

City of Saint Paul CELL PHONE POLICY

Effective Date: January 1, 2011

Revised: February 07, 2019

PURPOSE

Cell phones are provided for official City business use and are made available to employees in positions where the associated benefits justify the additional operating costs.

POLICY

Department and office directors may acquire cell phones for employee use when the expense and use of the cell phones is justifiable in terms of improved service and responsiveness to citizens or other employees. Department and office directors are responsible for that justification, both initially and ongoing. Cell phones should be provided only when they are required for the employee to perform required functions of his/her job. Simple convenience is not adequate justification. City ordinances and policies require that employees use their time, City equipment, tools, and supplies for City business. For additional information and policies on cell phones, refer to the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity (HREEO) Department policy on procurement of cell phones.

This policy sets forth the general rules applicable to employees citywide for use of City issued cell phones with the exception of employees of the Saint Paul Police Department (“SPPD”). Use of City issued cell phones by employees of the SPPD is governed by the policies and general orders of the SPPD.

SAFETY

An overarching concern of the City is the personal safety of employees and the public at large. Therefore, employees should use proper safety procedures at all times when using a cell phone, but especially while operating equipment, driving on City business, or performing similar duties.

City employees should not use a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle in the conduct of City business, except for the purpose of obtaining or rendering emergency assistance. Texting on a cell phone while driving is prohibited, in accordance with State Law.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Call detail (e.g. time, number called, date, duration of calls) appearing on the City cell telephone billing account is public information, except when exempt by statute.

USE OF CITY CELL PHONES FOR PERSONAL CALLS/PERSONAL BUSINESS

City-provided cell phones are intended for use for official City business only. Employees shall not use a City-owned cell phone or cellular data device for personal calls, texting, or to download a non-work related application such as a personal email account. If an employee feels they must make or receive an incidental personal call or text, as defined below, or use other features or applications of the device not associated with City business, the employee must reimburse the City as follows:

- \$0.20 a minute for calls within the service area
- \$0.55 a minute for calls outside the service area, if roaming charges apply
- Actual charge for all other uses such as, but not limited to: 411 calls, text messages, picture emails, etc.

For the reimbursement form and additional information, refer to the Invoice & Audits section of the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity (HREEO) Department policy on procurement of cell phones.

INCIDENTAL PERSONAL CALLS

A personal call is one not related to the City's service to the public. Incidental personal calls are defined as being of minimum duration and minimum frequency. Examples of incidental personal calls include, but are not limited to calls to arrange for care of a child or other family emergency, to alert a family member of an unexpected delay due to a change in work schedule, or to arrange for transportation in the event of car trouble.

Emergency calls to 9-1-1 are not considered personal calls.

REVIEW

Employees are to review the monthly invoice for their phone number and certify with a signature that no personal calls were made. If personal calls were made, the employee must note the calls and reimburse the City at the rate specified above. For the reimbursement form and additional information, refer to the Invoice & Audits section of the Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity (HREEO) Department policy on procurement of cell phones

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that cell phone use is consistent with this policy. They are to annually examine and report on the continued need for a cell phone during the budget process, and they are to provide periodic cell phone usage reports to the Directors of the Office of Financial Services and Human Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity, as requested.

USE OF PERSONAL CELL PHONES FOR CITY BUSINESS

This practice should be avoided to limit the administrative burden of reimbursement requests. In addition, use of this practice must be pre-approved and approved on an on-going basis. In the event that an individual uses their personal cell phone to conduct City business and makes a reimbursable claim, only actual verifiable costs attributable to City business calls(s) will be reimbursed through regular reimbursement procedures.

“Actual verifiable costs” are costs separately identified for each City call in excess of the standard monthly service fee. (For example, if the minutes used for a City call(s) do not cause the total minutes used to go over the calling plan allowance, the call(s) will not be reimbursed.) The maximum per minute reimbursement shall be \$0.20 a minute. If reimbursement requests are routinely submitted, the Supervisor should consider the assignment of a City-provided cell phone.