

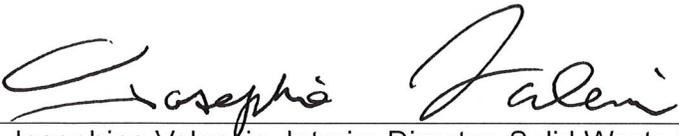


#06-20 Safe Driver Bonus	
Effective Date	10-7-2024
Previous Revisions:	2021, 2022, 2023
Process Owner	Safety

Policies available at: <https://www.sarecycles.org/departments-policies>



Policy Approved:

  
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 Josephine Valencia, Interim Director, Solid Waste Management

10-7-24  
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 Date

## I. Policy

The Safe Driver Bonus, formerly called the safety bonus program, was established in FY2018 and considers an employee's accident history starting from October 1, 2006. This document describes the eligibility criteria and program administration.

The 2023 revision capped the award at 15 years. This 2024 revision makes some clarifications but does not change the overall policy. However, the qualifying criteria is under review and changes are expected to be made in 2025.

## II. Definitions

- Disqualifying event:
  1. Receiving a preventable ruling from the Accident Review Board (ARB) for any accident, incident, or injury. ARB guidelines are established in AO 4.8 *Driver Safety Program*.
  2. Receiving a written reprimand or suspension for risky safety behavior, even if the issue did not require going through the ARB or did not result in a traffic citation. Examples of events that may lead to such discipline include, but are not limited to repeated distracted driving, texting while driving, multiple preventable incidents, failure to check tires, and/or failure to fully inspect vehicle before operation.
  3. Collection Workers must be assigned to rear load collection routes to be considered eligible for this award. Collection workers have an additional disqualifying event that does not apply to other job categories. If a Collection Worker fails to provide appropriate spotting assistance to a driver, and there is a preventable accident, the entire team becomes disqualified.

- Example: A driver has a preventable backing accident; the collector was present and should have provided spotting. The driver and collector are both disqualified. Accident-free years are reset to zero for both.
- Example: A driver has a preventable incident by colliding with a fence in an alley. Depending on the severity of the incident and the history of other incidents, the driver and the collector may be disqualified.
- Example: A driver has a preventable accident while driving on the highway and the collector is a passenger in the truck cab. In this example, the driver will be ineligible to receive the safety bonus. Since the collector did not have a role in accident prevention, the collection worker may still be eligible for the safety bonus.
- Vehicle: All motorized vehicles and heavy equipment, whether or not required to be registered under Texas law. This includes but is not limited to trucks, motorcycles, scooters, gators, ATVs, golf carts, forklifts, backhoes, and grinders.
- Rating Period: Equal to the Fiscal Year, October 1 - September 30.

### III. Eligible Positions and Bonus Amount

Positions eligible for the Safe Drive Bonus are in the table below. Benefit amounts are capped at a maximum of 15 years.

Position Title	Bonus Amount
2392-SOLID WASTE SR EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	\$100/year
2393-SOLID WASTE EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	\$100/year
7011-SOLID WASTE COLLECTION TRUCK DRIVER	\$100 / year
7012-SIDE LOADER EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	\$100/year
7279-SIDE LOAD OPERATIONS LEAD	\$100/year
7280-SOLID WASTE COLLECTION ROUTE SUPV	\$100 / year
7370-TRUCK DRIVER	\$100/year
7405-BRUSH COLLECTION CREW LEADER	\$100 / year
2184-AUTOMATED COLLECTION SVCS TRAINER	\$100 / year
7013-SOLID WASTE ROUTE INSPECTOR	\$100 / year
7010-SOLID WASTE COLLECTION WORKER	\$ 50 / year

## IV. Qualifying Criteria

- 1) An employee must not have any disqualifying events for a minimum of three years before receiving a payment. No payments are made for year 1 or year 2.
- 2) Employees in an eligible position must perform their regular job duties (not including light duty hours) for a minimum of 1,560 hours (75% of the year) during the rating period.
- 3) Employees must be in an active status at the end of the pay period for which the safety bonus is issued.
- 4) A preventable ARB ruling for an accident or injury will resets an employee's accident-free years to zero.
- 5) A preventable ARB ruling for an incident will disqualify an employee for the current year. However, the employee's eligibility years will not be reset to zero.

