this Chapter**
- Division of Logistics Services (DLS), Transportation Management
2. **Frequency of Review-** Annually
3. **Method of Review:** Annual Review of Agency Assigned Vehicles- DLS, Transportation Management solicits information from the IC to ensure that NIH is complying with the mandatory mileage usage standards for permanently assigned Government vehicles.

Federal Automotive Statistical Tool- This report is submitted annually to GSA in compliance with the Alternative Fuel Vehicle acquisition requirements.

Transportation Management System- A billing and information system that collects data on fuel usage, man hours, inventory, maintenance costs and accident damage.

4. **Review Reports-** Reports are sent to DDM,DHHS,GSA.

Reports should indicate that controls are in place and working well or include any management control issues that should be brought to the attention of the Deputy Director for Management.

