Delaware State University

University Area(s) Responsible: Office of Finance and Administration; Office of Purchasing and General Services; Office of Human Resources

Policy Number & Name: 9-07: Cellular Phone Policy and Procedures

Approval Date: 7/11/11

Revisions: _____________________________

Related Policies and Procedures: _____________________________

Purpose

This policy will govern the assignment, appropriate use and procurement of all University-Supplied Cellular Service and Equipment. It is intended to ensure that the use of cell phones for University business is properly authorized and monitored. It also ensures that the University is reimbursed for the occasional incidental or emergency use of University-Supplied cell phones.
Scope

This policy applies to all University-Supplied Cellular Service and Equipment and the employees to whom they are assigned.

Policy and Procedures

Cell Phone Assignment:

University-Supplied cell phones will only be assigned for conducting University business. This will be done after verifying that the employee’s communication needs cannot be satisfied by any other means such as a radio, a paging device or standard telephone equipment. Included are University employees who are vital to the decision-making for the University; employees responsible for restoring services vital to the operation of the University and those employees responding to identified/reported emergencies. These employees are considered to be highly mobile and must be reachable at all times.

University-Supplied cell phones will be assigned to the President and his/her staff, the Provost, and University Vice Presidents based on the nature of their duties and responsibilities as senior managers and chief decision-makers.

Unit Heads will be responsible for assigning and approving University-Supplied cell phone(s) to employees who fall under their budget. They will be responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures governing the use of University-Supplied cell phones are followed by those employees who have been assigned such equipment and service. They will review and approve monthly cell phone bills and make sure that the University is reimbursed in a timely manner for any personal calls the employee may incur. Employees who are assigned University-Supplied cell phones will limit personal use to circumstances that can be justified as being absolutely necessary. If upon review of a monthly bill the Unit Head determines that an employee has been in violation of policies and regulations, including the constant use of their University-Supplied cell phone for personal business he or she will take action that can range from revoking cell phone privileges to the termination of employment.

Again, employees who violate this policy on a repeated or continuous basis may face employment termination.
University-Supplied Cell Phone Use:

- University-Supplied cell phones are to be used for University business only.
- Units/Departments may find that the creation of a pool of cell phones to be assigned only when needed for short-term job duties will reduce the permanent assignment of cell phones. A sign-out log would be required.
- It is expected that from time to time incidental or emergency use of the University-Supplied cell phone may take place. Such calls should be infrequent and their length should be kept to a minimum. Employees will reimburse the University for All Non-business (Incident and Emergency) Calls made with their assigned cell phone.
- Employees must remember at all times that a University-Supplied cell phone is a privilege that may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct.
- Department Heads will investigate and take disciplinary action against any employee that violates the policies and procedures governing the use of University-Supplied cell phone.
- Employees will be responsible for the safekeeping, care and custody of the cell phone assigned to them.
- University-Supplied Cell Phones are University property and must be returned to the responsible department when the employee separates from the University; his/her cell phone privilege is revoked; he/she no longer requires the use of a cell phone to carry out their job duties and responsibilities.
- Cell phone numbers are owned by the University and cannot be transferred to private ownership.

Responsibilities

Employees:

- Employees have an obligation to use University-Supplied cell phones in a responsible, informed and safe manner; conform to network etiquette, customs and courtesies; and observe all applicable laws or regulations.
- Employees using University-Supplied cell phones are responsible for securing them. Losses shall be reported immediately to their Unit Head.
- Employees may be held liable for lost, stolen or damaged University-Supplied cell phone equipment.
- An employee is responsible for payments to the University for costs incurred on University-Supplied cell phones as a result of personal calls, regardless if they only use the specific plan's packaged minutes.
- Employees should avoid calls such as person-to-person, credit card calls, directory assistance (411) or any other calls requiring the services of an operator, while using a University-Supplied cell phone.
Unit/Department:

- Each department is responsible for maintaining a cell phone accessory inventory log (including, but not limited to, chargers, spare batteries, headsets, carrying cases and vehicle mounting hardware) for every employee with a university-issued cell phone.
- Department heads are responsible for reviewing charges to their budgets to ensure proper use of cell phones and to ensure corrective action is taken regarding inappropriate use of University-Supplied cell phones.
- Departments will maintain cell phone bills for a period of three years.
- Each department is required to collect any reimbursement for personal calls made by each employee.
- Departments are encouraged to review periodically their employees' cell plans with the Office of Finance and Administration and the Procurement Department to assess whether it is the most cost-effective plan available.
- The Office of Finance and Administration and the Procurement Department shall be notified immediately by a department to terminate unneeded cellular service.

