

VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

Chief Vehicle Use Policy

Adopted: January 8, 2025

Revised: January 7, 2026

Policy #:	300.00
Policy:	Chief Vehicle Use Policy
Effective Date:	January 8, 2025
Authority:	
Cross-reference:	

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy establishes guidelines for the use of official vehicles assigned to the Chief and Assistant Chiefs of the Vestal Fire District.

1.2 Response Time along with timely Incident Assessment Capability for response upgrades and/or response downgrades while enroute to an incident is directly beneficial to the success of the incident in terms of lives saved, injuries mitigated, manpower needs, fire apparatus needs, and control of fire apparatus liability.

1.3 Accordingly, the Vestal Fire District determines that when certain members of the Fire District have their equipped fire vehicles at their immediate disposal to allow a quick response from any location within the district or a reasonable response time near the Vestal Fire District and able to perform incident leadership while enroute and/or having response time decreased; there is achieved a favorable result in the terms mentioned above.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the Fire Chief and the four Assistant Chiefs of the Vestal Fire District who are assigned district-owned vehicles.

3. Vehicle Assignment

- **3.1.** The Fire Chief and four Assistant Chiefs shall each be assigned a district vehicle for official use.
 - Fire Chief has Chief 32 labeled Vehicle
 - Station #1 Assistant Chief has Chief 32-1 labeled Vehicle
 - Station #2 Assistant Chief has Chief 32-2 labeled Vehicle
 - Station #3 Assistant Chief has Chief 32-3 labeled Vehicle
 - Station #4 Assistant Chief has Chief 32-4 labeled Vehicle
- **3.2** Chiefs must remain reachable and able to respond to emergencies while using the vehicle, ensuring it is ready for prompt deployment.
- **3.3** Chiefs are also responsible for ensuring that the use does not create an appearance of impropriety or misuse of public resources.

4. Vehicle Operation and Maintenance

- **4.1.** All vehicle operators must have a valid New York State driver's license and maintain a clean driving record; assigned member is obligated to notify the Chief and Fire District Commissioners of any change in license status or having driving related charges.
- **4.2.** All vehicle operators must have completed a National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course; as well as the Fire Department's required safety training related to response driving.
- **4.3.** Regular maintenance and inspections will be conducted per district fleet policies.
- **4.4.** Chiefs must report any damage, malfunction, or other issues with their assigned vehicle immediately.
- **4.5** The individual assigned to the vehicle is responsible for the cleanliness and general upkeep of the vehicle.
- **4.6** The operator and all passengers are to be properly restrained any time the vehicle is in motion.

5. Fuel and Expenses

- **5.1.** Fuel for district vehicles will be provided through the district's fuel card system.
- **5.2** In an emergency, any sums of money expended for unexpected and appropriately needed fuel and/or maintenance of these vehicles by the person assigned to the vehicle are to be refunded to the individual by order of the Board of Fire Commissioners after the proper request for payment has been made and approved by the Board upon receiving a written receipt.

6. Vehicle Security

- **6.1.** Chiefs must secure vehicles when not in use by locking them and removing any valuables.
- **6.2.** Vehicles should be parked in secure locations to minimize risks of theft or vandalism.

7. Mileage, Tracking and Video Camera

- **7.1.** Each district vehicle will be equipped with an electronic tracking system to monitor mileage and usage.
- **7.2.** A monthly report summarizing mileage and usage will be submitted to the Fire Commissioners electronically by the Fleet Director or Fleet Chief.
- **7.3** Each district vehicle will be equipped with a forward-facing camera. The camera will be active when the ignition is in the run position. Audio recording is not active.

8. Compliance

- **8.1** District vehicles are to be used in the performance of duty, for authorized training purposes and/or District business with the critical ability for response.
- **8.2** The District-owned vehicles are to be used only in New York State and neighboring Pennsylvania counties for District business unless the Board of Fire Commissioners authorizes such use out of New York State.
- **8.3** "District business" shall include mutual aid both with Broome County and New York State, travel for vehicle maintenance, vendor consultations, training, and any unusual or

unforeseen circumstance that the Chief or his/her designee determines are related to the Fire Service and/or public safety. In all cases listed above, the Chief will be responsible for providing written documentation to the Board of Fire Commissioners either by memorandum or by the monthly report at the next regularly scheduled meeting. In addition to the above required written documentation, the Chief may make notification to the Board of Fire Commissioners by any other means as the chief deems necessary.

- **8.4** Intention is that these vehicles may be used when the chiefs are considered “on duty” or “on call” and during these periods of time permitted for scenarios such as a trip to the store, attending family sports event and other reasonable functions with proper and professional discretion, which retains their availability for response as well as leadership command and control.
- **8.5** Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including revocation of vehicle privileges.
- **8.6** Review of vehicle travel, operation and function shall be at the discretion of the Board of Fire Commissioners. The system administrator shall maintain access and control of the data and video. All data and video is cloud-based storage with the vendor subscription.

9. Policy Review

- **9.1.** This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practices.
- **9.2.** Revisions to this policy will be communicated to all affected personnel.

10. Effective Date

This policy is effective as of January 8, 2025, and supersedes any previous policies or procedures related to vehicle use by the Chief and Assistant Chiefs of the Vestal Fire District.

By Order of the Board of Fire Commissioners
Vestal Fire District
Date approved: January 8, 2025
Date revised and approved: January 7, 2026

Acknowledgment Section

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Fire District’s policy on Chief Vehicle Usage. I agree to comply with this policy and understand that failure to adhere may result in disciplinary action.

Employee Signature

Signature: _____

Date: _____