*Example:* A truck driver has a 10-year history of being accident free. If he has a preventable incident in FY22, he will not receive a safety bonus for that year. But the next year in FY23, he can potentially still receive a 10-year bonus if there were no other disqualifying events.

- 6) Similar to #5, having a disqualifying event 11-2 (discipline) will disqualify an employee from receiving the safety bonus for the qualifying period. However, the employee's previous accident-free years will not reset to zero.

## Changes in Job Title

- 1) During a rating period, if an employee changes from an eligible position to another eligible position or from an eligible position to a non-eligible position and meets the requirement of minimum hours in the eligible position, the employee qualifies for the bonus.

*Example 1:* During the rating period, a collection truck driver promotes to a side loader equipment operator position and the hours worked by the employee in both positions are combined.

*Example 2:* During the rating period, a route supervisor promotes to an assistant manager position in August. The employee is eligible for the safety bonus because most of the hours worked were in the eligible position of route supervisor.

- 2) At the discretion of the Department Director or designee, employees who change to a non-eligible position and return to an eligible position, credit for previous accident-free years may be bridged.

*Example:* An employee reaches six years of being accident-free as a truck driver (eligible position) and moves to a recycling coordinator position (non-eligible position) for two years. Then, the employee returns to the truck driver position. The employee may resume at six years accident-free and starts earning credit toward a 7<sup>th</sup> year.

- 3) At the discretion of the Department Director or designee, previous accident-free years may be bridged for eligible positions for employees who leave the Department or City and return to work for the Department.

*Example:* An employee reaches six years accident-free and separates. After two years, the employee returns. The employee may resume at six years accident-free and start earning credit toward a 7<sup>th</sup> year.

- 4) For employees who change to a job title that has a lower or higher annual payment, their payout calculated for prior years will not be affected. For the current year payout, the payment will be based on the position with the majority of hours.

*Example:* In November, a collection worker is accident-free for five years and promotes to a collection truck driver. The employee worked most hours (11 months) within the fiscal year as a collection truck driver. As shown below, the employee is paid based on the truck driver position for year six and as a collection worker for the first five years.

Position Title	Amount	Years	FY Payout
7011-Solid Waste Collection Truck Driver	\$100/year	1	\$100
7010-Solid Waste Collection Worker	\$50 / year	5	\$250
<b>Total 6<sup>th</sup> Year Payout</b>			<b>\$350</b>

## Payout

- 1) Employees who meet the eligibility criteria will receive a lump sum bonus on their paycheck. Payout will typically occur during the month of February, but may be earlier or later.
- 2) The payment of inactive employees is held until they return to active status. Employees are considered inactive when they are on long-term disability, have

exhausted military leave and are on unpaid status, or are on unpaid workers compensation because they have exhausted paid status. The safety bonus is not paid to employees who separate from the City before returning to active status.

- 3) **Underpaid** - If the employee does not receive the complete and correct amount, the Department's Fiscal Division and Human Resources Division will investigate and issue the correct payment on the following paycheck.
- 4) **Overpaid** - If an overpayment occurs, the employee is contacted, and the reason for the overpayment explained. The employee repays the overage in increments, approved by the Fiscal Division. Subsequent paychecks reflect the deductions until the amount is fully repaid.

## Future Changes

This policy is currently under review. There will be no changes to the eligibility for the payout that will occur at the beginning of 2025. However, it is likely there will be several changes to the eligibility criteria for subsequent payouts. Below are some of the things that are currently under consideration. But please remember, this and other policies are always subject to be changed without prior notification.

- Certain job titles may be added or deleted from the eligibility list
- Eligibility criteria may be expanded to include attendance points, mileage, training attendance, and other items
- For job titles that are in a lead or supervisory role, their team's overall safety performance may become an eligibility criteria.