

Town of Butternuts

Vehicle Usage Policy

Adopted March 9, 2016

It is the policy of the Town of Butternuts to provide vehicles for those employees whose job requires the use of a vehicle and to reimburse employees for business use of personal vehicles according to the guidelines below:

1. Employees may not drive vehicles for the Town of Butternuts without prior written approval of their supervisor and the Town Supervisor. Employees must have an appropriate valid driver's license issued in the United States. Before approving a driver, the supervisor must check the employee's driving record, verify the existence of a valid driver's license and ensure that if driving their personal vehicle, that the vehicle has personal liability insurance coverage.
2. Employees whose jobs require regular driving for business as a condition of employment must be able to meet the driver approval standards of this policy at all times. In addition, employees holding those jobs must inform their supervisor and the Town Supervisor of any changes that may affect their ability to meet the standards of this policy. For all other jobs, driving is considered only an incidental function of the position.
3. Any employee whose job requires the use of a vehicle for Town business must notify the Town Supervisor by the next business day of any and all moving motor vehicle convictions, whether due to driving on or off duty.
4. Only the following job titles can take home a Town vehicle without additional authorization from the Town Supervisor: Highway Superintendent.
5. Employees who need transportation in the course of their normal work may be assigned a Town vehicle for their use. All other employees needing transportation for Town business may use a Town vehicle upon request made to the Town Supervisor.
6. An abstract of the driver's license must be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles annually and kept in the department files. Any violations of the traffic, transportation or motor vehicle laws must be reported to the Town Supervisor for a determination as to whether that employee shall be permitted to continue use of a Town vehicle.
7. Employees who drive a Town vehicle on Town business must, in addition to meeting the approval requirements stated above, obey the "rules of the road," including, but not limited to:
 - no use of cellular telephones without a legally conforming, hands-free device;
 - no texting while driving;
 - exercising due diligence to drive safely.

Employees driving a Town vehicle shall not smoke or use tobacco products in such Town vehicle nor shall smoking or tobacco use be permitted by any passengers in such vehicle. It shall be the employee's responsibility to maintain the security of the vehicle and its contents at all times it is in his or her possession. Drivers must also make sure that:

- the vehicle has a valid New York State inspection sticker;
- oil is checked on a regular basis;
- tires have sufficient tread;
- the vehicle is kept clean.

No vehicle should be driven unless it is safe for the road. Employees are responsible for any driving or parking violations or infractions and the fine that results therefrom and must immediately report such to their supervisor and the Town Supervisor.

8. Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to operate a Town vehicle, or a personal vehicle for Town business, when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to be unable to drive safely. This prohibition includes circumstances in which the employee is temporarily unable to operate a vehicle safely or legally because of illness, medication, or intoxication by drugs and/or alcohol. Employees operating a Town vehicle or personal vehicle for Town business must drive defensively and courteously at all times.

9. Employees may not use Town vehicles for non-business purposes only with the express approval of the Town Supervisor. Such written approval must be obtained from the Town Supervisor's office in advance of each instance.

10. Employees driving a Town vehicle may claim reimbursement for parking fees (not fines) and tolls actually incurred. In addition, employees driving Town vehicles may claim reimbursement for fuel and other expenses directly incurred for business purposes. All requests for reimbursement must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the Town Supervisor.

11. Employees who are authorized to use their personal vehicles for approved town business purposes will receive mileage allowance as adopted yearly by the town board

12. Employees must report to their supervisor and the Town Supervisor any accident, theft, or damage involving a Town vehicle or a personal vehicle used on Town business, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. This report must be made as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the accident.

13. Time spent by non-exempt employees (those covered by the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act) in driving a Town or personal vehicle on Town business during normal working hours, is considered hours work-for-pay purposes. Commuting time before the start and after the end of the workday is not treated as work time for pay purposes.

14. No town vehicle is permitted to leave the Town of Butternuts for any purpose, business or otherwise, without the prior written or verbal approval of the Town Supervisor, in each instance first obtained, with the exception of vehicles used by members of the Highway Department, wherein such approval must be first obtained and approved by the Highway Superintendent.