



Policy on the Allocation and Management of Cell Phones

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Approved by Head of
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Ms GE Matlaopane

Contents

Background	3
Definitions	3
Policy Aim	3
Policy Scope	4
Policy Statement	4
Review and Distribution	7
Acknowledgements and Sources	7

Background

- 1.1. The Northern Cape Department of Health continually supports the enhancement of employees work performance by making available the tools of trade.
- 1.2. Taking into account the vast geographical nature of the Province and department's service delivery policy mandates, certain managers and staff, due to their official positions or the nature of their work, need to be consistently contactable for business purposes, to pursue departmental requirements and / or in the event of emergencies.
- 1.3. The cell phone is regarded as a necessary tool which enables officials of the department to make and receive work related communications when they are not physically at the office.
- 1.4. While cell phones should primarily be regarded as a tool that could lead to better productivity through making officials more available and connected to their work related calls, it can also be abused with high costs to the department.
- 1.5. Therefore, this policy is intended to regulate the administration and usage of an employer-provided cell phone by employees of the Department.

Definitions

- 2.1. **"Cell Phone"** means a standard mobile telephone with the ability to make and receive calls, text, or data messages without a cable connection, and supplied by registered service provider.
- 2.2. **"Service Provider"** means an enterprise registered to provide cellular phones and connectivity.
- 2.3. **"Official"** means an employee of the Department Of Health in the Northern Cape Provincial Government appointed in terms of Public Service Act 1994 as amended.

Policy Aim

3. This policy aims to standardise employee acquisition and usage of cell phones in the Northern Cape Department of Health.

Policy Scope

4. This policy applies to all employees of the Northern Cape Department of Health whose service delivery requirements necessitate the use of an employer provided cell phone.

Policy Statement

5. It is the policy of the Northern Cape Department of Health that the allocation of a cell phone will be according to the following general principles:

5.1. Eligibility

- 5.1.1. The eligibility for the use of an employer- provided cell phone shall be determined by the requirement of the job function of the employee, especially where the employee is required to:

- 5.1.1.1. Travel for business and private purpose on a regular basis;

- 5.1.1.2. Contact clients, colleagues or management with regard to Department business, after hours.

5.2. Acquisition of a Cell Phone

- 5.2.1. Access to employer-provided cell phone must be approved by the Accounting Officer or her/his delegate on prior application.

- 5.2.2. Once an application is approved, the Supply Chain Management Unit of the department shall enter into a contract with a registered cell phone service provider for the acquisition and use of cell phones on behalf of qualifying officials;

- 5.2.3. The contract must be recorded in the name of the user-employee at supply chain management unit;

- 5.2.4. The contract may include all-inclusive packages generally referred to as business chat, talk packages or airtime bundles;

- 5.2.5. Pool Cellular phones shall be managed by the Supply Chain Management Unit of the department.

5.3. Designated Level and Month Limit

Designated level	Maximum airtime limit per month
Member of Executive Council	Unlimited
Head of Department	Unlimited
Chief Directors	R1700.00
Directors	R1500.00
Deputy Directors	R800.00
Other qualifying officials	R500.00

5.4. General Conditions for Approval

- 5.4.1. Members of the Senior Management Service automatically qualify for use of departmental supplied cell phones;
- 5.4.2. The Programme/unit should inform the Accounting Officer regarding the availability of sufficient funds in the budget for these expenses prior to approval;
- 5.4.3. The approval of a cell phone application is linked to a job position, function or demonstrated need (see section 5.4.4) and not the occupant of the post;
- 5.4.4. Cognisance should be taken of employees with a rank lower than SMS but whose responsibilities is of such a nature that there is a need for a cell phone. However the following conditions for approval must be met:
 - 5.4.4.1. The employee frequently needs to be in immediate contact with political office bearers and / or SMS members;
 - 5.4.4.2. The employee continuously has to perform tasks of a critical or urgent nature and therefore has to be available during and after official hours to receive / make business calls;
 - 5.4.4.3. The employee cannot be reached on a regular basis by means of available or cheaper means of communication or he/ she cannot reach any other relevant officers.

5.5. Reimbursement of Costs

- 5.5.1. In exceptional cases (with reasonable cause), where the user exceeds the applicable predetermined limit for the department work, the Accounting Officer

may approve re-imbursement of costs subject to submission of a monthly claim and an itemised bill from the service provider to the Department.

5.6. Responsibility for the Cell Phone

- 5.6.1. Every employee has a responsibility to be ethical and efficient in the official use of cellular telephones.
- 5.6.2. Every employee is responsible for the safe-keeping and maintenance of his/her provided cell phone;
- 5.6.3. Theft, loss or damage of a cell phone must be reported immediately to the Supply Chain Management Unit and to the employee's supervisor;
- 5.6.4. Costs for any damage or loss that occurs as a result of negligence on the part of cell phone holder, shall be borne by the said official.

5.7. Termination of Cell Phone Contract

- 5.7.1. Before the end of employment by the official with the department, or if his/her duties change to such an extent that he/she no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the official will be required to return the cell phone and sim-card on or before his/her last day of employment with the department, and the obligation of the department in terms of his/her cell phone contract ceases immediately;
- 5.7.2. Where a departmental cell phone contract is due to end and that contract is transferred to an employee in his/her private capacity, the transfer costs charged by the service provider will be paid by the department.
- 5.7.3. Although the cell phone shall remain the property of the Department due to its perishable nature, the official shall not be obliged to return the cell phone upon termination of service unless the Accounting Officer directs otherwise.

5.8. Monitoring on the use of Cell Phones

- 5.8.1. An employee who uses an employee-provided cell phone is prohibited from using a cell phone whilst driving irrespective of whether the phone call is personal or work-related;

- 5.8.2. The department has authorization to monitor the cell phone usage on a routine and/or special case basis.

5.9. Conversion

- 5.9.1. User-employees who were issued with cell phones in terms of an existing cell phone policy with a cell phone service provider agreement, will continue on that basis until the relevant contract (s) expire(s);
- 5.9.2. Cell phones handsets that become available after expiry of the agreement(s) must be handled in accordance with this policy.

Review and Distribution

6. The Chief Financial Officer is the responsible manager for this Policy and for ensuring it is reviewed and updated.
7. This policy will be reviewed after 3 years but before 5 years of the last publication date. If necessary an updated version will be issued, if not a formal cover letter will be issued to supplement the cover of this Policy (identifying a revised publication date).
8. The Director for Policy & Planning will distribute updated versions to:
- Member of the Executive Council
 - Accounting Officer
 - All Chief Directors, Directors and Deputy Directors (who will in turn distribute to their staff as appropriate.)

Acknowledgements and Sources

9. Public Service Act, 1994 as amended
10. Department of Public Service and Administration guidelines (Minutes E1/21 dated 28 June 2002)
11. Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999)
12. National Treasury Regulations