

LYNNWOOD

Policy No. 140
Date: November 29, 2004
Revised:
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Use of Cellular Phones/Pagers

I. Purpose

To establish the City's policy for the official use of cellular telephones and pagers.

II. Policy

- A. Cellular phones and pagers may be provided to employees to enhance normal and emergency services. All cellular telephones and pagers are public resources and should normally not be used for personal telephone calls, except calls placed in emergency situations (e.g., requesting roadside assistance or medical aid, informing a family member when delayed) are to be kept as brief as possible (two to three minutes). The use of City owned cellular phones or pagers for personal business is generally prohibited, except as noted in II D, III A and III F below.
- B. The acquisition of cellular phones and pages shall be limited to those instances where there is a demonstrated need for equipment to perform essential City business or to improve safety, increase productivity, increase service to the public, or where necessary communications cannot be provided by any other means. The purchase of cellular phones and pagers shall be subject to approval by the appropriate department director.
- C. City owned cellular phones will only be used during an employee's regularly scheduled business hours except in cases of business necessity or emergencies. Cellular phones will be used only when the employee does not have access to email or land-based telephones or circumstances warrant an immediate response.
- D. The appropriate department director must authorize second "personal" lines on a city-owned cellular telephone.
- E. When issuing and/or reassigning cellular phones and pagers for new employees, leaving the City, transferring internally, changing work addresses or phone numbers, as well as assigning of or changes to cellular phones and pagers for current employees, employees are expected to advise the Help Desk or the designated person in their department.

III. Guidelines for Use

- A. Cellular phones are provided for business use. Occasional or incidental personal use is permitted if messages are not used: (1) to solicit others for non-City sponsored profit or non-profit-oriented sales, ventures or fundraisers; (2) for religious or political causes, (3) to promote or distribute information about non-City affiliated organization; or (4) to commit any illegal acts.

Examples of acceptable incidental or personal use of the system include: (1) brief and infrequent friendly communication between employees and (2) brief and infrequent calls to communicate pertinent personal information when necessary.

- B. Employees shall reimburse the City for any personal calls made on City cellular telephones. Employees will be required to identify personal calls on the billing detail and reimburse the City by check or money order included with the payment requisition.
- C. Cellular phones should not be used when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient, and readily available.
- D. The City reserves the right to monitor the use of all City-owned cellular telephones.
- E. Cellular transmissions are not secure. Discretion should be used in relating confidential information.
- F. Employees in possession of cellular phones are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage or theft.
- G. Employees using privately owned cellular phones may be reimbursed for direct airtime for calls to conduct authorized City business when evidenced by a billing detail. Reimbursement shall be made through the City's expense claim process with the billing detail attached. City business calls must be clearly identified, including name of person/agency called and reason for call.
- H. City-owned cellular phones should not be used for personal long distance calls. Such calls should be billed directly to the employee's home phone or credit card.
- I. Use of cellular cameras and voice memo recorders is not permitted.
- J. Nextel National Direct Connect usage requires advanced approval from the appropriate department director.

IV. General Safety Guidelines

- A. Employees serving in public safety positions, who are using cellular phones in the performance of their duties, must balance the necessity of maintaining communications with the safe operation of their vehicle. Safe operation of the vehicle takes priority. Other employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone for business are expected to limit the use of cell phones while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are strongly encouraged to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not an option, employees are expected to keep the call short, use hands-free options if available, refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional issues, and keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.
- B. In situations where job responsibilities include regular driving and accepting of business calls, where feasible, hands-free equipment will be provided to facilitate the provisions

of this policy.

- C. Employees whose job responsibilities do not specifically include driving as an essential function, but who are issued a cell phone for business use, are also expected to abide by the provisions above. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.
- D. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

V. Use of Personal Cell Phones

Employees who own personal cellular phones are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines:

- A. Personal cell phones may be used during working hours if the use is infrequent and does not interfere with the employee's responsibilities. In such cases, personal cell phones should be placed on "vibrate", so as not to disturb other employees. The employee's immediate supervisor may prohibit the use of a personal cell phone when such use negatively impacts an employee's work performance.
- B. Personal cell phone use is strictly forbidden while operating a city vehicle, except as outlined in Section IV of this policy.

VI. Disciplinary Action

Improper use of cellular phones will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Approved:

Mike McKinnon, Mayor

Date