

## Cell Phone Usage

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS), Rule R895-7, explains the policy and procedures for cell phone usage for state business. This Rule was last updated 11-29-2011.

If you have questions about this policy or procedures, please contact your Supervisor.

### **Policy:**

Cell phone usage paid for with state dollars must be justified. Management shall determine those employees who are required to carry cell phones based upon legitimate business needs. Where used, cell phones shall improve employee efficiency and enable employees to respond more quickly to business matters, emergencies and/or provide for the safety of state employees and the general public.

The payment for cell phone usage with state funds may be discontinued any time at management's discretion.

Two options are available to the divisions and employees of DAS for cell phone usage through a negotiated decision between employee and management:

### Option One:

The employee is required to carry a cell phone. The DAS Division sets up the most economical and effective cost plan and issues the phone.

1. State procurement rules and procedures must be followed in the purchase of all cell phones, equipment, service plans, and other services.
2. State-owned cell phones are to be used and justified based upon needs for official state business and not given as an employee perk. Employees shall use them for state business when it is the most cost effective or efficient manner of communication. Employees who have been given cell phones must return them in good condition when the business use is no longer justified or otherwise discontinued.
3. Management shall choose a plan that best meets its needs for the employee's work related business. Personal use of state-owned cell phones is allowed provided the personal use does not increase the cost of the cell phone service to the state.
  - i. To ensure that state-owned cell phones are used primarily for state business purposes, bills may be reviewed periodically by the department's accounting staff and the employee to determine that the business use designation is justified.
  - ii. Whenever an employee's duties are modified, management will again determine if the employee's duties justify the use of a state-owned cell phone and continue or discontinue the employee's use of a state-owned cell phone.

Divisions and employees should be aware that information regarding phone usage on state-owned phones, whether through land lines or cell phones, are public records and subject to the GRAMA statutes.

Option Two:

The Employee is required to carry a cell phone, uses a personal cell phone for state business, and is given an allowance each pay period that is not taxed as personal income. This option is justified when an employee must be available by cell phone and/or email and desires to use their own cell phone service.

1. An *allowance* is paid to the employee in their paycheck. The allowance amount can be up to \$15 per payday for phone-only plans and up to \$25 per payday for plans that synchronize with the State's email. However, an exception can be made if the plan cost exceeds these limits and is justified by a business need for the plan. Any exception must be documented by the division director and approved by the executive director or designee.

i. Since this is a non-taxable reimbursement, the reimbursement amount cannot exceed the actual cost of the cell phone plan to the employee.

ii. Whenever an employee's duties are modified, management will again determine whether the employee's duties justify the cell phone allowance and continue or discontinue the allowance.

iii. Bills may be reviewed periodically by the department's accounting staff and the employee to determine that the allowance does not exceed the cost to the employee and that the business use designation is justified.

2. The non-taxable wage type, "Telephone Reimbursement," is used and can be entered each pay period or set up for automatic payment.