

Burnet County
Personnel Policies & Employee Handbook

2.05 POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Employees of the County of Burnet are encouraged to vote and to exercise other prerogatives of citizenship consistent with state and federal law and these policies.

2.06 WORKING HOURS

Full-time county employees have a standard 40-hour work week. Usual working hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Offices will maintain the above schedule to the extent possible. Working schedules vary by departments and are determined by the department head. Those employees who work in shifts will have varying hours of work to be set by the elected official over the department.

2.07 OVERTIME WORK

All employees of the county are subject to be called to work at any time by their supervisor of the Commissioners' Court when such action is required to serve the public properly. Exempt employees, as defined under the Fair Labor Standards Act, are expected to render necessary and reasonable overtime services with no additional compensation. In the case of a declared emergency, exempt employees could qualify for overtime compensation.

2.08 WORK BREAKS

The Fair Labor Standards Act requires a reasonable break for nursing mothers to express breast milk during the first year following the birth of a child. Burnet County will provide a paid break up to 30 minutes for nursing mothers. The nursing mother will be allowed whatever time is needed to express breast milk, however, if the break is longer than 30 minutes in duration, the break time will be unpaid time off. The mother will be given a private location, not a bathroom, to express breast milk. The location will be determined on a case by case basis. Burnet County does not allow any retaliation against nursing mothers for asking for this break. Nursing mothers are entitled to this break for 1 year following the birth of their child.

All other breaks are determined by each department head and are not required to be given. If your department provides you with a break, they may not be accumulated or used for time off. The Fair Labor Standards Act does not require any breaks other than for nursing mothers.

2.09 PROOF OF AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE

Every employee who uses a private vehicle for county business must be able to furnish proof of automobile liability insurance.

2.10 DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY: DRUG FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy shall be to establish a drug and alcohol-free workplace to help ensure a safe and productive work setting for all employees.

Following all accidents, all drivers will be tested in accordance with our Drug and Alcohol Policy. CDL drivers must follow DOT regulations.

7.05 COUNTY TELEPHONES

No personal long-distance telephone calls shall be charged to any county telephones. Personal long-distance calls shall be charged to credit cards, charges reversed, or charges made to a third number. Personal calls shall be kept to a minimum.

Effective 10/01/2019, Burnet County will not reimburse employees for use of a personal cellular device. Where job needs demand immediate access to an employee, the county may issue a county-owned cellular telephone to an employee for work-related communications. These phones are intended to be used for business purposes and no personal calls are allowed. If personal cellular calls are made which result in a charge to the county, the employee will reimburse the county within 10 days after notification from the Auditor's Office. Burnet County employees to whom cell phones are issued may be required to keep location services enabled. Abuse of county issued cellular phones can result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

7.06 COUNTY VEHICLE USAGE

Part 1 — General Guidelines (All Employees)

The Commissioners Court has sole authority to authorize individuals to operate a county vehicle. Any individual operating a County vehicle must have a valid Texas Driver's License with the appropriate designation for the vehicle type they are operating. Any change in Driver's License Eligibility must be reported to the individual's supervisor immediately.

All county-owned vehicles shall be parked overnight at a county facility at the end of each working day, unless prior authorization has otherwise been granted by the elected official or department head to which the vehicle is assigned/controlled. Such authorization is subject to yearly review and approval by the Burnet County Commissioners Court.

Vehicles shall be used for work-related duties only. If a county vehicle has been authorized to be taken home or to a travel location overnight, such vehicle may also be used to transport the county employee, county official, and/or an elected official to and from work. County-owned vehicles may not be used otherwise, except in an emergency, or for trips completely incidental to County employment while driving to and from a County-related job [siteactivity](#).

Any use of a County-owned vehicle for commuting shall be treated as a fringe benefit that is taxable income in accordance with Internal Revenue Commuting Valuation Rules.

A. Personal Use

1. At no time may a County vehicle be used for personal gain, personal business, to drive to a place of secondary or part-time employment not related to County business, or for any other non-County-related use.
2. County vehicles may not be used as tow vehicles, unless it is for official County business.

B. Authorized Passengers Authorized passengers in County vehicles are: (a) individuals in the care and custody of a law enforcement official; (b) County employees or approved volunteers; (c) non-employee individuals if riding on County-related business; and (d) any person in need of transport due to an emergency.

C. Liability In the event of an accident involving a County-owned vehicle being used by a County elected official/employee for personal reasons, the County elected official/employee will be fully liable for all damage and/or

injuries sustained to all parties in the accident.

