



POLICY 15-17

See Also: Policy 15-14
Cancels: Policy 71-18

Rex Derr, Director

Pol 15-17 Using and Managing Cellular Telephones

This policy applies to all staff using state provided service on either a personally owned cellular telephone or one provided by the state, and their supervisors.

1. Agency Has the Right to Monitor Use

The agency has the right to monitor the use of all state-owned cellular telephones for any legitimate business purpose.

Monthly detail sheets from the service provider will be transmitted to Financial Services attached to the bill.

2. Employees Are Responsible for Protecting Equipment

Employees are responsible for safeguarding all state-owned equipment from theft, loss or damage. Program Managers must notify Purchasing immediately when a cellular phone is lost or stolen. A police report must be filed on all stolen cell phones and a copy sent to Purchasing.

3. State Lines May Be Installed on Personal Phones

With the authorization of the Program Manager, an agency funded cellular phone line may be installed as an additional line on a personal phone; however, a personal cellular phone line cannot be installed on an agency phone.

Business lines on personal cellular phones are to be cancelled by the employee or the employee's supervisor immediately upon separation.

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4. Employees Observe Agency Rules for General Use

Unless allowed by other exception in this policy, agency purchased cellular equipment or dedicated state lines on a personal cell phone are to be used only in the performance of official state business. Employees using cell phones for business purposes will:

- Take into consideration the higher cellular use costs compared to alternative communication choices, and
- Use discretion when relaying confidential information since cellular transmission security is not guaranteed.

Employees should not use cellular phones when a less costly alternative is safe and readily available.

5. Some Personal Use is Allowed

The Executive Ethics Board allows limited, unofficial use of a state-owned cell phone so long as the usage fits into the "de minimis" category.

An employee may use the state provided cell phone (or line) ONLY IF each of the following conditions is met:

- There is little or no cost to the state; the use
- Is brief in duration, occurs infrequently, and is the most effective use of time or resources;
- Does not interfere with the performance of official duties;
- Does not disrupt or distract from the conduct of state business due to volume or frequency;

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- Does not disrupt other state employees or obligate them to make a personal use of state resources, and
- Does not compromise the security or integrity of state property, information, or software.

Appropriate personal use may include such things as making medical appointments, calling home to ensure children arrived safely after school, notification to family about a change to work schedule, transportation coordination, or child or elder arrangements.

When they are available, land lines should always be utilized for personal calls rather than agency cell phones.

Making an emergency call to 911 or informing family members of a change to work hours or travel arrangements are not considered personal and are always permitted.

6. Some Personal Uses are Prohibited

Prohibited unofficial uses would include, but are not limited to, use for:

- Conducting an outside business or private employment;
- The purpose of supporting, promoting the interests of, or soliciting for an outside organization or group (unless provided for by law or authorized by an agency head or designee);
- Assisting in a campaign for election of a person to office or for a ballot proposition;
- The purpose of participating in or assisting in an effort to lobby the state legislature, or a state agency head;

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- Conduct that is prohibited by federal or state law or rule, or state or agency policy;
- Communications incompatible with a professional workplace;
- Any personal calls outside of working hours.

7. Invoices Will Be Reviewed

All cellular phone use invoices will be sent to the user who will review and sign to indicate that all calls were business related or fell within the personal de minimis limits set forth in this policy. Supervisors will also sign to indicate they have reviewed the invoice. Regions sign park invoices. Monthly invoices should be attached to bills along with the detail sheets and forwarded to Financial Services for payment.

Programs with a pool of phones will develop a method for tracking phone usage.

The agency retains the right to audit invoices.

8. Violation of This Policy May Result in Disciplinary Action

Violation of this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action by the agency. In addition the Executive Ethics Board may impose separate sanctions.

9. Use May be Restricted

Supervisors and managers are authorized to restrict an employee's personal use of telecommunications technology systems. Supervisors and appointing authorities are responsible for corrective and/or disciplinary action necessary as a result of the inappropriate personal use of cellular phones.

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