
Nurturing Potential, Promoting Change, Preserving Families

Tidewater Youth Services Commission

Operating Instruction 1.6

Governing the Use of Cellular Phones

Issued By: Shawn Sawyer, Executive Director

Effective Date: 11-7-18

Issued to: All TYSC Employees

Expiration Date: When cancelled or superseded

General Statement:

Because we are committed to the safety of our staff and to high quality, professional services, TYSC is providing this cellular phone or device to you as you provide services in our client's homes and in the community. Our reasons for issuing this phone or device include:

- To increase staff and client safety in the community and while traveling by making communication accessible in the event of an accident, injury, sudden illness, travel in high-crime or remote areas, vehicle breakdown and/or aggressive, dangerous or criminal behavior by clients or others encountered when providing services or on outings in the community.
- To provide immediate response to client crisis or emergency situations and to provide mobility to staff that provide 24 hour, on call coverage of cases.
- To maintain communication with the program, supervisors, fellow staff, and referral sources.

Cellular Phone Policy:

As a public agency, we are accountable for our expenditures and must ensure that the phones are being used only for legitimate agency business. For this reason, the following policies apply to every employee who is issued a cellular phone:

- 1.) General use of personal and Commission cell phones at work: While at work, employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cell phones as they use with Commission issued phones. Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Employees should restrict personal calls during work time and should use personal cell phones only during breaks or lunch periods in areas away from co-workers or clients. Other personal calls should be made during non-working time and employees should ensure that their friends and family members are aware of this policy. The Commission is not liable for the loss of personal cell phones brought into

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- the workplace. To ensure the effectiveness of meetings, employees are asked to leave all cell phones at their desk. On the unusual occasion of an emergency, on-call, or anticipated emergency that requires immediate attention, the cell phone may be brought to a meeting on vibrate mode.
- 2.) **Unsafe Work Situations:** The Commission prohibits the use of cell phones or other devices while at any work site at which the operation of such devices would be a distraction to the user and/or could create an unsafe work environment. For example, staff who are directly supervising youth are not allowed to receive or place calls, text message, surf the internet, receive or respond to emails, or check for phone messages.
 - 3.) **Cell Phone Use while Driving:** The Commission prohibits the use of cell phones or other devices while driving. This prohibition includes receiving or placing calls, text messaging, surfing the internet, receiving or responding to emails, checking for phone messages, or any other purpose related to Commission employment, the agency, its clients, vendors, volunteer activities, meetings, or civic responsibilities performed for or attended in the name of the Commission, or any other Commission related activities not named herein. Employees may not use a cell phone or other devices to receive or place calls, text message, surf the internet, check phone messages, or receive or respond to emails while driving if they are in any way performing activities related to their employment. Employees must stop their vehicles in a safe location in order to use cell phones or other devices.
 - 4.) **Personal Use of Commission issued Cell Phones:** The Commission may issue business cell phones to employees for work related communications. These Commission issued phones are to be used for business purposes only. Employees in possession of Commission equipment (including cell phones) are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage, or theft. It should be understood that Commission issued cell phones and devices are NOT covered by insurance. On resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request, the employee may be asked to produce the phone or device for return or inspection. Any employee unable to present the phone or device in good working condition within a reasonable time period may be expected to purchase a replacement at their own expense. Employees who leave the Commission with outstanding debt for equipment loss or unauthorized charges will be considered to have left employment on unsatisfactory terms and may be subject to legal action for recovery of the loss. Final paychecks will not be issued until all debt and equipment issues are resolved.
 - 5.) **Commission-owned and Supplied Devices:** Employees are not allowed to download any applications, files or videos, watch live video feeds, or stream music on Commission issued cell phones or devices. Use of the navigation and email applications are allowed. Employees are also not allowed to use Commission issued cell phones or device to access any inappropriate or personal sites such as dating sites, gaming, pornography, social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. or make calls to any toll numbers.
 - 6.) **Cameras on Commission issued Devices:** Employees may not take photographs or video, whether by camera phone or any other device without first obtaining permission from their supervisor. If

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the photo or video is of a client, the proper permissions must be obtained and documented prior to taking the photograph or video.

- 7.) Review of Monthly Charges: The Commission will monitor employees' cell phone usage and charges on a monthly basis. Signs of potential misuse will be brought to the attention of the employee's supervisor who will determine if reimbursement or other action is required.

- 8.) Special Responsibilities of Administrative Staff: Administrative staff are expected to serve as role models for proper compliance with the provisions within this policy and are encouraged to regularly remind employees of their responsibility in complying with this policy. Administrators should monitor employees to ensure that the presence of cell phones in the work place provides optimum benefits in managing time and expenses. Administrators should be knowledgeable about the Commission's cell phone plan/package in order to leverage the best use. Administrators should also address proper cell phone etiquette with their employees. Administrators should immediately implement pre-approved disciplinary measure for employees who violate safety procedures in the operation of cell phones.

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Employee Acknowledgement Cell Phone Usage Policy

I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will abide by the Commission's policy regarding cell phone and device usage. In particular, I understand:

- 1.) That the equipment that has been issued to me is for business use only and that I will be required to reimburse the Commission for all personal and non-business charges or fees.
- 2.) That before the end of my employment with the Commission, I will be required to return in good order, all Commission-issued equipment and accessories before I will receive my final paycheck.
- 3.) That I am responsible for any damage, abuse, neglect, loss, or theft of any Commission equipment that has been issued to me while it is in my care.
- 4.) That the Commission has authorization to monitor my Commission issued cell phone usage, fees, etc.
- 5.) That the Commission may monitor my cell phone on a routine and/or special case basis.
- 6.) That the use of a cell phone or other device while driving is illegal in some places (including New York, New Jersey, Washington D.C., and Chicago) and prohibited by Commission policy when carrying out employment related tasks.
- 7.) That should I need to use a cell phone or other device while operating a vehicle, I am required to pull over in a safe location prior to using the phone or device.
- 8.) That I am not allowed to download files, applications, videos, watch live video feeds, or stream music on my cell phone or device.
- 9.) That I am not allowed to use my Commission issued cell phone or device to access any inappropriate sites such as dating sites, pornography, etc. or make calls to any toll numbers.
- 10.) That this signed form will be placed in my personnel file and that any violation by me of the Commission phone/device usage policy may result in a loss of access, disciplinary action (up to and including termination of employment) or other legal action.

Employee's Signature

Employee's Name

Date