

CHAPTER:	8 – SAFETY AND SECURITY	ADOPTED: 3/7/06
SECTION:	6 – VEHICLE SAFETY	REVISED: 5/22/24

The purpose of this policy is to promote safe and courteous driving practices as well as providing for the appropriate upkeep of County vehicles and equipment in order to prevent accidents. The County encourages a partnership approach to safe driving with both the County and every driver doing everything possible to reduce the risks associated with driving.

This policy applies during all working hours, while on call, and paid standby duty while driving a County owned vehicle or equipment in the course of performing official County business.

Other relevant policies include HR 9.9 “Use of County Vehicles” and HR 8.4 “Incidents Involving County Property”; please refer to these sections for further information.

Alcohol, Drugs and Driving

What you should do:

Do not operate a County owned vehicle or equipment if you have consumed alcohol, medications containing alcohol, or medications that may affect your alertness and/or driving performance.

Why you should not drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

It is against the law to operate a motor vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 or greater. New Jersey law allows for a drunk driving conviction if you consume any amount of alcohol and your driving is impaired.

For further information on the County policy regarding Drugs and Alcohol, please refer to HR 7.6.

Speeding

What you should do:

Drive within the speed limit at all times. Always take into account road, weather, and/or traffic conditions. Even in emergencies, caution should be taken so that you get there safely.

Why you should not speed:

Because it's against the law. Excessive speed can cause accidents. Speeding reduces a driver's ability to navigate curves and steer around unexpected road debris as well as decreasing the distance necessary to stop a vehicle.

Seatbelts

What you should do:

Wear your seatbelt at all times and make sure all passengers do the same.

Why you should wear your seatbelt:

It is the law. NJS 39:3-7.2F applies to all passenger vehicles including vans, pick-up trucks and sport utility vehicles that are required to be equipped with seat belts. Studies show that seat belts do save lives and reduce injuries during crashes.

Headlights

What is required:

Headlights must be turned on anytime windshield wipers are used, one-half hour after sunset, one-half hour before sunrise, in bad weather (rain, smoke, fog, snow, ice), and whenever visibility is 500 feet or less. Parking lights cannot be used when headlights are required.

Why you should turn the headlights on:

It is the law in New Jersey. It is important to be able to see clearly as well as be seen by other vehicles.

Fatigue

What you should do:

If your work requires driving, make sure you get a good night's sleep. Do not drive or operate equipment if you are fatigued to the extent that may impair your driving performance.

Why you should not drive while fatigued:

Sleepiness causes auto crashes because it can ultimately lead to the inability to resist falling asleep at the wheel. Driving skills impaired as a result of fatigue include delayed reaction time, lack of awareness of surroundings, inattention, and inability to process information.

Aggressive Driving

What you should do:

- Drive courteously.
- Share the road with other vehicles on the road.
- Let other vehicles merge when it is safe to do so.
- Stop at yellow lights.
- Do not jump red lights.
- Be patient when there are pedestrians.
- Do not tailgate.
- Pass and change lanes only when it is safe to do so.

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Why you should not be an aggressive driver:

Because it is the law. Aggressive driving can escalate into a road rage incident. Motorists have been killed or injured for trivial reasons that a reasonable person would have overlooked.

Cellular Phones

What you should do:

Mobile phones and two-way radios* should not be used while driving. Allow calls to go through to voice mail or safely pull over before answering a call.

*NOTE: County-owned/issued two-way radios may be used for brief and essential communication between the county office/dispatcher (as applicable) and the driver as necessary to carryout job responsibilities.

Why you should not use cell phones while driving:

Studies have indicated a correlation between use of cellular devices and accidents. Such devices can distract drivers from paying proper attention to the road. The use of hand held cellular devices while operating a vehicle is prohibited by law.

Smoking

What you should do:

Smoking is not allowed in County vehicles.

Why you should not smoke while driving:

Studies have indicated a correlation between smoking while driving and accidents. Such activities can distract drivers from paying proper attention to the road.