



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - CELLULAR PHONE POLICY



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1 Introduction and scope

This document has been compiled for the use of Department employees 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. Deviations from these procedures need to be approved by the Head of Department.

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 Departmental Heads and to standardise the use of cellular telephones. This document deals exclusively with the allocation and use of cellular telephones.

2. 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 employee is no longer employed by the Department.
3. The validity of cellular costs relating to business use.
4. Guidelines are provided for the allocation and usage of pool cellular telephones within the Department.
5. Officials are made aware of their responsibilities towards the safeguarding of the cellular telephone provided to them.

3 Policy

1. Department policy is that a cellular telephone is regarded as a tool which will assist staff in performing the 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 and receive calls when they do not have access to a landline telephone. Costs of the rental of the cellular phone contract, as well as all related calls are paid by the Department up to a specified limit.
3. If an employee should require the use of a cellular phone, but does not qualify for such a facility (as per procedures for the allocation of cellular telephones), 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 once the need no longer exists.
4. Cellular telephones are provided to qualifying employees on contracts with predetermined service providers. A monthly limit is also granted. This limit is not to be exceeded. ~~The Service Provider is responsible for~~ 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. The employee is to sign a declaration to allow the excess between the monthly limit and the actual invoiced amount, to be deducted directly from his/her salary.
5. On a monthly basis, the itemised billing statements are to be submitted to the relevant persons within the administration department. The cost of the private calls is to be clearly identified and settled by the employee.
6. 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. All cellular telephones which are provided to officials by the Department , are to be insured by the Department
7. Refer to section 5 for procedures for the provision and administration of cellular phones to employees.

4 Documents

The following documentation pertains to the use of cellular phones:

1. Contract between service provider and Department ;
2. Application form;

Procedures

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

4.1 Allocation of Cellular Telephones

Cellular telephones could be allocated to officials using the following criteria:

1. Staff members who, because of the nature of their work, need to be contacted by the Department especially after hours or on week-ends;
2. Cellular telephones are to be allocated to Department 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. The rank of a Director upwards automatically warrants the allocation of a cellular telephone. If the official is below the ranking of a Director, his application must be motivated by the Director concerned;
3. Staff members who are away from their place of work and need to be contacted by the office on a regular basis;
4. Certain events, depending, on the nature of the work performed at the relevant Department , which require close co-ordination and contact between the office and the staff member;
5. The acquisition of the cellular telephone must be absolutely essential and in the interests of the Department that the requirements cannot be satisfied through a less costly medium;
6. Exceptional cases, which do not meet the above criteria, are to be approved by the Head of the Department.

4.2 Application Procedure

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

1. Reasons for the request of a cellular telephone;
2. Which other means of communication were considered;
3. Is it necessary that the user at all times be available;
4. Is the cellular network in operation within the area of use of the cellular phone;
5. Why is the cellular telephone the most economic instrument;

6. What are the financial implications of the cellular telephone, that is, which tariff structure and which services are contemplated.
7. All applications must be on an official application form, which is to provide the necessary details and be approved by the provisioning officer. The application form must be motivated by a Director and approved by the Director: Financial Management.

4.3 Provision of Cellular Telephones

The authority to provide cell phones to staff within the Department rests with the Accounting Officer or a delegated official. The Accounting Officer 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 for his/her private calls;
2. If an official is negligent;
3. If the cellular telephone is mis-used (example unnecessary calls);
4. If it is not a necessity according to the job description.

4.4 Ownership and Possession of Cellular Telephones

1. Cellular phones allocated to employees of the Department which qualify for this benefit, remain the property of the State. The employees are responsible for the safekeeping of these cellular phones and ensuring that they function effectively. The onus is on the employee to ensure that the cellular phone is protected against theft and damage.
2. The cellular phone provided to the employee forms part of the asset pool of the Department
3. 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 (directly or through voice mail) during working hours and, by agreement, after hours in the case of officials whose responsibilities demand such accessibility.
4. Users will be financially liable for insurance excess and sim swap (stolen/lost handsets). Should the insurance claim be declined, the employee will be held responsible for whatever expenses that the department will incur to replace the phone.

