

Subject: Use of Agency Property Policy
Source: Personnel Policy

Policy

Employees will be held accountable for damage to, or loss of, agency property in their possession or for which they are responsible. In the event that such loss or damage is intentional or due to negligence or carelessness, an employee may be required to replace or pay for the replacement cost of the agency property.

This policy is designed to ensure that items purchased with Federal or State grant funds are not lost or damaged.

Areas of Responsibility

- Individual staff members are responsible for exercising reasonable care to prevent loss or damage to agency property in their possession. Agency property must be cared for properly and returned in the condition in which it was received.
- Each manager is responsible for creating systems that track the use of equipment for which they are responsible, and for reporting any loss of or damage to agency property to the appropriate supervisor.
- Supervisors are responsible for holding staff under their supervision accountable for loss of or damage to agency property.
- The Human Resources Personnel is responsible for maintaining a record of any oral or written reprimands or any other consequences resulting from the loss of or damage to agency property, and for ensuring that such reprimands are maintained as part of that employee's personnel record.
- The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that each supervisor complies with this policy.

Definitions

- *Agency property*, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as any item or group of items which was purchased with agency funds or was donated to the agency.
- An *intentional* act is one which is done deliberately and is undertaken of one's own free will.
- *Negligence* is defined as the failure to exercise the degree of care considered reasonable under the circumstances. *Carelessness*, in this context, is a synonym for negligence. Staff should treat agency property with the same care as they would their own property.
- *Lost* agency property is that which has not been returned within one week (7 calendar days) of the time when it was to be returned.
- *Steward* is defined as the manager who is ultimately responsible for a particular item of agency property. For example, the Transportation Manager is the Steward of the vans purchased by the agency.

Procedure

The following procedures apply to all items purchased by North Texas Parent & Child Development, Inc.

Checking out and returning agency property

1. All agency property must be formally checked out before it may be used. The check-out procedure will vary, depending upon the item, but will always include a system which tracks the name of the person who will be responsible for the item, the name or ID of the item, the date on which the item will be returned, and a signature. Agency property will typically be checked out by the Program Secretary.
2. Staff should note any damage to, or problems with, agency property before they check it out. Examples include: Obvious damage (*i.e.*, dents, broken lens, scratches) to vehicles; incomplete sets of books or curricula; malfunctioning or damaged computer hardware.
3. All agency property must be formally checked in after it is used. The check-in procedure will ensure that the agency property was returned in the condition in which it was borrowed. Agency property will typically be checked in by the Program Secretary.
4. In the event that agency property is lost or is damaged, the employee who checked out the agency property must explain the circumstances of the loss or damage in writing.

Additional Guidelines:

1. No agency property is to be left in vehicles overnight. This includes laptop computers, LCD projector screens, audiometers, speakers, books and any other equipment or materials belonging to the agency.
2. When you have agency property in a vehicle and you need to park that vehicle for any reason, in addition to the other precautions that you already are taking (locking the vehicle, parking in a safe well lit environment), that you do not leave agency property in plain sight. For example you lock the property in the trunk rather than leaving it on the seat, or you cover it with a piece of clothing or blanket or that you tuck it under the seat. This reduces the likelihood that a thief will notice the item/s.

Consequences

1. If an item is lost or damaged, the Steward of that equipment must investigate the circumstances of the event and then make a recommendation to the appropriate supervisor as to whether or not the employee responsible for the loss should receive a formal reprimand and whether or not the employee should be required to replace or pay for the replacement cost of the agency property. A copy of the Steward's recommendation will be sent to the employee, to the HR Personnel, and to the Executive Director.
2. Upon receipt of the Steward's recommendation, the supervisor must decide within two weeks (14 days) what disciplinary action, if any, to take against the employee. A copy of his or her decision, as well as the reasons for that decision, will be sent to the employee, the Steward, the HR Personnel, and the Executive Director. In all cases, the loss or damage will be noted in the employee's personnel record.