D. Compliance with Law All drivers of County-owned vehicles, and those using their personal vehicles on County business, shall comply with all applicable State and local laws. It shall be the responsibility of the driver to pay any fines imposed for not complying with such laws.

E. Texting While Driving Federal law prohibits any CDL driver operating any vehicle over 10,000 GVWR from texting, with fines and penalties up to and including loss of CDL. Burnet County expressly prohibits anyone operating a County-owned vehicle from texting, with penalties up to and including loss of employment.

F. Vehicle Allowance The Commissioners Court may grant a vehicle allowance to any elected official/employee deemed appropriate. The vehicle allowance will be paid monthly on the elected official/employee's paycheck as a taxable fringe benefit as designated by IRS Fringe Benefit Guidelines.

Part 2 — Take-Home Vehicle Policies

2.1 Peace Officers

A. Definition For purposes of this Section 2.1, "Peace Officer" means an individual holding an active Texas peace officer license in good standing.

B. Fleet Policy Requirement The Burnet County Sheriff and the Burnet County Constables with Deputies shall provide a Fleet Policy to the Commissioners Court by October 1st of each year for acceptance by the Commissioners Court. This policy will include, at a minimum:

1. The maximum miles outside of the County authorized for take-home vehicles; and
2. Procedures for reimbursement to the County for use of County vehicles for private law enforcement work.

The Burnet County Constables with Deputies may adopt the Burnet County Sheriff's Office Fleet Policy or may submit their own Fleet Policy for acceptance by the Commissioners Court.

C. Eligible Positions Take-home vehicle eligibility for Peace Officers is governed entirely through the Fleet Policy process in 2.1(B) above; the eligible-positions list process in Section 2.2(A) below does not apply to Peace Officer positions.

2.2 All Other Employees

A. Eligible Positions All other Elected Officials or Department Heads who have County vehicles purchased/assigned to their department shall provide a list of eligible positions for take-home vehicles to the Commissioners Court by October 1st of each year for approval. The Burnet County Commissioners Court has final authority on whether a vehicle can be routinely taken home overnight.

7.06 — COUNTY VEHICLE USAGES — GENERAL GUIDELINES

All county owned vehicles must shall be parked overnight at a county facility at the end of each working day unless prior authorization has otherwise has been granted by thetheir elected official or department head to which the vehicle is assigned/controlled. Such authorization is subject to yearly review and approval by the Burnet County Commissioners Court.

Vehicles may shall be used only for work-related duties only. If a county vehicle has been authorized to be taken home or to a travel location overnight, such vehicle may also be used to transport the county employee, county official, and/or an elected official and, if authorized, to drive to and from work. County

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~~owned. Vehicles may not be used for no other purpose otherwise, except in an emergency, or for trips completely incidental to County employment while driving to and from a County-related job site.~~

~~Outside of a law enforcement employee/elected official, if an elected official/employee uses a County vehicle to commute to and from their primary residence, said use shall be treated as a fringe benefit use of said vehicle may be included that is as taxable income of the elected official/employee in accordance with Internal Revenue Commuting Valuation Rules.~~

~~The Commissioners Court has sole authority to authorize individuals to operate a county vehicle outside of law enforcement individuals. No person, including those in law enforcement, must possess a valid Texas Driver's License to operate a county vehicle. No person may operate a commercial county vehicle without a valid Texas CDL authorizing operation of said vehicle. Only County elected officials/employees, duly commissioned reserve officers authorized by the County Sheriff or Constable, or officers assigned to special operations and/or task force units approved by Commissioners' Court, are authorized to drive a County vehicle. A list of duly commissioned reserve officers authorized by the County Sheriff or Constable to drive a County vehicle shall be maintained by the respective department head/elected official and a copy kept by the Human Resources Office.~~

~~[A.] purchased/ The Burnet County Commissioners Court has final authority on whether a vehicle can be routinely taken home overnight outside of law enforcement. Personal Use~~

~~[1.] At no time may a County vehicle be used for personal gain, personal business, to drive to a place of secondary or part-time employment not related to County business, or for any other non-County-related use.~~

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~~[2.] Law Enforcement vehicles may be used for special events provided the County is reimbursed at a rate approved annually by Commissioners' Court.~~

~~[3.] County vehicles may not be used as tow vehicles, unless it is for official County business.~~