4.5 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, all calls within this limit are deemed to be business calls.

This limit will be paid for by the Department . The different categories of staff, which qualify for a cellular telephone, are allocated different allowances 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.

The following guidelines are recommended for the treatment of private calls:

1. All accounts outstanding over seven working days shall be recovered from the official's salary without further notice;
2. All amounts exceeding the cellular telephone limit are to be approved by the official's supervisor, before these amounts are deducted from the official's salary;
3. Managers in submitting applications for officials reporting to them shall also undertake to ensure that the facility will be used for business purposes only and that all private calls will be paid for;
4. Officials will receive an itemised billing statement monthly, which is to be submitted to their manager. Private calls to be identified separately by the official;
5. The Department reserves the right to check the itemised billing from time to time as a mechanism for ensuring that the cellular telephone facility is not being abused (i.e. that the amount being paid by the Department is not for personal calls);
6. All amounts above the determined limits per month may be considered excessive and recoverable over and above the private calls from the official concerned.

4.6 Purchase of Cellular Telephones and Contracts

After approval has been granted by the Head of Department, the following guidelines are recommended:

1. The equipment must comply with the requirements of the Global System Mobile Communications (GSM) cellular network;
2. The service must be obtained from firms that are formally associated with the network licensees;

3. The Department will, for the acquisition of cellular telephones, adhere strictly to the Procurement Policy;
4. Cellular phones are to be purchased on contract, from approved service providers;
5. The service provider will be identified by the Procurement Administration and a two year contract will be entered into between the Department and the service provider;
6. All cellular telephones are to be acquired directly by the State and belong to the State and not to the official. Government officials are not to communicate with the service provider, any queries are to be channeled through the Head of the Procurement Section;
7. The official is to notify the administrative representative in the Department with the relevant details (contract number, cellular phone number etc) within seven working days after the phone has been obtained;
8. Officials should obtain cellular phones that are freely available with the particular cellular phone contract. Should an employee wish to obtain a cellular phone, which is not free with a contract, special approval is to be obtained from the Head of Department.

4.7 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 all private calls and 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.

4.8 Liability for and Insurance of Cellular Telephones

1. Cellular telephones, which are provided to the qualifying officials, are to be insured by the State. The responsibility lies with the Department to obtain the insurance.

2. The official who is allocated the cellular telephone should take all precautionary measures to ensure that it is safe (guidelines provided below);
3. If the cellular telephone is damaged or lost as a result of negligent use by the user, the user will be obliged to settle the excess amount as stipulated by the insurer and any additional costs, which arise as a direct result of the negligence.

4.9 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 Loss Control Officer within 24 hours.

4.10 Use in Cars

1. 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 may purchase a walk and talk kit, as legislation requires that a person may not hold a cellular phone while driving, if the official is required to travel on a regular basis;

4. The Department of 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.

4.11 Official Leaving Department or Contract Expires

1. All cellular telephones must be returned to the Provisioning Administration component at the expiry of the service contract or if the official leaves the employ of the Department
2. Heads of Administration 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, Procurement Administration may renew the contract and obtain a free replacement cellular telephone;
4. Procurement Administration may replace the old cellular telephone with the new replacement cellular telephone;
5. On expiry of the cellular phone contract, the user should return the cellular telephone to the Department . It should be disposed of in accordance with the normal policy on the disposal of assets or added to the pool of phones at the Department;
6. It is the duty of every official to hand in the cellular telephone at Procurement when s/he leaves.

A Appendix 1: Monthly Limits for Cellular Telephone usage for the Department .

The following limits should serve as a guideline when granting amounts to officials for usage of cellular telephones. The amounts below include the monthly rental and include the cost of the business calls per various positions:

Position	Monthly Limit
MEC	No limit
Head of Department	No limit
Chief Director and Director	R 800-00
Deputy Director	R 600-00
Assistant Director and lower	R 400-00.