



## **Vehicle Operational Guide for Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service**

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# Texas A&M AgriLife Vehicle Operational Guide

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## Section 1.0 | Purpose

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The purpose of this Vehicle Operational Guide (Operational Guide) is to implement both the [Texas State Vehicle Fleet Management Plan](#) and [Texas A&M University System's \(A&M System\) Comprehensive Compliance Plan](#). This Operational Guide shall be submitted to the State of Texas Office of Vehicle Fleet Management electronically or be made available online to affirm that appropriate procedures are maintained and kept current in order for Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension) to retain its vehicle purchasing authority.

AgriLife Research operates a decentralized fleet, where its departments and research centers (Units), maintain their vehicles.

AgriLife Extension operates a centralized fleet that is managed by AgriLife Property and Fleet Management.

## Section 2.0 | Governing Regulations

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This Operational Guide is governed by A&M System Regulation [21.01.08, Vehicle Fleet Management](#) and the [A&M System Comprehensive Compliance Plan](#).

## Section 3.0 | Definitions

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**System Fleet Manager**—Individual appointed by the executive vice chancellor and chief financial officer responsible for maintaining the Comprehensive Compliance Plan.

**Site Coordinator**—The Manager of AgriLife Property and Fleet Management has been designated as Site Coordinator and is responsible for overseeing the AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension Vehicle Fleet Management Programs, and ensuring compliance with A&M System Regulation [21.01.08, Vehicle Fleet Management](#) and the [A&M System Comprehensive Compliance Plan](#). The Site Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the reporting of AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension data to the State of Texas Fleet System.

**Vehicle Coordinator**—Each unit that possesses vehicles designates an individual as the Vehicle Coordinator. The Vehicle Coordinator is the point of contact for questions and information concerning vehicles, and vehicle fleet management requirements. The Vehicle Coordinator is responsible for maintaining and submitting AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension fleet data to AgriLife Property and Fleet Management, or directly into the State of Texas Fleet System.

**Vehicle Operators**—Vehicle Operators are AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension employees who operate the AgriLife owned–vehicle. The Vehicle Operator responsibilities include:

- Possess and maintain a valid driver’s license or commercial driver’s license as required in the employee’s position description.
- Ensure vehicles are not used for any purpose other than official agency business.
- Keep vehicles secured at all times.
- Follow all state laws associated with vehicle operations.
- Resolve moving violations.
- Ensure vehicles’ interior and exterior are clean, and vehicles should be washed as necessary to maintain a professional appearance
- Report all accidents to the Property and Fleet Management Office within 24 hours of occurring and assist vehicle coordinator with submitting Motor Vehicle Accident Report to [accidents@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:accidents@ag.tamu.edu) within 48 hours of accident occurring.

## **Section 4.0 | Responsibilities**

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- 4.1** The Chief Financial Officers (CFO) for AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension are the senior executives responsible for their agency Fleet Management Program.
- 4.2** The Site Coordinator reports to each agency CFO on issues regarding their agency fleet.
- 4.3** The Site Coordinator is responsible for the overall management of the agencies fleet and for reporting to the Office of Vehicle Fleet Management. The site coordinator is also the central point of contact for the Office of Vehicle Fleet Management and the A&M System Fleet Manager. Since AgriLife Research operates a decentralized fleet, some of the duties of the Site Coordinator are handled by their Units. Duties of the site coordinator include but are not limited to:
- A.** Developing the Vehicle Operational Guide;
  - B.** Preparing an annual vehicle replacement plan to be presented to the appropriate administrator each year prior to the budgeting process. Lists of vehicles should be prioritized for replacement relative to the needs of the respective unit;
  - C.** Determining, approving and/or selecting the types of vehicles to be purchased based on life cycle costs, utility, varying work-related needs of employees and safety for the agencies;
  - D.** Determining and/or approving the timing of maintenance or repairs;
  - E.** Observing and maintaining compliance with federal and state mandates governing vehicle management;
  - F.** Collecting the required data elements as found in Appendix A of the Comprehensive Compliance Plan;
  - G.** Ensuring the information entered into the fleet management database is accurate and correct;
  - H.** Preparing necessary paperwork for alternative fuel waivers and waiver renewals for review by the System Fleet Manager;
  - I.** Processing and/or lending assistance to the processing of paperwork to acquire vehicle titles and

license plates;

