

# WESTMORELAND COUNTY

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Subject: County Issued Cellular Device Policy

Policy Number: VI.1 Effective Date: July 23, 2009

Revised Date: Aug 15, 2019

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#### I. Purpose

The Board of Commissioners has developed this policy to establish procedures for acquiring, and guidelines for the use of County issued cellular phones and mobile hotspot devices.

#### II. Business Use

Cellular devices are issued to individuals and departments to support the effective performance of their jobs. They are intended for County business purposes only. Each individual who receives a cellular device is responsible for safeguarding the equipment and controlling its use.

The employee who is assigned the use of a cellular phone is expected to exercise discretion regarding persons having access to the cellular phone number in an effort to minimize phone usage costs while maintaining department service capabilities.

Abbreviated calls home or to family members by employees when required to work beyond the normal working day shall be considered business calls. The employee is responsible for keeping the duration of such calls to a minimum.

Employees using a County issued cell phone are not permitted to withhold their cell phone number from other County employees who need it to conduct County business.

#### III. Personal Use

The use of County owned cellular devices for personal use is strongly discouraged, although it is understood that usage for personal reasons may be necessary in emergency situations when no other immediate means of communication are available to the employee.

Employees must realize that although personal calls are under the usage limits provided by the employee's plan, they do count toward the overall time limits established under the County's service agreement. Employees are responsible for promptly reimbursing the County for all non-business cellular device charges incurred. This practice shall apply to both incoming and outgoing cellular phone calls, as well as any data overage charges.

Employees are not permitted to operate a personal business from a County issued cell device.

#### **IV. Damage, Loss / Theft**

Employees should make reasonable precautions to prevent loss, damage, theft or vandalism to County issued cellular devices.

The County will accept responsibility for devices that are damaged in the course of business unless the damage is the result of reckless or deliberately destructive actions of the employee.

A device that is lost, stolen or damaged outside the course of business is the responsibility of the employee assigned to the device. The Information Systems department will have pricing information for the cost of a replacement device.

Lost or stolen devices should be reported to the Information Systems department immediately so the service can be suspended or cancelled.

Replacements for any lost, stolen or damaged device should be addressed with the employee's department head. The department head or assigned individual within the department will contact the Information Systems department who will contact the vendor for replacement or repair. Employees and department heads are NOT to contact the cellular device provider directly.

It is the assigned employee's responsibility to provide any type of protective case and/or screen covering for the cellular device. Such protective measures are highly encouraged by the County to help alleviate any costs of device repair/replacement in the future.

#### **V. Safe Use**

In the interest of safety, employees using cellular devices are expected to exercise appropriate care and caution if used in a motor vehicle. Employees are to avoid the use of cellular devices under any circumstances where such use might create or appear to create a hazard. Employees should comply with applicable laws regarding the use of cellular devices while driving and avoid cellular device use that may jeopardize the safety of the employee and others. Employees are prohibited from text messaging or emailing when driving.

Westmoreland County will not reimburse employees for business calls or internet usage made on non-county devices. Employees that feel that they need to use a cell phone or have mobile internet service for County business must follow the procedures to acquire a county issued device.

Any county issued cellular smartphone must use a form of authentication to unlock the device (pin, password, or pattern). Devices found not to be using this type of authentication will be removed from the employee and their privileges will be suspended.

Any employee who violates any part of this policy or otherwise abuses the privileges of a County issued cellular device will be subject to disciplinary action including reprimand, suspension, dismissal and/or criminal charges.

## **VI. Usage Monitoring**

Cellular invoices will be audited on a monthly basis (or such other periods as the County Commissioners may direct to examine usage). The County has the right to terminate an account at any time. The County also has the right to suspend or alter plans at any time.

## **VII. Procedures for Acquiring County Cellular Device:**

1. The Department Head or Elected Official must first contact the Fiscal Department to ensure funds are available before requesting cellular devices. This will be verified by the Information Systems Department.
2. All requests for County issued cell phones must include the following information:
  - a. Department name of the request
  - b. Cost center where monthly invoices will be paid from
  - c. Primary user (employee using the cell phone)
  - d. Reason for request (detailed explanation of why cell phone is necessary)
  - e. Estimated monthly usage (minutes and data)
  - f. Department Head / Elected Official signature (not necessary if Department Head / Elected Official is submitting the request via email)
3. All requests for County cell phones and mobile hotspots must be sent to the Information Systems Department. Requests can be sent by email (from the Department Head / Elected Official) or by interoffice mail with Department Head / Elected Official's signature. Please send request to Director/Deputy Director of Information Systems, or the Information Systems Office Manager.
4. The Information Systems Department will review the request and, if everything is complete and funds available, assign a device and an appropriate plan.
5. The employee receiving the cell phone or mobile hotspot must sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the device and agree to comply with this policy.

No Employee or Department Head, other than the Information Systems Department, is permitted to negotiate or discuss cellular device plans on County devices with an outside vendor.

