

South Texas College

Cellular Telephone Use Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide uniform guidelines to College employees regarding the acquisition, use, and payment of College owned cellular (cell) phones and associated services. Individual organizational units, with the approval of the appropriate Vice President, may issue cell phones to staff members if it is deemed necessary to support college business.

Introduction

Cellular phones can be an effective communication tool for College employees when conventional telephone service is not readily available. However, the cost of cellular phone service is high compared to other communication devices such as conventional phone service. The College must ensure that proper management controls are in place regarding the use of cellular phones and the costs associated with their operation. Cellular phone usage should be based upon cost-effective practices that are applied consistently and comply with appropriate rules and regulations.

Vice Presidents and Financial Managers may establish cell phone use policies that are more but not less restrictive than this procedure.

General Guidelines

Acquisition and Assignment of Cell Phones

South Texas College provides cellular phones to a limited number of employees undertaking mission-related and business use. Employees who, through the nature of their work, are required to be accessible by phone regardless of the time of day, day of the week, or geographical location.

Vice Presidents and Financials Managers should determine the type of services necessary to fulfill specific college responsibilities. Costs related to these services are the responsibility of the departments.

Optional Plans Associated with Cell Phone Services

Optional plans available with cell phone services include items such as text messaging, email, internet, and vision plans. The purchase of these optional plans must be documented and approved in the Cellular Phone Request Form. These optional services should not be used on the cell phone if they are not included and approved on the Cellular Phone Request Form. The unapproved use of these services will result in higher fees to the College. The usage of approved optional plan services should be in compliance with these guidelines.

Business Use of Cell Phones

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that business and personal use of college owned cellular phones and other mobile devices be documented in a detailed manner. The IRS can declare that all undocumented use is personal and should be taxed, even if the calls were mostly business calls.

Non-business use is permitted as long as that use is of minimal time and duration, does not impede College functions, and does not result in additional cost to the College. Non-business use of an assigned unit shall be occasional, unusual in frequency, incidental, or for emergencies. If the non-business usage of the cellular phone results in a direct cost to the College, it is the employee's responsibility to reimburse the College. If the non-business usage of the cellular phone is beyond occasional, unusual in frequency, incidental, or for emergencies, it is the employee's responsibility to reimburse the College.

The employee must highlight each non-business phone call on the appropriate phone bill.

The financial manager of the organizational unit is responsible for addressing patterns of personal calls that would create college exposure under tax law. Employees should be prepared to justify the business nature of each phone call and use of optional plan services. The financial manager is responsible for determining whether the employee should reimburse the College for the cost of non-business calls. The financial manager is responsible for determining the amount of the reimbursement. Non-business use will result in a direct cost to the College in situations when the phone minutes included in the plan are exceeded. In determining whether non-business use is beyond occasional, unusual in frequency, incidental, or for emergencies, all the pertinent facts and circumstances should be considered.

Non-business phone calls will be reimbursed to the College, at actual cost, if determinable, or at \$.10 per minute.

Copies of the bills will be remitted to the Technology Resources Department which will be reviewed on a randomly selected basis.

Misuse of a College-provided cellular phone will result in suspension or loss of service or privileges. Violation of these guidelines will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Such disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable College policies.

Employees are not expected to use a personal cellular phone for official College business. Employees will not be reimbursed for the cost of using a personal cellular phone for official College business.

Procedures and Payments

- College employees desiring cellular phone services must submit a Cellular Phone Request Form to their Financial Manager or if the employee is the Financial Manager of the organizational unit, the form must be submitted to their immediate supervisor.
- After the Financial Manager approves the services, the form must be approved by the appropriate Vice President. The President's staff should have the President sign the form.
- Upon receiving the form, the Financial Manager will discuss the proposed usage with the requestor and the Purchasing Department to determine the most cost-effective plan for the user.
- When the proper plan and rates are determined, the user's organizational unit will submit a purchase requisition.
- The Purchasing Department will issue a Purchase Order.
- When received, the cellular phone will be delivered to the Purchasing Office.
- The Purchasing Office will issue the cellular phone to the user.
- The user will sign the Acknowledgment of Cellular Phone Usage Form (Attachment 1).

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Financial Manager

- Determine the type of equipment and services necessary to fulfill the employee's specific college responsibilities. Costs related to these services are the responsibility of the departments.
- Obtain a detailed bill for each cellular phone from the Accounts Payable Department and distribute to the appropriate employees for signature.
- Complete a monthly review of the detailed bill to identify personal charges which have been highlighted.
- Obtain signed copy of each bill from the appropriate employees.
- Review and sign the copy of each bill obtained from the appropriate employees and forward them to the Accounts Payable Department.
- Addressing patterns of misuse or abuse. Misuse or abuse shall be addressed according to college policies.
- Determine whether the employee should reimburse the College for the cost of non-business use. Non-business use is defined as use that results in a direct cost to the College or use that is beyond occasional, unusual in frequency, incidental, or for emergencies, considering all the pertinent facts and circumstances.
- Determine the amount the employee should reimburse the College for the cost of non-business use. Non-business phone calls will be reimbursed to the College, at actual cost, if determinable, or at \$.10 per minute.

Responsibilities of Employee

- Sign and submit a Cellular Phone Request Form to the appropriate Financial Manager and Vice President.
- Sign and submit an Acknowledgement of Cellular Phone Usage.
- Do not loan the cellular phone to anyone other than to another STC employee.
- Report any theft or loss of their cellular phone immediately to their organizational unit and the Purchasing Department.
- Return the cellular phone to the Purchasing Department upon their separation from college service.
- Refrain from using the cellular phone while driving in states where such use is prohibited by law, or in medical or other facilities where use is banned.
- Use hands-free technology for the cellular phone while driving in states where such technology is required by law.
- Document any activity that may be questionable upon public scrutiny, or that otherwise may have an appearance of impropriety. The documentation must explain the manner in which the activity was college business.

- Be prepared to justify the business nature of each phone call and use of optional plan services.
- Highlight each non-business phone call on the phone bill.
- Review and sign the monthly cellular phone statement and forward to the appropriate Financial Manager.
- Reimburse the College, as determined by the Financial Manager, for the cost of non-business use, as applicable. Non-business use is defined as use that results in a direct cost to the College or use that is beyond occasional, unusual in frequency, incidental, or for emergencies, considering all the pertinent facts and circumstances.

Responsibilities of Purchasing Office

- Review requests for cellular form and discuss appropriate plans with Financial Managers.
- Issue purchase orders to procure the phones.
- Maintain a current inventory of all cellular phones. Such inventory should include telephone numbers, along with the name of each employee. In addition, the agreed upon plan and the related purchase order number will be maintained for each employee. A copy of this inventory will be provided to the Accounts Payable Department on a monthly basis.
- Issue phones to employees.
- Suspend service when phone is lost.

Responsibilities of Vice Presidents

- Approve the assignment of cellular phones.
- Approve the Cellular Phone Request Form.

Responsibilities of the Technology Resources Department

- On a randomly selected basis, review the cellular phone statements for misuse.

South Texas College Acknowledgement of Cellular Phone Usage

All applicable South Texas College employees must read, understand, and comply with South Texas College's Cellular Phone Guidelines. By using the phone, you agree to comply with all rules, regulations, and policies of South Texas College and any applicable local, state, federal and international laws, guidelines, and regulations. Misuse of a College-provided cellular phone will result in suspension or loss of service or privileges. Violation of these guidelines will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Such disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable College policies.

Desk or cellular telephones may not be used to defame, harass, intimidate or threaten any other person(s).

(Print) Name of Employee

(Signature) of Employee

Date