- J. Maintaining a file for all vehicle titles and/or copies of vehicle titles for AgriLife Extension vehicles. AgriLife Research units keep files for their fleet vehicles in their areas.
- K. Reviewing of Motor Vehicle Accident Reports; liaison for agencies to the System Risk Management Office;
- L. Provide training for vehicle coordinators as needed;
- M. Reviewing reports of inappropriate use of agency vehicles; and,
- N. Updating and distributing the Vehicle Operational Guide as necessary.
- O. Provide training on the reporting requirements and safety issues, as required, for any vehicle coordinator or driver.

**4.4** Duties of the Vehicle Coordinator include but are not limited to:

- A. serving as central point of contact for the site coordinator;
- B. providing information and assistance as required by the site coordinator;
- C. advising the site coordinator concerning low utilization of vehicles;
- D. ensuring accident information is reported to the Property and Fleet Management Office and the site coordinator within 24 hours via email to [accidents@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:accidents@ag.tamu.edu);
- E. ensuring a Motor Vehicle Accident Report is forwarded to the Property and Fleet Management Office and the site coordinator within 48 hours via email to [accidents@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:accidents@ag.tamu.edu);
- F. ensuring information entered into the State of Texas Vehicle Use Reports is accurate and correct;
- G. maintaining completed State of Texas Vehicle Use Reports within the unit for auditing purposes;
- H. ensuring vehicles are used for business directly related to the responsibility of the agency;
- I. ensuring State safety inspections are current;
- J. inspecting vehicles to ensure vehicle body damage has been reported to the site coordinator and repair is performed in a timely manner;
- K. scheduling and ensuring unit compliance with the required preventive maintenance schedule;
- L. being knowledgeable of and promoting compliance with the System Regulation, Comprehensive Compliance Plan and Vehicle Operational Guide; and,
- M. providing training, guidance and information as needed for vehicle operators.

**4.5** Duties of the vehicle operator include but are not limited to:

- A. possessing and maintaining a valid driver's license or commercial driver's license when required;
- B. ensuring vehicles are not used for any purpose other than official business;
- C. entering information into the State of Texas Vehicle Use Report on a per trip basis and check the information for accuracy;

- D. reporting any mechanical problems to the vehicle coordinator;
- E. reporting accidents to the vehicle coordinator immediately; and, assisting with the completion of the Motor Vehicle Accident Report and any additional accident paperwork;
- F. following all state laws associated with vehicle operation;
- G. keeping vehicles secured at all times; and,
- H. being familiar with the A&M System Regulation, Comprehensive Compliance Plan and Vehicle Operational Guide.

## **Section 5.0 | Driver License Requirements**

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Drivers must be at least 18 years old, possess and maintain a valid driver's license, be on the TAMUS Member payroll, be eligible for worker's compensation and be approved by their unit head or designee to drive an agency vehicle.

## **Section 6.0 | Vehicle Use**

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- 6.1 Units are responsible for ensuring the drivers of their assigned vehicles are faculty, staff, student employees or TAMUS affiliates of their unit. AgriLife vehicles may only be driven to accomplish a specific purpose or task as authorized by the site coordinator. Use is restricted to official Texas A&M University System business to include accomplishing research, service and/or administrative responsibilities. If an AgriLife-owned vehicle is not available; AgriLife Research or AgriLife Extension, at its option, may provide an alternative form of transportation such as rental vehicles or reimburse an employee for the use of a personally-owned vehicle.
- 6.2 All traffic citations issued to the driver of an agency-owned vehicle must be reported to their supervisor. If an authorized driver is convicted of a traffic violation that results in the loss of their Texas Vehicle Operator's License, the driver must notify their supervisor that they have lost their license and are no longer eligible to drive an agency owned vehicle. Supervisors are responsible for reporting this information to the site coordinator.

