

November 29, 1999
Re: IO-99-165

You inquired whether you could use a county owned vehicle to drive to and from the gym where you work out every morning. You indicated that you were assigned a car for your official use during the day and that you have been instructed to leave the car at a specific location every evening when you leave work, and to pick it every morning from that same location on your way to work. Since the gym is between the location of the car and the place where you work, you believe it saves time and gas for you to use the county car to go to the gym before work every morning.

The Public Ethics Law, §3-104(a) would clearly prohibit the use of county resources, equipment, or facilities for secondary employment, for making a profit, or for promoting one's private business. §3-104(a). However, your personal use of the county car does not violate this provision, and it is the ethics commission's opinion that the inquiry you raised does not present any ethical issues. Absent a county-wide policy regarding the use of county resources, the commission has concluded that it is up to the department head to determine the use to which county employees can put vehicles - or tools, or computers, for that matter.

Please rest assured that your use of the county car in the manner you described, does not violate the Public Ethics Laws of Anne Arundel County. Thank you for your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Betsy K. Dawson
Executive Director