



Lynn Fitch
ATTORNEY GENERAL
OPINIONS AND POLICY

April 17, 2025

The Honorable Larry Johnson
Commissioner, Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District Board
Post Office Box 416
Greenwood, MS 38935

Re: Use of County Vehicle for Travel Associated with Levee Board
Business

Dear Commissioner Johnson:

The Office of the Attorney General has received your request for an official opinion.

Background

According to your request, you are the Leflore County elected member on the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District Board (“Board”), which is a compensated position. You are also employed as the Director of the Leflore County Civic Center. The latter position affords you the use of a county-owned vehicle.

Question Presented

Is it a conflict of interest for a county employee to use a county-issued work vehicle for business travel associated with an elected, compensated position on a separate state board?

Brief Response

Generally, the expenditure of county resources for personal or private use is prohibited by state law. We find no statutory authority excepting a county employee’s use of a county vehicle for business travel associated with a separately elected, compensated position on a state board. As to whether such use constitutes an ethical conflict of interest, we refer you to the Mississippi Ethics Commission.

Applicable Law and Discussion

Generally, public employees are not authorized to use their work vehicles for private or personal use.¹ At the local level, we have previously and consistently opined against the private or personal use of both municipal and county vehicles. *See* MS AG Op., *Evans-Bass* (May 13, 2020); MS AG Op., *Weaver* (Sept. 22, 2008).

Serving as Levee Board Commissioner is entirely separate and distinct from the county employment for which you were provided a county vehicle. Further, you receive compensation for the elected position, which means the use of the county vehicle benefits you personally. *See* Laws 2002, Ch. 593, § 1. A county employee's personal use of "a county vehicle is an impermissible donation." MS AG Op., *Weaver* at *1; *see also* MISS. CONST. art. IV, § 66.

For further guidance on any potential conflicts under Mississippi's Ethics in Government Laws, Mississippi Code Annotated Sections 25-4-101 *et seq.*, we refer you to the Mississippi Ethics Commission.

If this office may be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

LYNN FITCH, ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: /s/ Caleb A. Pracht

Caleb A. Pracht
Special Assistant Attorney General

¹ However, there is express statutory authority permitting law enforcement officers to use their official vehicles while performing private security duties under certain circumstances. *See* Miss. Code Ann. § 17-25-11.