## **Section 7.0 | Use of Personal Vehicle for Official Business**

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Fleet and rental vehicles are available for employee use for official business. If an employee chooses to use a personal vehicle for official business, the State Fleet Management Mileage Reimbursement Rate factors in costs associated with vehicle insurance, wear and tear, fuels, oils and lubricants. Reimbursement rates are determined by the State and do change based on economic factors. Employees should follow the AgriLife travel policies for the travel reimbursement procedure.

In the event of an accident, your personal vehicle insurance policy will be pursued. It is your responsibility to confirm with your insurance company that use of your personal vehicle for official business is allowed on your policy.

## **Section 8.0 | *Personal Use/Misuse of Official Vehicles***

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- 8.1** No AgriLife Research or AgriLife Extension employee shall use any vehicle owned by the agencies for any purpose other than official business. There must be an official business reason for the presence of each passenger. Transportation of family, friends or other non-official business vehicle occupants is not allowed.
- 8.2** Employees may not use such vehicles in connection with any political campaign or for any personal or recreational activity including transportation to and from work on a daily basis. However, a vehicle may be driven to an employee's home and retained overnight on specific occasions when doing so allows the employee to effect significant time or cost savings or meet a specific out-of-town appointment to conduct official business.

In cases where significant time or cost savings can be achieved, employees should obtain approval from their Vehicle Coordinator prior to taking vehicles home.

## **Section 9.0 | *Vehicle Security***

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- 9.1** The security of AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension vehicles and contents is the responsibility of the driver. When the vehicle is not in use, the keys should be removed, all windows up, and the vehicle locked. If there is an alarm system installed in the vehicle, it should be set upon leaving the vehicle. Failure to ensure that the vehicle is properly secured may result in theft of personal items and/or the vehicle. AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension are not responsible for any personal items left in an agency vehicle.
- 9.2** Vehicles that become disabled on the road should be secured with all possible precautions taken to prevent theft or vandalism. In the event a vehicle cannot be secured in its present location, the driver should contact the Property and Fleet Management Office to tow the vehicle to a facility where it can be secured. Vehicles should not be left along highways or in any area where it is more likely for theft or vandalism to occur.
- 9.3** Vehicle operators should be aware that employee safety is the first and foremost concern. Although ensuring vehicle security is important, the vehicle operator's safety should never be sacrificed in order to do so.
- 9.4** To report vehicle break-ins on the Texas A&M campus in College Station, call the University Police Department at (979) 845-2345. Off-campus reports may be called in to the local police department by dialing 911.

## Section 10.0 | *Vehicle Use (Mileage) Reports*

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- 10.1 State law requires each driver of a state-owned vehicle to complete a daily report of use on the Monthly Vehicle Use Report Form.
- 10.2 The report must show the number of trips, miles traveled, purpose for which the vehicle was used, amount and type of fuel purchased, oil added, passengers carried, and other information as may be required to provide a record of vehicle use and maintenance performed. Receipts for any vehicle purchases made by the driver from private sector vendors must be itemized and attached to the Monthly Vehicle Use Report Form.
- 10.3 If the vehicle is used by more than one operator during the day, each operator must enter his or her name into the report form. If more than one page is required per month, a continuation page may be used.
- 10.4 After the close of the reporting period, the vehicle coordinator will review the report for accuracy, and either the vehicle operator or vehicle coordinator will sign in the designated space.
- 10.5 For AgriLife Research, the vehicle coordinator or the Property and Fleet Management Office will ensure that the mileage log information and receipts are entered into the Texas Fleet System and will maintain the mileage logs for all agency vehicles in a central file location. The Property and Fleet Management Office offers data entry service into the Texas Fleet System to all AgriLife Research units. All Monthly Use Reports and receipts are due to the Property and Fleet Management Office by the close of the 7<sup>th</sup> day of business each month.
- 10.6 For AgriLife Extension, all Monthly Use Reports, receipts, and Mileage Distribution Charge forms (AG-321) are due to the Property and Fleet Management Office by the close of the 7<sup>th</sup> day of business each month. Mileage is entered into the Vehicle Cost Analysis system, where it is then billed out to the unit. Then all mileage, fuel and maintenance are entered into the Texas Fleet System and the monthly use reports and receipts are kept in a central file location.

