I. Policy

All eligible officers participating in the take-home vehicle program under the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (hereafter Commission) - Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Collective Bargaining Agreement may be issued either a marked or unmarked police vehicle for on-duty and off-duty use in the bi-county area. All participating officers will comply with this directive.

II. General Provisions

A. Officers will not allow any other person to use or operate their assigned vehicles without written permission from the Chief, Park Police Division, or his/her designee.

B. When an officer is on leave, disability, light duty or out of the bi-county area for fourteen calendar days or more, the Division may require the officer to leave his/her vehicle at a specific location or make it available for use by other officers.

C. The Division may administratively remove an officer from this program when continued use of a vehicle jeopardizes that vehicle because of neglect or abuse or as a result of disciplinary or performance actions. The decision to administratively remove an officer from this program will be made by the Chief, Park Police Division, an Assistant Chief or his/her authorized designee. Appeals will be subject to either the disciplinary or grievance procedure.

D. Officers who have had their police powers restricted or removed will not be entitled to the use of a take-home vehicle.

E. Unattended vehicles must be locked at all times.

F. Seat belts will be used by all officers and all passengers.

G. Take-home vehicles may be used in conjunction with secondary employment when said employment is on a Commission site, or for events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Commission, as approved by the Chief, Park Police Division, or the Chief's designee. Vehicles may also be used to transport prisoners in these situations.

H. Officers are permitted to commute to and from secondary employment and sit in their Division issued vehicle while working secondary employment off Commission property.

I. Officers who are assigned take-home vehicles will be subject to call at all times while not on duty.
J. Officers who live outside of the bi-county area may park their vehicles at designated drop-off locations that are approved by the Chief, Park Police Division, or designee. The list of approved locations shall be maintained in the Office of Professional Standards and is subject to revision at anytime by the Chief, Park Police Division, or designee.

1. Officers wishing to utilize existing drop-off locations, or submit new locations for approval, shall make a request to the Division Chief via the chain-of-command.

2. The Division will consider any government owned facility as a drop-off location. Submitting Officers shall ensure that their request include all relevant security information (during what hours is the facility staffed, lighting, fences, etc).

K. Specified officers may use their take-home vehicles out of the bi-county area, in an off-duty capacity, when authorized by the Chief, Park Police Division, or designee.

L. If an officer’s assigned take-home vehicle is out-of-service for other than routine maintenance, the officer may request the use of a spare vehicle. The assignment of spare vehicles is subject to availability. Requests for use of spare vehicles will be made in writing to the affected section or unit commander. Temporary use of a spare vehicle in an emergency situation must be approved by a shift supervisor or higher-ranking official.

III. Response to Calls

A. While off-duty, officers responding to calls for service or dealing with police matters will abide by any agreements entered into with other agencies.

1. For minor incidents, off-duty officers will request an on-duty police unit to respond if other than minimal actions are necessary.

2. Authorization for an officer to remain at or handle any incident, for compensation purposes, must be approved by the watch commander, or in his/her absence, the shift supervisor. The portal-to-portal portion of the Collective Bargaining Agreement does not apply in this situation.

B. While using vehicles off-duty, officers will monitor the appropriate Division’s radio. Officers should be cognizant of their geographic location so as to be on the correct frequency. Officers need not advise the dispatcher when going in or out of service. However, they must advise the dispatcher when responding to a call or taking an action of any kind.
IV. Uniforms and Equipment

A. All officers operating vehicles while off-duty will carry a Division approved handgun and their credentials on their person and have at least one pair of handcuffs or flex-cuffs in their vehicle at all times. Officers should always carry an extra set of Commission vehicle keys on their person. All officers will display their credentials upon request.

B. Civilian attire worn while operating a vehicle off-duty must project a favorable image for the Commission and not create a safety hazard for the officer.

C. The Division will issue baseball caps, jackets or other designated clothing to all officers participating in this program. Officers who are not in uniform will wear this issued clothing whenever they are at an incident scene to identify them as police officers.

D. All Division portable radios and weapons will be removed from the vehicles and stored at the officer's station or residence whenever the vehicle will be unattended for more than a short period of time or between tours of duty. Other issued equipment will be stored in such a manner that it is not readily accessible.

Issuing Authority: [Signature]

Chief Antonio B. DeVaul
Maryland-National Capital Park Police
Montgomery County Division

End of Directive