



CELLULAR DEVICES

County Executive Office

Information Technology Services

Ventura County Cellular Device Policy



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I. PURPOSE

This policy specifies the proper acquisition and use of cellular devices and works in concert with the County's Employee Technology Use Policy. The policy's flexibility enables agencies and departments to leverage the right tools in order to provide the best service to our community while minimizing associated costs.

II. COUNTY OWNED CELLULAR DEVICE ISSUANCE CRITERIA

Individual agency/ department directors are responsible for determining the business need and authorizing issuance of County-owned cellular device. Such determination is not to be based on position or title within the organization and the justification should be consistent with one or more of the following criteria:

1. Emergency Services/First Responders – the County employee requires immediate direct communications in order to provide for the safety of citizens, County employees, or County assets.
2. 24x7 Accessibility– the nature of the County employee's work assignment requires frequent, immediate direct communications or access to time sensitive information to conduct County business on a 24x7 schedule and use of a cellular device would be more cost effective and productive than alternative methods of communication.
3. Frequent Field Work - the nature of the County employee's work assignment requires frequent travel to remote work areas to conduct County business and use of a cellular device would provide a cost effective and productive method of communication.
4. Pooled Cellular Device – Employees may share cellular devices that are not assigned to a specific employee on an as needed basis. Pooled cellular devices can be made available by the department at the director's discretion. Pooled device use must still be justified using criteria #1 thru #3.

Personal Cell/Smart Phone Use

If an employee's data and/or phone usage is less than 30 minutes per month on a County-owned cellular device and it is not necessary for the employee to have access to County email and



calendar, department directors are encouraged to have the employee utilize their personal cellular device.

Employees whose needs are consistent with the above guidelines but choose to use their personal cellular device rather than be provided a County cellular device to conduct County business may be approved for reimbursement of their County business usage. This reimbursement will be the indicated value of the County business call minutes on the bill. The employee will be required to provide a copy of their detailed billing in order to receive such reimbursement. The County reserves the right to deny reimbursement where it is determined that there was not a justified business need or where it is determined that there was a more economical means of communication (i.e., land-line telephone). Employees choosing to use their personally owned cellular device and want to sync these devices to the County email system must have the approval of their agency/department director.

Data usage on personal cellular devices will not be reimbursed due to the difficulty in identifying personal vs business use.

III. CELLULAR DEVICE USAGE

County-owned cellular devices are to be used primarily for County business and in a manner consistent with the County Employee Technology Use Policy. Personal cellular device use reimbursement is governed by Category II, “County-Owned Cellular Device Issuance and Justification” of this policy and takes precedence over that specified within the County Employee Technology Use Policy.

In order to better ensure the safety of our employees and citizens, cellular device use while driving on duty, driving any County-owned vehicle, or conducting County business on a personally owned cellular device will be limited as follows:

- A. Receiving telephone calls is acceptable while actively driving if the phone or vehicle is equipped with a “hands free” system (e.g. Bluetooth). Cell/smart phone calls may be initiated if they are equipped with a voice activated dialing function. Otherwise, drivers conducting County business or using County vehicles shall pull over to the side of the road at a safe location, stop the vehicle, and then operate the cellular device.
- B. Drivers, while actively driving on County business or using County owned vehicles, are not to use any functionality on their cellular devices (e.g. calendaring, Internet, sending or reading received text or email messages).



- C. It is recognized that public safety officials and uniformed officers receive advanced defensive driving training. Therefore, the use of cellular and other electronic communication devices by public safety officials and uniformed officers is dictated by the urgency required at any moment, as long as such use is within the boundaries defined by their defensive driving training.
- D. Cellular device based Global Positioning System (GPS) may be utilized on County provided telephones to enhance employee safety.

County of Ventura agencies and departments may adopt additional work rules concerning the use of cellular device technology during work hours, and employees must fully comply with individual work rules governing cellular device use.

IV. CELLULAR DEVICE ACQUISITION

Agencies and departments may select a service provider and service plan of their choice that provides the best service coverage for their location(s) that is the most cost effective from among those vendors authorized by the General Services Agency, Procurement Services. This information may be obtained by phone (654-3750) or from the "Price Agreements" page of the Procurement Services website.

Phone selection should be consistent with acquiring the least expensive phone meeting the business needs of the employee's job function. All cellular devices ((e.g. phone, iPad, etc.) costing in excess of \$300 dollars, including accessories, require additional approval of the County Executive Officer or their appointed designee.

Employees who want to move from having a County-owned cellular device to a personally-owned cellular device and wish to keep their existing equipment, may purchase their County-owned cellular equipment on a two year depreciation schedule based on the original purchase price. If the equipment was provided to the County by the service provider at no cost the County may choose to transfer the asset immediately to the Employee(s).

Service plan selection is to be consistent with acquiring the least expensive pooled minutes service plan or per minute rates required to address the business needs of the organization and employee.

Employees issued County-owned cellular devices are responsible for safeguarding the County asset and may be responsible for the replacement cost of the device if it is lost or destroyed due to neglect by the employee. Employees are required to immediately surrender their County-owned cellular device at the request of the agency/department director or upon discontinuing employment with the County.



V. PERSONAL USE REIMBURSEMENT

County-owned cellular devices are to be used primarily for County business. Agency/department directors must have a reimbursement policy that at a minimum provides for the following level of reimbursement for personal cellular device use:

Personal calls should result in no additional cost to the County. If additional costs over the base monthly plan amount occur and personal use minutes have been incurred, the employee is to reimburse the County for the amount the bill exceeds the monthly base plan rate or the total indicated value of the personal call minutes listed on the bill, whichever is less. All long distance, roaming, or other special charges associated with personal usage are also to be reimbursed by the employee.

Employees are strongly encouraged to abstain from downloading personal use applications to County-owned cellular devices.

Employees who download personal application(s) to their County-owned cellular device will be solely responsible for the application cost, support, and maintenance.

VI. CELLULAR DEVICE REPORTING AND SUBSCRIPTION PLAN REVIEWS

A. Annual inventory and revalidation of cellular phone assignment.

Individual agency/department directors are responsible for conducting an annual inventory and revalidation of issuance criteria for all cellular phones issued by the agency/department. This annual inventory and revalidation will be as of December 31st of each year and will be provided to the County Executive Office by January 31st of the following year. The inventory and revalidation will utilize a standardized spreadsheet format containing the following information for each cellular device.

- Budget Unit
- Device number (telephone number)
- Employee Name or “pool”
- Device Type (cellular phone, Smartphone, Ipad or wireless air card)
- Issuance Criteria (1: First responder, 2: 24x7 Accessibility, 3: Frequent Field Work or 4: Pool)



B. Aggregate Reporting.

For aggregate reporting purposes The County of Ventura will work with each wireless carrier to establish a master account and sub account view of all County owned cellular devices. All agency/department cellular sub accounts are to fall under this master County account. This master account view will be used by IT Services to generate centralized reporting of the number of devices, type of device, usage and costs by agency/department. The master account view will not include access to individual call records. Access to the call record information will be restricted to the agency/department director or their designates.

C. Periodic Plan Reviews.

Agency/department directors are encouraged to work with IT Services or their wireless carrier to perform annual reviews on the department's cellular bills to match usage with optimal rate plans to ensure cost containment on a per device basis.