## Section 11.0 | *Vehicle Maintenance and Repair*

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- 11.1 All AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension vehicle are maintained according to the suggested maintenance schedules provided by the manufacturers.
- 11.2 The State Fleet Management Plan requires that all state vehicles be on a preventative maintenance program. Preventative maintenance appointments should be scheduled at least twice a year. Under no circumstances should units ignore preventative maintenance checkups. Ignoring preventative maintenance check-ups is a safety issue that could result in a serious accident or loss of property.
- 11.3 All AgriLife Research Vehicle Coordinators oversee the repairs and maintenance services for their vehicles.  
  
All AgriLife Extension Vehicle Coordinators oversee the repairs and maintenance services for their vehicles. In the case that a repair or maintenance service will cost more than \$1,000.00, a complete estimate must be submitted to AgriLife Property and Fleet Management for approval.
- 11.4 Each unit is responsible for adhering to all vehicle state inspections. All AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension vehicles must display a current state registration sticker and any other decals required by law or the agency. AgriLife Research units are required to obtain their state inspections and state registrations when they are due. AgriLife Extension units will be notified by AgriLife Property and Fleet Management when state inspections are due. Vehicle Registrations will be obtained by the office and then mailed to the unit.



- 11.5** At a minimum, the following checks should be accomplished on a weekly basis: tire condition and pressure, leaks (any kind), engine oil level, all belts, all hoses, radiator coolant level, battery fluid level, hydraulic oil level, transmission oil level, lights/signals, fuel, windshield washer fluid level, valid state inspection certification, license plates front and rear, the complete agency inscription on both sides of the vehicle and any other decals required by the agency or owning unit. Proper completion of these operational checks will reduce unnecessary breakdowns and/or damage to the vehicle.
- 11.6** The vehicle coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all warranty work and recalls are conducted per manufacturer standards and within the allotted manufacturer's timeframe.

All warranty work and recalls for AgriLife Extension vehicles will be communicated to the vehicle coordinator by AgriLife Property and Fleet Management.

AgriLife Research units will ensure all warranty work and recalls are completed on their own vehicles.

## **Section 12.0 | *Vehicle Fueling***

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- 12.1** The Council on Competitive Government mandates that all state agencies implement a fuel card program, which is administered by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.
- 12.2** AgriLife Research has assigned the responsibility for administering the fuel card program to its units. Due to the nature of their vehicle needs and research, fuel cards may be assigned to each vehicle or to an employee. It is recommended by AgriLife Property and Fleet Management that a fuel card be assigned to each vehicle.
- 12.3** AgriLife Extension has assigned the responsibility for administering the fuel card program to AgriLife Property and Fleet Management. Each vehicle is assigned its own fuel card and can only be used with that vehicle.
- 12.4** Vehicles located in College Station may utilize the fueling station at the TAMU Fleet Transportation Services office on Agronomy Road. Each unit is billed by TAMU Transportation Services for any fuel they may purchase.

