



## **Mobile Phone Policy**

Mobile phones and mobile phone services must be acquired following both the City's purchasing policies and procedures and the most recent edition of the Technology Resource Usage Policy and Work Rules issued by the Information Technology Department. All City-provided mobile phone services and equipment are subject to the approval of department directors or their designee

### **1.1 Usage Policy**

The City of Bellevue audits all City-provided mobile phone services (voice minutes used, text messages sent/received, and data service use) which include a review of the monthly billing by the individual's supervisor.

Most wireless transmissions are not secure. Therefore, individuals using wireless services should use discretion in relaying confidential information. Reasonable precautions should be made to prevent equipment theft and vandalism to City issued mobile phones.

### **1.2 Personal Use of City-Provided Mobile Phones**

The City of Bellevue issues mobile phones or provides a monthly mobile phone stipend to allow efficient and cost effective execution of City business. Incidental personal use of City-provided mobile phone lines is permitted. Any extra costs incurred, above what the City would normally pay, for such personal use to be reimbursed to the City according to paragraph 1.6 below.

If personal use of City-provided mobile phone lines becomes regular and on-going, the employee may be moved to a monthly mobile phone stipend or asked to obtain a personal mobile phone. See paragraph 1.5 below.

### **1.3. Shared and Vehicle-Installed City-Provided Mobile phones**

Where a City-provided mobile phone is assigned to more than one individual or is installed in a City vehicle, all individuals who make or receive personal calls on such phones shall make a record of such calls to assist in reconciling the mobile phone bill. Any extra costs incurred, above what the City would normally pay, for such personal use is to be reimbursed to the City according to paragraph 1.6 below.

### **1.4. Reimbursement for Business Use of Personal Mobile Phones**

Individuals who conduct City business on their personal mobile phones may apply for reimbursement for such calls or texts. To receive reimbursement, the individual must indicate the date and purpose of the call or text, and submit this information along with

the original phone bill. The reimbursement amount will be based on the cost of the City-business calls that exceed the normal monthly calling plan cost.

### **1.5 City paid monthly stipend for use of personal Mobile Phones**

At the department director's discretion employees who would otherwise be provided with a City issued mobile phone can request to receive a monthly stipend for using their personal mobile phone for City business. The monthly stipend is paid through the payroll system as a taxable benefit, and the amount of the monthly stipend is based on one of three plan options as determined appropriate by the employee's director, or designee:

A. Phone only	\$45 / month
B. Data plan	\$60 / month
C. Phone with data	\$85 / month
D. Wireless Priority Service	\$4.50 / month add on

(for some EOC/EOB members)

Stipend amounts for data plan and phone with data factor in a device replacement cost.

Employees who receive a monthly stipend agree to purchase a device that meets the City's technical standards, adhere to the City's Smart Phone policy and use their personal phone for City business ([Smartphone Policy](#)). In addition, employees must execute a Monthly Mobile Phone Stipend Agreement to be submitted to the employee's manager/supervisor for approval. The monthly stipend process is administered and overseen by the Finance and Information Technology departments.

### **1.6 Reimbursing the City for Personal Calls**

Individuals who use City-provided mobile phones for personal use (calls or text messages) are responsible for reimbursing the costs associated with the personal use. The amount of the reimbursement to the City will be equal to the increase in monthly charges to the City caused by the personal calls.

**For example:** The calling plan for a particular mobile phone is 60 minutes for \$19.95 with additional minutes at \$.25 per minute and \$.20 per text message, and the person assigned to the phone uses the phone for 5 minutes of personal calls and sends 5 personal text messages.

- a. If the total minutes for all calls does not exceed the 60 minutes in the plan during the month, the individual would owe nothing for the personal phone calls and would owe \$1.00 for the personal text messages
- b. If the total minutes exceed the 60 minutes, the individual would owe \$.25 for each minute over the 60 minutes, to a maximum of 5 minutes (the total length of their personal calls.)



