



agriculture, land reform & rural development

Department:
agriculture, land reform & rural development
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

cellular telephone policy

**Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural
Development**

Cellular Telephone Policy

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1 Introduction and scope

This document has been compiled for the use of Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development officials and provides the policies and procedures related to the allocation and use of cellular telephones. This document outlines the procedures to be followed in each of the activities related to the allocation and use of cellular telephones. Any deviations from these procedures need to be approved by the Head of Department.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the document is to:

1. Formalise the procedures relating to cellular telephone allocation and use;
2. Provide help and guidance to all Unit Heads and to standardise the use of cellular telephones.

3 Objectives

To ensure the following:

1. The validity of the allocation process;
2. The accuracy and completeness of the process of managing the cellular telephone account during use and when the employee is no longer in the employed of the Department;
3. The validity of cellular costs relating to business use;
4. Procedures are provided for the allocation and usage of pool cellular telephones within the Department;
5. Employees are made aware of their responsibilities towards the safeguarding of the cellular telephone provided to them.

4 Policy

1. Cellular telephone is regarded as a tool which will assist staff in performing their duties for which they have been appointed and not a status symbol or fringe benefit.
2. Cellular phones are provided to qualifying employees to enable them to make business related calls when they do not have access to a landline telephone. Costs of the rental of the cellular phone contract, as well as calls up to the maximum limit (Annexure A) are paid by the Department.
3. If an employee should require the use of a cellular phone, but does not qualify for such a facility, the Department may allocate a pool cellular phone to the employee for a period of time as deemed necessary. The employee is to return the telephone to the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development once the need no longer exists.
4. Cellular telephones are provided to qualifying employees on contracts with predetermined service provider/s. A maximum monthly limit is also granted for the purpose of making business related calls. This limit is to be used exclusively for business related calls and is not to be exceeded. If the limit is exceeded the difference between the invoiced amount and the limit provided to the employee is to be paid by the employee.
5. The employee is to sign a declaration (**Annexure B**) to allow the excess between the monthly limit and the actual invoiced amount, to be deducted directly from his/her salary, should the employee not settle his/her account within the stipulated period of time.
6. For the top-up packages, the department will allocate a specific limit per month (**See Annexure A**) as per approved packages. Should the official exhaust the limit, any additional airtime required within a specific month will be for the account of the official.
7. Cellular telephone account payments are to be made to the financial management unit. Failing which, outstanding amounts will be deducted directly from the employee's salary on the following salary date.
8. The employee bears the responsibility for the safeguarding of the cell phone while it is in his/her possession. Measures should be adopted to ensure that the cell phone is free from damage and neglect, and that it is not stolen.
9. Refer to section 6 for procedures for the provision and administration of cellular phones to employees.

5 Documents

The following documentation pertains to the use of cellular phones:

1. Contract between service provider and Department;
2. Application and authorisation form (**Annexure B**) which includes the declaration allowing the Department to directly deduct from the official's salary the difference between the monthly cellular telephone limit (Annexure A) and the actual invoiced amount as received from the service provider;
3. Request form for usage of a pool cellular phone (**Annexure C**);
4. A file of pool cellular phones in use by officials within the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

6 Procedures

The following procedures should be followed when issuing employees with cellular telephones.

6.1 Allocation of Cellular Telephones

Cellular telephones are allocated to employees using the following criteria:

1. Cellular telephones are to be allocated to Department's officials as per their ranking within the Department and also if it is certain that the nature of the official's duties is such that a cellular telephone is required.
2. The rank of a Deputy Director upwards automatically warrants the allocation of a cellular telephone. If the official is below the ranking of a Deputy Director, the application must be motivated and recommended by the Senior Manager concerned and approved by the relevant Chief Director;
3. Exceptional cases are to be approved by the Head of the Department.

6.2 Application Procedure

When an employee requests a cellular telephone, the following information should be provided:

1. Motivation for use of a cellular telephone;
2. Is it necessary that the user at all times be available;
3. What are the financial implications for the issuing of the cellular telephone;
4. All applications must be on an official application form (Annexure B), motivated and recommended by the responsible Senior Manager and approved by the Head of Department (Accounting Officer).

6.3 Provision of Cellular Telephones

The authority to provide cell phones to staff within the Department rests with the Head of Department (Accounting Officer) or a delegated official. All contracts will be arranged by the Finance Unit.

Cellular telephones will be distributed by the Finance Unit. Officials are not to collect instruments or accessories from the service provider. The Head of Department will also have the power to withdraw such a facility if it is in the best interest of the Department to do so, or if the following circumstances have been identified:

1. If an official is not paying the excess between the monthly limit and the actual invoiced amount;
2. If an official is negligent;
3. If the cellular telephone is misused (example unnecessary calls);
4. If it is not a necessity according to the job description.

