

Union County Mobile Communication Device Policy

1) Introduction and Purpose

- i) This policy will govern the issuance and use of mobile communications devices by Union County employees in accordance with all applicable regulations, policies, and laws. This policy applies to mobile telephones, devices that enable mobile internet access, and other subscription-based items of technology that enable mobile communications. This policy excludes all elements of radio technology.
- ii) The purpose of this policy is to summarize and standardize prior practices and policies, ensure efficient and effective use of county resources, and assist employees in the performance of assigned duties.
- iii) This policy excludes mobile devices owned and paid for by entities other than Union County Government, mobile devices used as part of bona fide law enforcement operations and investigations, and any exceptions as approved by the County Manager or designee.

2) Issuance of Mobile Telephones

- i) Mobile telephones are divided into two authorized device categories: basic phone and data. Basic phones are capable of making mobile calls, with text messaging enabled on a case by case basis. Data phones are capable of, but not limited to, making mobile calls, using text messaging, accessing county email, and the internet.
- ii) The Union County Information Systems Department is responsible, unless excepted by the County Manager or designee, for issuing and managing all mobile communications devices.
- iii) A list of mobile communications devices issued pursuant to this policy is the baseline of mobile devices authorized under this policy. This list is organized by department, listed by position, and indicates the appropriate category for each authorized device (basic phone or data). Changes to this list will be proposed and justified as a part of the annual budget process. If budgeted resources allow, the Manager or designee may approve immediate changes to the authorized list.

3) Allowance in Lieu of Issued Device

- i) The County Manager or designee may authorize payment of a monthly allowance in lieu of issuing a mobile device, and may authorize a one-time payment to procure a device. The amount of the monthly allowance will be based on the available budget, will be consistent among employees authorized by approved device category, and will be paid monthly to the employee. In no case will an allowance exceed the amount paid by Union County for the appropriate category of device, or will an allowance paid to procure the device exceed the value of the device.
- ii) This allowance is intended for senior level employees who routinely work remotely, have responsibility beyond normal work hours, and are accessible at varied times. The County Manager or designee will authorize allowances conservatively based on these criteria.

- iii) An employee receiving an allowance in lieu of a county issued device will maintain a personal mobile device that is available for business use and is appropriate to the authorized device category – for example, an employee receiving a data allowance must have a data phone, where an employee receiving a basic allowance may have either a basic phone or a data phone. The employee will provide the number to the department, and the number may be used for Union County business.

4) Personal Use

- i) This policy accommodates de minimis use of mobile communications devices by employees for making or receiving personal phone calls on county issued mobile phones. The purpose of allowing de minimis use is to accommodate minor, essential, and incidental personal communications. If the personal use of the device exceeds a de minimis threshold in value and frequency, then the Department Head will ensure that the employee attains a copy of the statement, identifies all personal calls, and reimburses the total cost of personal calls to the Union County Finance Department.
- ii) For this policy, a de minimis monthly amount will be set and maintained by the County Manager. This amount will be set in accordance with guidance published by The Internal Revenue Service regarding de minimis fringe benefits.
- iii) In all cases, Department Heads will discourage employees from using county issued mobile communications devices as their primary mode of personal communication.

5) Department Responsibilities

- i) The Department Head is responsible for annually justifying appropriate issuance, use, and condition of mobile communications devices during the annual budget planning process. The Information Services Department will assist each department in evaluating condition and serviceability of devices, as well as ensuring standardization as much as practical.
- ii) The Department Head is responsible for reviewing use for each device to ensure that the device is being used appropriately, efficiently, and effectively. This review will be conducted at least quarterly each year.
- iii) The Department Head is responsible for enforcing policies that support safe use of all mobile communications devices, especially regarding applicable laws, regulations, and county policies concerning use of these devices while operating vehicles, tools, equipment or machinery.
- iv) The Department Head will ensure that loss, theft, damage, and service issues are reported to the Information Services Department in a timely manner. If a loss is incurred by the county due to misuse or negligence of the employee responsible for the device, the Information Services Department will identify an appropriate cash amount for the employee to reimburse Union County. In no case will this amount exceed the documented value of the loss. If the Department Head disagrees with the determination of the Information Services Department regarding a reimbursement, then the Department Head may appeal the matter to the County Manager or designee, whose decision will be final.
- v) The Department Head will ensure that employees comply with the personal use provisions contained in this policy.

- vi) The Union County Finance Department will distribute monthly allowances and withhold appropriate taxes for those employees authorized an allowance in lieu of an issued device in accordance with this policy.
- vii) The Information Services Department is responsible for distributing statements on a monthly basis to each department with authorized devices in a format where department personnel can review use and cost on a device-by device basis. These records will be retained and provided to any party on demand in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations and court orders.
- viii) The Information Services Department will maintain a list of instructions for market compatible devices to access county email. These instructions will be made available to employees authorized an allowance in lieu of an issued device. Although staff may assist employees, in no case will the Information Services Department or Union County be responsible for ensuring or maintaining email access for any device owned by an employee authorized an allowance in lieu of an issued device.
- ix) The Personnel Department will receive a signed agreement from each employee authorized a mobile communications device, and store the agreement in the employee's permanent personnel record. Based on the needs of Union County, the County Manager or designee, after legal approval, may amend these signed Agreements and require signatures as a condition of continued use.

6) Employee Responsibilities

- i) Employees impacted by this policy are responsible for reading and complying with the most current version of the policy.
- ii) Employees will reimburse the county for loss as described in this policy,
- iii) Employees will reimburse the county for Personal Use as described in this policy.
- iv) At all times, employees will ensure that the device is used appropriately, safely, effectively, and efficiently.
- v) If an employee's duties or circumstances change such that the provision of a mobile communications device is no longer efficient or effective, then the employee is responsible for reporting this concern to department management so that Union County can ensure the best use of these resources.

7) Employee Signature

"My signature indicates that I acknowledge receipt of this policy, and agree to comply."

Employee Signature

Date

Printed Name

Department