University:

- The Office of Finance and Administration internal auditors will conduct random reviews of usage and charges to verify that cell phone policies and procedures are followed.
- The Office of Finance and Administration and the Procurement Department will review cell phone plans periodically to determine if employees are using the most cost-effective plan.
- The Office of Finance and Administration will maintain a University-wide inventory of cell phones and accessories in conjunction with the Procurement Department.

Procurement:

- The University Procurement Department is the only department authorized to purchase cell phone equipment and services for Delaware State University.
- Requests for cellular phone service will be kept on file. New request for cellular phone service will be submitted to the Procurement Department in writing on a Cell Phone Request Form.
- The Procurement department will only consider requests accompanied by a completed Cell Phone Request Form bearing the signature of the appropriate authorizing Unit Head.
- Units will coordinate repair, purchase, purchase of accessories/new equipment and service plan changes with the Procurement Department.
Taxation:

The value of employer-provided telecommunication devices/services used by University employees for personal calls is considered a taxable fringe benefit and must be included in their gross pay for income tax and social security tax purposes. This can be avoided if the employee pays the employer the fair market value for all personal use of the employee-provided cell phone which would result in no income to the employees. The amount added to gross wages is not considered salary for the purpose of computing retirement or other employee benefits.

Even if an employee is exempt under University policy from the University reimbursement requirement, the amount of benefit that is added to an employee’s gross pay is still considered a fringe benefit for IRS purposes. The use of University-Supplied cell phones for University business is not taxable to the employee.

Employees are required to keep records substantiating the personal use and the business use of their assigned cell phone. If the employee fails to maintain substantiation of personal use, then all usage is to be considered personal and the full value of the University paid cell phone service is taxable to the employee.

Each employee who is assigned a University-Supplied cell phone must complete a form with University Payroll to report on taxable value of cell phone services as an employee fringe benefit on the IRS W-2 Form.

The form is to be signed and dated annually at the end of the month of November.

Reimbursement* of Incident and Emergency Calls to the University:

- At the end of the billing cycle the employee must review the assigned cell phone bill and mark his/her personal calls, text messages, etc.
- The reimbursement will be done within 30 days of the statement date and will be based on the number of minutes times the University established flat rate. Any downloads or information calls must be reimbursed by the employee unless they are documented and substantiated as business related. Cost of text messaging must also be reimbursed unless it is business related.
- Every month the employee must complete a monthly reimbursement report and issue a check or money order to Delaware State University for the amount resulting from personal use reflected on the cell phone bill.
• Reimbursements will be deposited as expenditure credits against the Chartfield that incurred the charges. A copy will be attached to the cell phone bill for the accounting department to process vendor payments.

*From time to time an employee may have to use his/her personal cell phone to make a business call. A reimbursement may be requested but calling plan charges, equipment charges, taxes, surcharges and regulatory fees will be excluded. The employee will be reimbursed for costs related to each business call either by applying per minute cost, if the call is within plan minutes or by actual charges if the call takes place in excess of the plan minutes. Per minute cost is calculated by dividing the monthly calling plan charge by the minutes allowed. Multiply the cost-per-minute times the business minutes used on the personal cell phone to determine the total owed to the employee.

**Important Cell Phone Use Related Information:**

• Using a hand held cell phone while operating a University-Owned vehicle is prohibited by State of Delaware law.
• Employees must use hands-free device for cell phone use while operating a University-Owned vehicle.
• Because of costs, the University discourages use of cell phones when desktop phones can be used.
• Employees should exercise discretion as to who has access to a University-Supplied cell phone number to keep incoming calls and associated costs at a minimum.
• Cell phone transmissions are not always secure and employees should use discretion in relaying confidential information using cell phones.
• When using a cell phone with a hands-free device while driving, use common sense and these tips: Get to know your phone and its hands-free device features such as dial and redial. Do not take notes or look up information while driving.
• Use your wireless phone to help others in emergencies. Dial 911 or other local emergency numbers in the case of fire, traffic accident or medical emergencies. Such calls are free.
• Employees assigned University cell phones are responsible for compliance with this policy.