MOTOR VEHICLE POLICY GUIDE 2024
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

Effective: June 2024

This Guide provides key information on the Motor Vehicle Policy across the Public Sector. This Guide should not be used as a substitute for the Motor Vehicle Policy and all template, and associated documents are listed in the Motor Vehicle Policy.

This Policy applies to all motor vehicles owned or registered as property of the Cook Islands Government or obtained for the purposes of producing public goods and services. Any person who is approved to use a Government motor vehicle or heavy machinery must use this motor vehicle or heavy machinery to produce public goods and services. Drivers of all Government vehicles must comply with this Policy.

AUTHORISATION AND CONDITIONS OF USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Authorisation

- Employers must approve the use of Cook Islands Government Motor Vehicles.
- This approval can be granted through the addition of the employee to the Approved Users List (Annex 01).
- Approved users, which includes, but is not limited to, Employers, Employees and Contractors, are permitted to use a Government motor vehicle or heavy machinery to produce public goods and services. Approved users can only use Government vehicles for private purposes where this is provided for in an employment agreement or contract.
- Family members of approved users and/ or associates of approved users are not permitted to drive Government motor vehicles and heavy machinery.

Conditions of Use

- Government vehicles and heavy machinery must be used for Government business only, unless specified otherwise in an employment agreement or contract.
- The use of Government vehicles and/or heavy machinery for commercial or political purposes is prohibited.
- All drivers or users of Government motor vehicles and heavy machinery must hold a valid and current drivers' license, with the appropriate vehicle class certification, for the Country of operation.
- Smoking and the consumption of alcoholic beverages in a Government vehicle or on heavy machinery is prohibited.
- Driving a Government vehicle or heavy machinery after consuming alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Kept secure at all times and cleaned regularly.
- Registered, serviced every six months and kept road worthy (Warrant of Fitness) by the Agency.
- All necessary security precautions must be taken when parking government vehicles and heavy machinery at all times. All drivers must ensure that the vehicle is not exposed to obvious risks of being damaged while parked e.g. parked under coconut trees.
- The same precautions apply to residential parking of vehicles and heavy machinery by approved users who take vehicles home outside normal work hours.

TRAFFIC RULES, ACCIDENTS, AND INCIDENTS

- Authorised drivers must obey all traffic/road laws and rules when operating a government vehicle and heavy machinery.
- Vehicles and heavy machinery should, where available, be parked in government reserved car parks.
- Under no circumstances will the Government pay any fines related to traffic violations that occurred while an individual was operating a government vehicle or heavy machinery. These are payable by the individual who committed the offence.
- The agency will be responsible for fines relating to conditions of the vehicle such as a lack of current warrant of fitness or annual license.
- Employers must ensure government vehicles and heavy machinery are insured through the Government insurance policy administered by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM).
- Drivers are required to report any government vehicle accident or incident (e.g. theft) to their employer and the Police Department. If the event involves a Head of Agency, the Public Service Commissioner or relevant authority must be notified.

- For insurance purposes, Driver's involved in an accident are required to complete a Motor Vehicle Accident Report and provide this to relevant authorities as soon as possible.
- In the event of an accident where the driver of a government vehicle or heavy machinery is at fault and/or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the driver must be personally held liable for all costs relating to the damage of the motor vehicle or heavy machinery.

RENTAL VEHICLES, PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES AND PROCUREMENT

- The use of rental vehicles to deliver government services should not be the preferred option where suitable alternatives exist.
- Where the employer considers it necessary to rent a vehicle, a rental vehicle should be procured on a short term basis, at the most economic available rates.
- It is the responsibility of employees, unless specified otherwise in an employment agreement, to provide their own transportation to and from their place of work.
- All Government vehicles and machineries procured should be relevant for the functions of the Agency and comply with the Cook Islands Government Procurement Policy and the Government Fleet Management Policy.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS AND TEMPLATES

- Extended Leave Guide
- **Online leave application link: https://payroll.cookislands.gov.ck/ESS**
- Official Duty Travel Policy
- Approved Users List (Annex 01)
- Motor Vehicle Accident Form (Annex 02
- CIGFPPM Expense Claim Form (Annex 03)

For Policy queries or issues in the administration of this Policy, contact the Office of the Public Service Commissioner on phone (682) 29 421 or email: opsc.policy@cookislands.gov.ck