

Highlights

Why We Did This Audit

The Police Department spends more than \$1 million annually to purchase vehicles. In September 2015, about 45 percent of the department's fleet was assigned as take-home vehicles. Allocating department resources to take-home vehicles reduces the resources available for other department activities.

Take-Home Assignments

Take-home vehicles are assigned to employees with standby and call back responsibilities; to increase visibility in the community; and because of parking and security issues.

Standby responsibilities are for positions that are on-call at all times. Standby take-home vehicles are typically assigned to employees with the rank of captain and above and civilian managers. In September 2015, 95 vehicles were assigned for standby responsibilities.

Call back responsibilities are for positions subject to shared 24-hour on-call basis. In September 2015, 230 vehicles were assigned for call back responsibilities.

High visibility vehicles are marked vehicles that may be required by their funding source to be driven for high visibility in the community. There were 16 vehicles assigned as high visibility vehicles in September 2015.

Parking and security vehicles are all assigned to undercover operations and excluded from this audit.

For more information, contact the City Auditor's Office at 816-513-3300 or cityauditor@kcmo.org.

To view the complete report, go to kcmo.gov/cityauditor and click on Search Audit Reports.

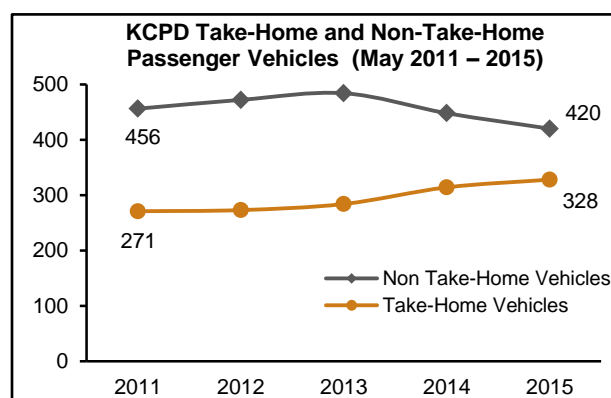
PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Changes to Police Take-Home Program Could Improve Vehicle Resource Management

What We Found

The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department devotes a substantial and growing portion of vehicle resources to its take-home vehicle program. As of September 2015, the department had 341 take-home vehicles. We estimate that for the year ending May 31, 2015, take-home vehicles were driven 2.5 million miles for commuting and personal use at a cost of about \$1.5 million.

The department does not know how much the program costs. The department entered into 29-month agreement providing take-home vehicles to command staff without calculating the cost of the provision. Basic information related to the take-home vehicle program – commuting and personal miles, frequency of officer call backs, whether vehicle accidents occur during personal or business use, and non-monetary benefits – is not tracked.



Faced with limited resources, the Police Department has to balance competing demands and look for savings opportunities. Adjustments to the department's take-home vehicle program could better allocate department resources through better matching of vehicle resources to call back responsibilities; re-evaluating the use of public vehicle resources in off-duty, private employment; using alternative methods of compensating some civilian employees in lieu of providing take-home vehicles; and assigning lower mileage vehicles to employees whose positions require substantial driving or specialized equipment.

Some adjustments to the take-home vehicle program could increase effectiveness. Marking and using KCPD license plates on sworn officers' take-home vehicles can increase police presence and visibility in the community. Prohibiting the transport of family, friends, and non-employees in take-home vehicles could promote faster responses to emergencies and decrease risks and potential claims against the department.

What We Recommend

We make a number of recommendations that are intended to better manage department resources. The Police Department should:

- develop and know the cost of its take-home vehicle program;
- track information related to take-home vehicles;
- use data to better manage department resources and evaluate alternatives that should reduce costs and improve effectiveness; and
- share program costs, data, and alternatives with the Board of Police Commissioners to improve oversight and decision making.

Management agreed with about half of the recommendations.