## **Section 13.0 | *Accidents and Accident Reporting***

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- 13.1** Any accident involving an agency employee regardless of type of vehicle (ex: agency-owned, rentals, personal), when operating within official mission and scope of the agencies, must be reported to AgriLife Property and Fleet Management within 24 hours of occurrence via email to [accidents@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:accidents@ag.tamu.edu). The vehicle coordinator is responsible for completing the appropriate forms and forwarding them, along with any pictures, according to instructions issued by AgriLife Property and Fleet Management.
- 13.2** All AgriLife Research and Extension units should follow the [Motor Vehicle Accident Reporting Guide](#) and use the [AgriLife Motor Vehicle Accident Report](#).
- 13.3** A copy of the AgriLife [Motor Vehicle Accident Reporting Guide](#), a copy of the [A&M System Auto Plan Certificate](#), a copy of the [Financial Responsibility for State Vehicles Letter from the Attorney General of Texas](#), and a copy of the [Motor Vehicle Accident Report Form](#) must be kept in the vehicle (Texas A&M AgriLife-owned vehicles, rental vehicles, or personal vehicles being used to conduct A&M System business) or vehicle packet

at all times.

- 13.4** Any questions regarding motor vehicle accident reporting should be directed to AgriLife Property and Fleet Management at [accidents@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:accidents@ag.tamu.edu).

## **Section 14.0 | Motor Vehicle Procurement**

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- 14.1** AgriLife Research vehicles are purchased on an as-needed basis and when funding is available. Due to having a decentralized fleet, there is no vehicle replacement schedule or timeline for replacement analysis. Vehicles may be purchased on grant or project funding, or on department funds, when available, and are based on the needs of the unit.
- 14.2** An assessment of AgriLife Extension vehicles is done annually. Recommendations are made to the agency CFO on vehicles for potential replacement. Consideration when determining vehicle placement include but are not limited to: work needs, condition of existing vehicles, and budget capacity in the given fiscal year.
- 14.3** AgriLife Research and Extension units work with the AgriLife Purchasing Department to obtain quotes and get the best price possible for new vehicles.

## **Section 15.0 | New Vehicle Receipt and Registration**

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- 15.1** Newly purchased vehicles for AgriLife Research will be delivered/received by the ordering unit. Vehicle registrations and renewals will be handled by each individual unit.
- 15.2** Newly purchased vehicles for AgriLife Extension will be delivered/received by the Property and Fleet Management Office located in College Station. Vehicle registrations and renewals will be handled by the Property and Fleet Management Office.

## **Section 16.0 | Vehicle Assignment**

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- 16.1** AgriLife Research vehicles are assigned to faculty/staff based on their needs, as determined by their unit
- AgriLife Extension vehicles operates within an agency motor pool. Units are assigned vehicles based on demand within the unit. Vehicles may be reassigned at any time by the agency Director or designee, should a need arise. The vehicle coordinator works with the employee to determine which vehicle(s) best meet their specific need.

## **Section 17.0 | Disposal of Used Vehicles**

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- 17.1** AgriLife Research used vehicles are disposed of by being sold via an online auction, with the proceeds going back to the unit that the vehicle was assigned to.
- 17.2** AgriLife Extension used vehicles are disposed of by being sold via an online auction, with the proceeds going back to the fleet service center.

## **Section 18.0 | Auto Insurance**

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- 18.1** Requests for all automobile insurance must go through the Property and Fleet Management Office.
- 18.2** AgriLife Research and Extension vehicles are covered under the A&M System Automobile Insurance Program per A&M System Regulation [24.01 Risk Management](#).
- 18.3** AgriLife Research units may elect to have their vehicles covered for Liability Only or Physical Damage. Coverage is paid by each unit.
- 18.4** AgriLife Extension vehicles typically carry Liability Only insurance coverage. These costs are part of the agency fleet service center. Should a unit wish to carry Physical Damage coverage on a particular vehicle it may do so, and the unit is responsible for the costs. Contact the Site Coordinator for additional guidance.

# appendix a

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## Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations, Rules, Plans and Forms

- [Texas. Government Code, Ch. 2171 Travel and Vehicle Fleet Services](#)
- [Office of Vehicle Fleet Management](#)
- [System Regulation 21.01.08 Vehicle Fleet Management](#)
- [2016 Texas State Vehicle Fleet Management Plan](#)
- [Texas A&M University System Comprehensive Compliance Plan](#)
- [Texas A&M AgriLife Fleet Management Forms](#)
- [System Regulation 24.01 Risk Management](#)



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