

601. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

SCOPE: This policy applies to all employees of the City of Vancouver, unless otherwise addressed by a current collective bargaining agreement or public safety policy.

POLICY: Employees are expected to utilize telephone or communications equipment and services in a cost-effective and responsible manner, for business purposes.

GUIDELINES:

1. What is included under “Electronic Communication Equipment and Services”?
This includes, but is not limited to: Cellular phones and accounts, Blackberry (or similar) devices, Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's that are communication-enabled), pagers and point-to-point circuits, standard telephones, headsets, speakerphones, employee SCAN access, and other telecommunication peripherals.
2. Can an employee add, modify or remove telephone or communications equipment or services?
No. The Information Technology Department is responsible for adding, modifying or removing telephone or communications equipment and services at the City. Employees may request changes from their department's designated staff person. The designated staff person will work with Information Technology to make any required modifications to an employee's telephone or communications equipment, including its installation. All equipment purchases, including hardware or software, shall be made according to policies established by Procurement Services. The designated staff person shall work with Procurement Services.
3. Can an employee attach his/her personal communication devices to City systems or be reimbursed if he/she purchases electronic communication equipment that is planned for use with City systems?
No. For the City to support the use of communication equipment with City systems, the purchase of such equipment must be made using City funds and through approved City purchasing processes. Additionally, electronic communication equipment purchased by employees with the intent of using it for City purposes will not be eligible for City reimbursement. .
4. What types of long distance services are provided?
Two options are available for business-related long distance calls: the City's Portland lines or SCAN lines. The Portland lines provide telephone service to the Portland metropolitan area for a flat monthly fee. The SCAN lines should only be used to call long-distance locations outside the Portland area for city-related business. If either of these options results in repeated busy signals, contact the Information Technology Department for assistance.
5. Can collect calls be accepted at work?
Collect calls should only be accepted if the call is being made by a City employee for authorized business use.
6. What are the City's guidelines for personal phone calls at work?
Making and receiving personal calls should be limited. Use of personal cellular telephones and/or City telephone equipment and services should not result in additional costs to the City and should not interfere with performance of official duties or normal business operations. Employees are trusted to exercise good judgment in both the duration and frequency of such calls.
7. What are the rules governing the use of City-owned cellular phones?
Employees should not use cellular phones to place or receive calls when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient and readily available. Because cellular transmissions are not secure, employees should refrain from using them to relay confidential information.
8. Can an employee simply use his/her own cellular phone and receive reimbursement from the City for business-related calls?
No. The City normally does not reimburse employees for calls made on personal cellular phones.

9. Can employees make or receive personal calls on City cellular phones?

Personal calls on City cellular phones are discouraged. City cellular phones should not be treated as if they are an employee's personal cellular phone. That is, they should not be taken on vacation or used when an employee is off duty unless there is a specific work-related purpose in doing so. As with other City property, minor personal use of cellular phones, while not sanctioned by the City, is not prohibited by this policy. While employees may occasionally take or make personal calls at work, they should not be disruptive to the performance of the employee's or the employee's co-workers' work duties. Further, personal calls made or received on a cellular phone must be reimbursed by the employee.

City-owned cellular phones and services are provided to employees for the conduct of City business only. Employees must reimburse the City for personal usage within 10 days of receiving a detail of usage report.

10. Does the City provide 2-line cellular phones to employees, and what restrictions apply to their use?

Department managers may approve the purchase and use of a 2-line cellular phone for employees. In such cases, the primary line must be used only for City business. The employee is responsible for establishing an account with the cellular vendor for the second line to be used for personal use. The account should be established so the City business portion of the bill is sent to the City and the personal bill is sent to the employee's home address. Employees are financially responsible for the personal line account (as well as for personal calls made on the City account). In cases where the employee has established a personal account for a 2-line cellular phone, personal use of the primary (City business) line is prohibited. Finally, employees may be required to provide the City with personal account records for personal use of a City-issued 2-line cellular phone as part of any investigation related to an employee's use of the cellular phone.