

966. Distracted Driving/Equipment Operation

.1 Purpose:

The City of Tulsa values the safety and well-being of all employees. In order to increase employee and public safety and to eliminate unnecessary risks resulting from distracted driving and equipment operations we are implementing this policy.

.2 Scope:

.21 City of Tulsa employees may not engage in the handheld use of personal or City-issued cellular telephones, mobile electronic data devices or engage in any other type of cognitive, physical, or visual distraction that may cause a driver to become inattentive during the operation of vehicles and equipment.

The handheld use of the above devices is prohibited when:

.211 The employee is operating a vehicle/equipment owned, leased or rented by the City of Tulsa including when the motor vehicle/equipment is on City of Tulsa property.

.212 The employee is operating a personal motor vehicle/equipment in connection with City of Tulsa business.

.22 Employees may only engage in hands-free cellular communication when it is required for the performance of assigned job duties.

.23 Employees are encouraged to limit their talk time and only accept calls that require immediate attention. If a call is going to take time or require your full attention, terminate the call and resume when your car is safely put in park.

.24 Departments may restrict the use of hands-free cellular communication at the discretion of the Department Head.

.25 The use of hands-free cellular telephones and/or mobile electronic devices is prohibited when:

.251 The device causes cognitive, physical, or visual distraction that may cause a driver to become inattentive during the operation of vehicles and equipment, or

.252 The device is used for personal or non-City related business.

.3 City employees are required to:

Park in a safe location prior to engaging in handheld use of cell phones and mobile electronic data devices. Equipment operators must stop equipment operations and put equipment into a safe resting or parked position prior to engaging in the handheld use of cell phones and mobile electronic data devices.

.31 Program electronic navigation devices prior to the operation of vehicles/equipment.

.4 Violations of this policy will result in:

.41 A pre-termination hearing to determine the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken, up to and including termination.

.5 Emergency Exclusions

.51 Drivers/Operators may use cellular phones to report a collision or other immediately dangerous life or health situation to emergency responders. If a driver/operator must use such devices to make a call or report an emergency, the driver/operator should first make all efforts to stop in a protected area, secure the vehicle and then make the call.

.52 Employees may use electronic mobile data devices while driving/operating during public safety emergency response situations.

.6 The use of the City's two-way communication radio system while driving/operating is excluded from this policy.

.7 Management Responsibilities

.71 Shall ensure that all employees are informed of this policy, understand and comply with its directive.

.72 Shall periodically refresh employees on the contents of this policy.

.73 Shall create a plan to communicate with their employees in a way that eliminates distracted driving/operation opportunities.

.74 Shall observe employees driving habits and appropriately manage and discipline employees for distracted driving/operation behaviors and non-compliance of this policy.

.8 Employee Responsibilities

.81 Shall comply with this policy as a driver/operator and passenger. Passengers may use mobile communication devices for short term city business and private use while the vehicle or equipment is in operation by another employee. Electronic game playing and personal social media use is not an acceptable use of mobile electronic data devices while

working. Passengers are to be attentive co-pilots and not cause distractions to the driver.

.82 Shall bring to the attention of management any issues that are causing the non-compliance of this policy.

.9 Definitions

.91 Cognitive Distraction: When a driver/operator diverts his or her attention to another mentally demanding task while driving or operating equipment.

.92 Physical Distraction: When a driver/operator removes their hands off of the controls while driving or operating vehicles/equipment.

.93 Visual Distraction: When a driver/operator takes their eyes away from the road or area they are operating in for an unsafe amount of time while driving or operating vehicles/equipment.

.94 Mobile Electronic Data Devices: Devices that allow for data communications, data viewing/recording, navigation, and other similar devices.

.95 Safe Location: Safe areas to park vehicles/equipment in order to perform duties that may cause distractions if performed while driving/operating. These areas can include parking lots, curbside of residential streets or other curbside areas of low speed and low traffic volume locations. Special consideration shall be given to parking in well-lit areas during low light and low visibility situations. Highway shoulders are not considered a safe parking location.

.96 Handheld use: Physically interacting with any hand-held or other electronic device, including: holding the device, dialing a mobile phone by pressing more than a single button, texting, e-mailing, instant messaging, video messaging, obtaining navigational information, or engaging in any other form of electronic data retrieval or electronic data communication. Handheld use does not, however, include initiating hands-free communication through a single touch to initiate, answer, or terminate a call.

.97 Hands-free use: Operating a mobile electronic data device without physical interaction, only by voice commands and/or single-touch activation.