

## POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

**Section:** Employment  
**Policy:** Use of Cellular Telephones  
**Policy No:**  
**Effective:**  
**Revised:** NEW  
**Distribution:** City-Wide

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### USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

#### 303.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with guidelines for the proper use of cellular phones.

#### 303.02 POLICY

It is the City's policy to use cellular telephones in the course of city operations to enhance communication. Cellular phones may be used by employees to conduct official business when the use of radio communication or hard line telephones is inappropriate, unavailable, or inadequate to meet communication needs and when the cellular phone is used in accordance with this policy.

#### 303.03 Definitions

*Disruptive activity:* Any time that cellular phone operations would be considered disruptive, such as in meetings, training sessions, court, or public places when their use would reasonably be deemed annoying and intrusive.

*Distraction:* Any time the use of a cellular phone would unnecessarily or unreasonably divert the attention of an employee from official duties and/or cause a potentially hazardous situation.

#### 303.04 Procedures

- A. City Owned Cellular Phones
  1. Cellular phones are authorized for official city business during assigned/scheduled working hours.
  2. Cellular phones may be used during non-working hours only for the conduct of city-related business.
  3. Exceptions may be made for family situations or personal matters that require attention and where alternative forms of communication are not suitable or easily available.
  4. Additional latitude and consideration shall be granted personnel required to carry City-owned cellular phones 24/7/365 as part of their job duties, including, but not limited to: on-call /emergency response status.

5. Approved cellular telephone usage includes but is not limited to the following types of communications:
  - a. Conveyance of sensitive or restricted information
  - b. When essential information must be communicated without delay to or from city personnel
  - c. Incidents in which direct contact with an employee, contractor, or the public is critical
  - d. Incidents in which use of a hard line telephone would be appropriate but where one is not available
6. Cellular phone numbers should not normally be provided to members of the public. Exceptions may be made when immediate future contact between an employee and another person may be critical to a city objective.
7. Employees may not operate city vehicles while using cellular phones unless emergency circumstances exist and other means of communication are not available or suitable. Under non-emergency situations, and when possible, employee drivers (safety being foremost consideration), should drive to a safe location when using either personal or business cellular phones. (The shoulder of a roadway is not considered a safe location with respect to this policy). Hands-free operational devices may be used as an alternative (safety being foremost consideration), when authorized and available.
8. Any financial charges incurred via cellular phone use should be limited and clearly linked to the necessity to use cellular phones when other alternatives are not available or inappropriate.

Random and periodic audits of city issued cellular use may be made at the city administrator's discretion.

B. Reimbursement for Personal Use

1. Section XXX.XXX, Subsection X, of City Ordinance shall apply. The section, reads, in part, as follows: *...any City employee so assigned a cell phone shall be responsible for personal usage of any cell phone in excess of the minimum contract payment for said cell phone.*
2. Employees assigned a City-Owned cell phone falling under a pooled-minutes program, wherein a specific allotment of time is not readily identifiable, are charged with the responsibility to self-monitor and manage their usage to help control cell phone costs. Excessive use, and associated corrective action, shall be determined and exercised at the discretion of management.

C. Personal Cellular Phones

1. Use of personal cellular phones, both in voice or data transmission during work hours, should be restricted to essential communications and should be limited in length. Engagement in multiple or extended conversations unrelated to city business or similar use that interferes with the performance of job tasks is prohibited.
2. Use of personal cellular telephones at work is governed by the same safety restrictions as provided for city owned cell phones.
3. Personal or city issued cellular phones should not be used if they may be disruptive to others.
4. All cell phones shall be set on vibrate or silent during work hours to minimize business disruptions.
5. Use of photo imaging or audio-recording capabilities is strictly prohibited unless said use can be clearly linked to the conduct of authorized official city business.

**303.05 Police Department**

Cellular telephones are an augmentation to the department's communication system, not a substitute for radio communication designated for transmission through the department's emergency communication center.

Officers should not use the department-owned phone for car-to-car communication when other means are available and appropriate.