



Cellular Telephones and Wireless Communication Devices

Purpose

The university recognizes that certain positions require the use of a cellular telephone (cell phone) or other wireless communication devices to conduct official business. This policy provides specific guidelines regarding the use of cell phones and/or wireless communication devices. This policy further details general telecommunication services at the university.

Persons Affected

All SFA employees.

Definitions

Wireless Communications Device: cellular telephone or a smartphone. For purposes of this policy, laptops, tablets, and personal computers are not considered wireless communication devices.

Procedures

Wireless Communication Devices

Each department is responsible for establishing whether a specific employee needs a cell phone or wireless communication device service. Criteria for establishing this need include:

- A. Requirement to travel frequently on university business.
- B. Large amounts of time spent away from the office.
- C. A need to contact the individual after normal business hours on a frequent basis.
- D. A need for others to be in constant communication with the individual.
- E. Safety considerations.

If an employee meets one or more of these criteria, a department head/director may approve a request to provide either a university cell phone or wireless communication device or a communication allowance through one of the following options.

- A. University-provided cell phones or wireless communication device:
The Telecommunications Department will determine the preferred university vendors from which the university will contract cellular services. All university-provided cell phones and plans will be acquired from one of the preferred vendors.

Departments must submit a Cellular Telephone Request and Justification Form. This form is created and maintained by the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and all dollar amounts are coordinated and approved by the university controller.

- B. Communication Allowance:
The department may elect to provide a communication allowance to reimburse the employee for the projected cost of business-related charges. The dollar amount of the cell phone allowance should cover the estimated business-related calls and a pro-rata portion of the monthly cost of the phone plan. Determination of the dollar amount of the allowance



is made at the departmental level, but will be within the guidelines and dollar limits defined on the Communication Allowance Request Form. The communication allowance will be paid through payroll and will not be considered taxable income. The allowance does not constitute an increase to base pay and will not be included for percentage-based pay increases or for retirement (TRS or ORP) calculations.

C. Intermittent Use of Cell Phones for Business Purposes:

Some departments may provide cell phones on an intermittent basis to their employees. Intermittent basis is defined as more than one employee assigned use of the phone during the month.

D. Infrequent Use of Cell Phones for Business Purposes:

If infrequent business calls are made by an employee who does not receive a communication allowance or university-provided phone, departmental approval can be given to reimburse the employee for business calls that exceed personal wireless plan minutes.

Reimbursement of these calls will be made through accounts payable through normal procedures for reimbursement of business-related expenses. Appropriate documentation, such as a copy of the wireless plan billing statement and the stated business purpose of the call, should be submitted to support the reimbursement. Any reimbursement of business-related calls will not be taxable to the employee.

Telephone Use

All telephone services exist primarily for the transaction of official university business (except for residence hall telephones). Personal local calls may be made but should be minimized. Personal toll calls must be charged to home telephones, personal telephone calling cards, or reimbursed to the unit. Reimbursements for personal calls on a university telephone should be coordinated with the department head (or account custodian). It is the responsibility of the department head (or account custodian) to review all telephone bills to ensure compliance with the usage policy.

All charges for telephone services, toll-free numbers, and cellular telephones remain the responsibility of the unit head (or account custodian) until written notification is received by ITS for their discontinuance.

Requests for installation, relocation, alteration, or repair of telephone equipment should be submitted to the ITS Help Desk. A work order will be issued, and upon completion, the appropriate account may be charged.

Requests for toll-free telephone numbers should be submitted by the unit head (or account custodian) to ITS. The memorandum must include the purpose of the toll-free service, account number, existing telephone number where the toll-free number will ring, directory listing information (if appropriate), and name and telephone number of a contact person. Discontinuance of the toll-free service or changes to the ring extension require a memorandum from the unit head (or account custodian) to ITS.

Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards



None

Responsible Executive

Chief Information Officer

Forms

Communications Allowance Request Form
Cellular Telephone Request and Justification Form

Revision History

September 1, 2023 (original)