## **Mobile Phone Policy FAQ**

**Q. How will I receive my monthly mobile phone stipend?**

A. The stipend will be effective on either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> of the initial month. You will receive 50% of the monthly stipend amount in each of your paychecks. The stipend is considered a taxable fringe benefit by the IRS and therefore the stipend will be added to your taxable earnings and appropriate federal taxes will be withheld each pay period.

**Q. If I'm using my personal mobile phone to conduct City business, are my phone records considered public records?**

A. Public records include any information documenting City business, so just like any work you conduct on personal devices (home e-mail account, personal computer, personal mobile phone or writing tablet you liberated from a hotel room), if the information you are creating meets the definition of a public record, you should preserve it just like you would any other public record.

**Q. If my phone records are considered to be a public record, does that mean they can be subject to a public records request?**

A. Yes, this is possible, but unlikely. The City has only had one public records request for mobile phone records since 2006, and it was made by the State Auditor's Office. This is not a frequent request.

**Q. Since this is a personal phone, are my phone number and other personal details not related to work subject to public disclosure?**

A. No, personal information about City employees such as phone number (mobile and land line), home e-mail, or home address are exempt from public disclosure under [RCW 42.56.250\(3\)](#). If there was a request for your phone records, the City's Public Records staff would work with you to determine what to collect, and redact any information that is not subject to public disclosure. You will be kept in the loop on all of this.

**Q. What do I need to do to maintain my personal mobile phone records if they are a public record?**

A. Maintain your records and information on your mobile phone just like you would if it was a city-owned device. As a general rule, text messages should be kept short and simple (ie: I'm at the inspection location; can you call my next appointment and let them know I'm running behind, etc.) which means they are transitory records and can be deleted once their administrative use is completed. If you receive a voicemail with specific details that you need to keep, take notes and maintain them as a record, or forward it to your City desk phone. Maintain your phone bill just like you would any other bill after you pay it. For specific questions, contact Records Management: [publicrecords@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:publicrecords@bellevuewa.gov).



## **Mobile Phone Policy FAQ**

**Q. Why are some employees not allowed to receive a stipend?**

Q. Each Department needs to determine the most cost effective method for providing the appropriate level of communication tools to their employees. Some Departments utilized pooled minute plans that allow staff with varying levels of usage to maintain phones that cost as low as \$9.99 each. In other situations the Department has determined that the equipment is a tool that must be available to execute the job and the risk of privately owned phones breaking and being unavailable for use is too significant.

**Q. I receive a monthly mobile phone stipend and am having problems with my mobile phone or PDA. Who do I call to resolve the problem?**

A. You will work with your mobile phone provider to correct the issue. If your provider deems that the connectivity problem is related to the City's network you can contact ITD.

**Q. I am going to receive a stipend. Can I buy any phone I want?**

A. If you are receiving a stipend for voice only, you may purchase any phone you want. If you are receiving either a data only or voice/data stipend you will need to purchase a phone/PDA that meets the City's standards and follow the City's Smartphone Policy: [Smartphone Policy](#)

**Q. I am on the EOC or EOB and currently have access to the National Communication Systems, Wireless Priority System (WPS). Should I retain that coverage?**

A. Yes! Employees currently authorized with the WPS will need to provide the Emergency Preparedness Division with your new Mobile phone information so they can activate it for you. You will be provided an additional monthly stipend of \$4.50 to cover the additional cost that will be billed on your personal mobile phone. If you should utilize the system during an emergency event you can submit any usage charges (\$.75 each) for reimbursement.

**Q. If I move to a stipend and get a new phone, will I be able to keep my work phone #?**

A. Yes, let the new provider know that you want to port your existing number to the new account. You will need to have the current city account number and 5 letter account code when you go sign up for service. Both numbers are available from your Department's phone account administrator.

The whole process should take 2 to 2.5 hours for the transfer to occur from your old phone.