

CITY OF BREMERTON HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY		CITY TELEPHONE POLICY	
INDEX Human Resources Administration 3-10-12	EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/1/1995 REVIEW DATE: REVISED DATE: 10/1/1996 11/5/2005	APPROVED: _____ CARY BOZEMAN, Mayor	

REFERENCE

B.M.C. 2.96
WA. Auditor’s Bulletin No. 014 (3/13/96)

PURPOSE

To provide direction to City employees and elected officials regarding permissible use of City telephones including cellular communications technology.

POLICY

CITY TELEPHONES: City telephones are not intended for personal use. Therefore, personal phone calls should be kept to a minimum. It is understood that at times employees need to take care of a personal matter over the phone during work hours. Such usage is acceptable as long as it does not unduly interfere with City operations.

The individual using a City telephone to place or receive a personal call that incurs a cost to the City will provide the Department Head the following information:

- Telephone number called
- Date and time of call
- Approximate length of call

The individual placing or receiving the personal call will be responsible for full reimbursement to the City for all charges. If the employee or his/her family has an emergency, and if such emergency necessitates use of a City phone to communicate, the City may at its discretion waive reimbursement to the City. Examples of an emergency include, but are not limited to:

- Illness or injury of a family member, or employee
- Unanticipated work requirement where the employee needs to inform home that he/she will arrive later than expected.

“Emergency” will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Department Head or designee.

CELLULAR TELEPHONES:

Department Heads are responsible for the authorization and cost of all cellular telephones and other wireless devices issued to employees within their departments. Department Heads are also responsible for the administration of the City stipend for personal cellular telephone usage.

A committee shall be established consisting of representatives from each department that shall meet quarterly to review department cellular telephone plans or a department's use of the City stipend plan to ensure that the City's policies regarding cellular telephones are financially beneficial to the City.

An annual report demonstrating departmental compliance with the City of Bremerton Telephone policy shall be made to the Audit Committee on December 31 of each year.

CITY STIPEND PROGRAM FOR USE OF PERSONAL CELLULAR PHONE:

On behalf of the City, if a Department Head determines that an employee needs to carry a cellular telephone for City business the employee may, upon approval of his or her Department Head, be eligible to receive a monthly stipend for use of their personal cellular telephone. The personal cellular telephone would replace the need to carry a city-owned cellular telephone. The following is required to receive a City stipend for use of a personal cellular telephone:

1. An employee must agree in writing (City's Stipend Agreement) to have his or her personal cellular telephone accessible and available at all times during City business hours or while on call or standby or other times that an employee may be required to be available for City business.

Department Heads shall have the sole discretion to determine what department employees are eligible to receive a stipend for use of a personal cellular telephone.

Upon approval of the Department Head the City shall pay a stipend of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per month to an employee using his or her cellular telephone for City business.

Such payment of stipend will be considered “wages” for federal income tax purposes and are subject to withholding and payment of employment taxes.

The stipend payment for use of a personal cellular telephone for City business shall be a voluntary program between the City and the employee.

CITY ISSUANCE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONE:

The City may supply a cellular telephone when such loan or issuance is a benefit to the City and will not be construed as a privilege or benefit. Use of a City cellular telephone may be of convenience to the employee or elected official, but convenience alone will not determine usage.

Additionally, employees or elected officials from time to time, or on a regular basis, may be provided a city-owned cellular telephone for the use while on the job.

“Loan” of a cellular telephone occurs when an employee or elected official will have possession of the equipment for a predetermined time (for example, while attending a conference or seminar for one or two days).

Cellular telephones issued to an employee or elected official will remain the property of the City. Should such property become damaged lost or stolen due to the negligence of the employee or elected official, such property will be replaced or repaired at the employee or elected official’s own expense. Obligation to replace or repair will not include “normal wear and tear”.

The Department Head or designee will monitor on a monthly basis, City issued cellular telephone bills. The employee will submit payment for any portion of the bill that resulted from personal use at that time.

Cellular telephones will not be used when more cost effective means of communication are readily available (i.e. two-way radio or land line telephones). In an emergency, or if safety is a consideration, this provision does not apply.

Prohibited Use:

The following uses of the City telephones (including voice mail) are strictly prohibited:

1. Using the phone system to pursue outside business ventures or political or religious causes.
2. Sending offensive or improper voice mail message, including those of a racial or sexual nature.
3. Using the phone system in a frivolous nature, such as for practical jokes.

ATTACHMENTS

Agreement for City Stipend for use of personal cellular telephone for City Business.

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**EMPLOYEE AGREEMENT
FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CITY OF BREMERTON'S
STIPEND PROGRAM FOR USE OF PERSONAL CELLULAR TELEPHONES**

I _____ do hereby acknowledge and understand:
(PLEASE PRINT)

1. That the use of my personal cellular telephone for City business is a voluntary program.
2. That I agree to have my personal cellular telephone accessible and available at all times during my schedule for City business hours or while on call or standby or other times that I may be required to be available for City business;
3. That because I am willing to use my personal cellular telephone for official City of Bremerton matters, the City of Bremerton will reimburse me with a monthly stipend of \$25.00 per month (the "Reimbursement"). That the Reimbursement will be included in my regular pay check. That because the Reimbursement is not being paid pursuant to an "accountable plan," as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, the Reimbursement is considered W-2 wages for federal income tax purposes and will be subject to all required employment and income tax withholdings. That such treatment is required by the Internal Revenue Code even though the City of Bremerton is submitting the Reimbursement only to assist me in defraying my personal monthly cellular telephone bill. That by my signature hereto, I acknowledge that the federal income tax treatment of the Reimbursement as W-2 wages is not controlling for any other purpose whatsoever;
4. That the use of my cell phone for City business shall not be considered a right or obligation or past practice and is not an on going benefit that is included in the my overall compensation package;
5. That the City may terminate this stipend program at any time;
6. That I have fully read and agree to the terms of this agreement as presented above.

Employee Signature

Date