6.4 Ownership and Possession of Cellular Telephones

1. Cellular phones allocated to qualifying employees of the Department remain the property of the Department. The employees are responsible for the safekeeping of these cellular phones and ensuring that they function effectively.
2. The onus is on the employee to ensure that the cellular phone is protected against theft and damage.
3. The cellular phone provided to the employee forms part of the asset pool of the Department.
4. The officials who are allocated with cellular phones acknowledge that the instrument is a work tool and that they will therefore be accessible on the cellular phone during working hours and after hours in the case of officials whose responsibilities demand such accessibility.
5. If it is found that the cellular phone was lost due to negligence, the official will be required to replace the exact make and model of the equipment.

6.5 Limits for Usage of Cellular Telephones

Employees of the Department, who qualify for a cellular phone, have a monthly limit which is to be adhered to (Annexure A). All calls within this limit are deemed to be business calls.

This limit will be paid for by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. The different categories of staff, which qualify for a cellular telephone, are allocated different limits according to their levels within the Department. This limit covers the rental, as well as the cost of the calls. This limit will be reviewed annually.

All amounts above the determined limits per month may be considered excessive and recoverable from the official concerned.

In terms of top-up packages, all officials will be liable for any amount above the approved top-up limit.

6.6 Managing the Cellular Telephone Account

1. There should be a detailed account for each individual user of cellular telephones summarised into one account, within the Department;
2. This account should be paid in total to the supplier and copies of the individual accounts of the users should be retained for reference purposes;
3. Once the itemised statements are received, a debit will be charged against the respective official's salary for any amounts which exceed the monthly limit;
4. A record of individual cellular phone (monthly) expenses should be maintained to render expenses for the Department, which would enable comparisons to be made so that expenses of this nature are measured and controlled.

6.7 Use of Pool Cellular Telephones

Not all officials will qualify for the permanent allocation of a cellular telephone. Certain officials will from time to time need the use of a cellular telephone in the course of their duties. This will allow for the acquisition of a pool of cellular telephones that can be accessed by such officials. The following guidelines should be followed:

1. Senior Management will decide on the number of pool cellular phones required for the Department;
2. The pool phones are kept at Head Office and will be controlled and distributed by the Procurement Officer;
3. Records of all calls made are to be kept by officials that take a pool cellular phone from the Department, these records being regularly checked by the Finance Unit;
4. An official who takes out a pool cellular phone assumes total responsibility for the phone while it is in his or her possession;
5. Pool cellular telephones will be purchased on contract from approved service provider/s;
6. Unit Heads must give authorisation for their officials to apply for the use of a pool cellular telephone;
7. Pool phones should be booked seven days in advance.
8. A file must be kept which records the following details:
 - a) Details relating to the particular cellular telephone (model, serial number, etc);
 - b) Details of official requiring use of the cellular telephone;
 - c) The date and time the cellular telephone is booked out, as well as the date and time when it is returned;
 - d) The reasons for the use of the cellular telephone each time the cellular phone is booked out.
9. Upon return of the cellular phone by the official it is to be inspected to ensure it is in the same condition as it was before it was issued and in working order. If the cellular telephone has been damaged, it is to be repaired before it is returned to the Department;
10. The Department will receive itemised bills for each of the cellular telephones and this is to be checked against the file;
11. Private calls made from pool cellular phones are to be paid for by the user and, if not paid, will be deducted from the salary of the person concerned in the next salary date;
12. Users of pool cellular telephones are required to ensure that the instrument is in good working condition at all times;
13. Users of pool cellular telephones are to ensure that such allocated telephones are not used by other parties.

6.8 Liability for Cellular Telephones

1. The official who is allocated the cellular telephone should take all precautionary measures to ensure that it is safe (guidelines provided below: 6.9);
2. If the cellular telephone is damaged or lost as a result of negligent use by the user, the user will be obliged replace the cellular telephone or bear all costs which arise as a direct result of the negligence.

6.9 Guidelines for the handling of the Cellular Telephone

1. Cellular telephones must be in possession of the official at all times (not left lying on desks or in offices);
2. Cellular telephones must be carried in such a way that it is not visible while appearing in public;
3. The use of cellular telephones in open areas (i.e. in the streets and in public places) should be avoided at all costs. Voicemail facilities should be used instead;
4. Officials who are provided with cellular telephones by the Department must ensure that these are properly locked away and stored in a safe place;
5. When a cellular telephone is stored in a briefcase, handbag, etc. these are to be under the personal control of the employee responsible for the items;
6. Cellular telephones should not be stored in a visible place in a motor vehicle when an employee is travelling. Cellular telephones should not be left in the cradles of the hands free kits when stopping at traffic lights or at any other traffic signs;
7. All cellular telephones, which have been lost, should be reported to the South African Police Service and the Department within 24 hours.