~~[B.] Allowed Authorized passengers in County vehicles are: a) individuals anyone in the care and custody of a law enforcement official; b) County employees; c) a non-employee individuals if riding on County-related business; and d) any person in need of transport due to an emergency.~~

~~[C.] In the event of an accident involving a County owned vehicle being used by County elected official/employee for personal reasons, the County elected official/employee will be fully liable for all damage and/or injuries sustained to all parties in the accident.~~

~~[D.] All drivers of County owned vehicles, and those using their personal vehicles on County business, shall comply with all applicable State and local laws. It shall will be the responsibility of the driver to pay any fines imposed for not complying with such laws.~~

~~[1.] **Federal Law prohibits any CDL driver operating any vehicle over 10,000 GWR from texting with fines and penalties, up to including loss of CDL.**~~
Burnet County expressly prohibits anyone operating a County owned vehicle from texting with penalties, up to and including loss of employment.

~~The Commissioners' Court may grant a vehicle allowance to any elected official/employee deemed appropriate. The vehicle allowance will be paid monthly on the elected official/employee's paycheck as a Taxable Fringe Benefit as designated by IRS Fringe Benefit Guidelines.~~

7.07[7.06] UNIFORM POLICY

If a Burnet County employee receives a county uniform, Burnet County will comply with IRS regulations in determining if the benefit is taxable to the employee.

7.08[7.07] USE OF COUNTY CASH FUND

According to LGC Sec. 130.902 (c), a change fund may not be used to make loans or advances or to cash checks or warrants of any kind.

Therefore, no checks will be cashed for any reason from any county change drawer.

7.09[7.08] USE OF SIGNATURE STAMP

A signature stamp is used when an elected official or department head authorizes an employee to use the stamp on behalf of the person in authority. An employee who receives permission to use a signature stamp on behalf of a person in authority must account for the proper usage of the instrument. To this end, Burnet County requires the employee to personally sign or initial underneath a stamped signature to identify who placed it there. The employee will become the primary contact in case a document has been erroneously stamped. In case of a mistake, the person who stamped the document will be held accountable. Use the signature stamp on the proper documents and only after the person whose signature is on the stamp and has given permission for its use.

Do not use signature stamps on documents that require a personal review or assessment from the individual whose name is on the stamp. Improper use may result in legal ramification and/or disciplinary steps up to and including termination.

11.00 – TRAVEL EXPENSES

11.01 ELIGIBILITY

Any employee of Burnet County required to travel in the performance of county business shall be reimbursed as provided for in these policies. Such travel shall be at the discretion of the department head. Use of county vehicles is encouraged whenever possible. Once an employee has given notice of resignation, they do not qualify for reimbursements to attend schools, conferences or any other non-required travel.

11.02 TRANSPORTATION COST

An employee using a private motor vehicle for transportation shall be reimbursed at the rate per mile allowable by IRS guidelines for actual mileage traveled using the shortest route to and from his/her destination.

When two or more employees travel in the same vehicle, only one may claim mileage reimbursement. This provision, however, shall not preclude any employee from receiving reimbursement for other eligible expenses incurred.

When an employee or elected official uses another mode of transportation, such as a bus, air or train, reimbursement shall be for the actual cost of the transportation. A ticket receipt must accompany the expense report. Employees and elected officials shall not be reimbursed for use of a rental car except where the cost of other transportation would exceed the cost of a rental car or is not available.

11.03 LODGING COST

Burnet County will pay for accommodations up to the single room rate unless two or more County employees enrolled in the conference are sharing a room.

Burnet County will pay for the prior night of lodging accordingly:

Miles	Training Start Time
60 – 120	at or before 10:30 a.m.
121 – 240	at or before Noon (12:00 p.m.)
241 – 360	at or before 3:00 p.m.
361 – 480	at or before 6:00 p.m.

If an employee travels more than 480 miles, Burnet County will pay for the prior night regardless of the training start time.

11.04 MEALS

Employees or elected officials traveling outside the county may receive a per diem not to exceed \$63.00 per day for meals, providing they are traveling overnight on official business.

Any amount in excess of the IRS per diem rate will be considered a taxable fringe benefit. Breakfast will be paid for if you travel before 6:30 a.m. Lunch will be paid for if you travel before 10:30 a.m. Dinner will be paid for if you travel after 7:00 p.m. Amounts for each meal would be as follows: Breakfast - \$16.00, Lunch - \$19.00, and Evening - \$28.00.

The employee has the option of presenting receipts not to exceed \$63.00.