6.10 Use in Cars

1. Hands free apparatus and car kit installation is optional and for the employees own account;
2. The Department will not be held liable for any damages and or injuries caused by accidents or traffic fines which are directly or indirectly the result of the use of the cellular phone while traveling in a motor vehicle;
3. The Department will not be liable for unlawful use of the phone, including infringement of the law resulting from failure to use the hands free apparatus while driving.

6.11 Official Leaving Department or Contract Expires


1. All cellular telephones must be returned to the Department at the expiry of the service contract or if the official leaves the employ of the Department;
2. Unit Heads must ensure that cellular phones of officials, who terminate their services with the Department are returned before leaving;
3. On expiry of the cellular phone contract, the Department may renew the contract and obtain a free replacement cellular telephone;
4. The Department may replace the old cellular telephone with the new replacement cellular telephone;

7 Effective Date

This policy is effective from 01 May 2011

It is very important to note that cellular phones should not be used as a replacement for landlines. The landlines must be used as far as possible as it is more cost effective.

This policy has been endorsed by Management.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Date: 2 / 04 / 2011

Annexure A:

**Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural
Development**

MONTHLY LIMITS FOR CELLULAR TELEPHONE USAGE

The monthly limits are determined by the free airtime contract packages offered by approved service provider/s. The maximum limit will be the monthly contract charges (which includes Autosim, CLIP, Itemised Billing, Insurance, Telephony and VAT).

RANK	CONTRACT PACKAGE	CURRENT COST* (excl Vat & Insurance)
Head of Department	Talk 500 (Vodacom)	R800
	Procall 600 (MTN)	R949
Senior Manager	Talk 500 (Vodacom)	R800
	Procall 600 (MTN)	R949
Manager	Talk 240 (Vodacom)	R430
	Procall 300 (MTN)	R565
Assistant Manager and lower	Talk 120 (vodacom)	R315
	Procall 120 (MTN)	R285

Annexure B:

Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

**APPLICATION AND AUTHORISATION FOR ISSUING OF
CELLULAR PHONES**

A. INSTRUCTIONS:

This application must be completed by the applicant, recommended by the responsible Unit Head and approved by the Accounting Officer of the Department.

B. APPLICATION DETAILS:

1. Details of applicant

Name & Surname.....

Rank..... Unit.....

Persal No.....

2. Motivation for use of cellular phone

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3. DECLARATION

I, the undersigned undertake to comply at full to the official Departmental policy regarding cellular phones as outlined in departmental cellular phone policy.

I agree that all expenses above the identified maximum limit will be for my own account.

Should I not settle my account within the stipulated period, I hereby allow the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to deduct

directly from my salary the excess between the monthly limit and the actual invoiced amount.

I further agree that the approval of the cell phone subsidy/authorization can immediately be withdrawn if it is found that this agreement is misused. In this case all contractual obligations of the cell phone will be my sole responsibility.

This agreement will be valid for a maximum period of two years in accordance with the cell phone contract period. The instrument remains the property of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development at the end of the contract period.

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

.....
RANK

RECOMMENDED/NOT RECOMMENDED

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

.....
RANK

.....
UNIT

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

.....
SIGNATURE

.....
DATE

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Annexure C:

Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

POOL CELLULAR PHONE USAGE REQUEST FORM

A. INSTRUCTIONS

Departmental pool cellular phones, if available, will be allocated to officials for a maximum period of seven days. A new request may be made for usage of a pool cellular phone at the end of the seven day period, unless another request is pending for its use.

Authorisation for usage of a pool cellular phone must be given by the official's Senior Manager.

B. OFFICIAL'S DETAILS

Name & Surname.....

Rank..... Unit.....

Persal No.....

C. REASON FOR REQUEST

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.....
.....
.....

D. REQUESTED USAGE PERIOD

From: To:

Number of Days: (Maximum seven days)

Maximum Number of Minutes per day:

E. DECLARATION

I, the undersigned undertake to comply fully with the official Departmental policy regarding the use of pool cellular phones as outlined in the departmental cellular phone policy.

I assume total responsibility for the phone while in my possession and undertake to return it in the same condition as it was when issued to me.

I understand that if the phone is not returned at the end of the seven day period the Department will block the phone and I will be liable for all reconnection fees.

I agree that private calls, as checked against the itemised bills, will be for my own account. Should I fail to settle my account within the stipulated period, I hereby allow the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to deduct directly from my salary the outstanding amount.

.....
Signature Date

Authorised by:

.....
Signature Date

Unit Head:
Unit

F. CELLULAR PHONE DETAILS

Model: Serial No:

Date issued: Time:

.....
Official's signature Issuer's Signature

Date returned: Time:

.....
Official's signature Receiver's Signature