

**Updated 3-31-2011**

**POLICY ON COMMUNICATION DEVICE SUPPLEMENTS  
AND CELLULAR TELEPHONE USE**

**RATIONALE:** This policy allows the University of Alabama System (System) to comply with applicable laws and regulations and to efficiently provide wireless communication devices to System employees for official System business.

**POLICY:** The System will allow employees, whose job duties require them to be accessible outside of normal working hours to elect to receive a monthly, taxable communication device supplement to their pay for cell phones or other wireless communication devices. Procedures to receive this supplement are noted below.

**PROCEDURES:** Employees desiring a communication device supplement must comply with the following procedures:

- A. Application.** If an employee's job duties require spending considerable time away from their office or work area or require them to be accessible outside of normal working hours, they may apply for an equipment purchase reimbursement and a communication device supplement with approval by the employee's supervisor and the appropriate vice chancellor. Approval of the supplement shall remain in effect until terminated pursuant to the terms of this policy. A communication supplement is not an entitlement and may be changed or withdrawn by the system at any time.
- B. Amount of Supplement.** The amount of the supplement should cover the Employee's projected business-related use of the communication device. At the beginning of each fiscal year the Office of Financial Affairs shall establish separate baseline supplements for voice service and for data service.
- C. Equipment Purchase Reimbursement** No more frequently than every twelve months, an employee may request a communication equipment purchase reimbursement. Upon approval of such request and submission of an invoice showing the date of purchase and purchase price of the communication device, the employee shall receive a lump sum reimbursement of eighty percent (80%) of the cost of a new device. Accessory purchases shall be reimbursed at one hundred percent (100%) of the cost. Accessories include batteries, hands-free devices, cases, chargers, and data cabling. Reimbursements will also be provided for one-time service activation fees and taxes.
- D. Payment of Supplement.** The communication device supplement shall be paid to the employee on a monthly basis as part of the employee's monthly compensation. The supplement is a taxable fringe benefit and is subject to withholding requirements. The supplement is not an increase in base pay and will not be included in calculations of percentage increases in pay, retirement contributions, or other similar calculations.

- E. Contracting for Services.** Employees who receive approval for a communication device supplement are responsible for selecting and contracting with a service provider in their own name for approved voice service, data service, and communication equipment. The employee must retain an active service provider contract as long as the employee receives the communication device supplement. Any charges by the employee's service provider in excess of the communication supplement are the personal responsibility of the employee and not the System.
- F. Use of Equipment.** Because the equipment is owned personally by the employee and the supplement is provided as taxable income, the employee may use the communication device for both business and personal purposes. Maintenance and service of the equipment is the personal responsibility of the employee. Use of the equipment in any manner contrary to local, state, or federal law will result in termination of the communication device supplement.
- G. Contract Changes.** The employee shall bear the cost of any service provider contract termination fees in the event the employee's service provider contract is terminated at the election of the employee or due to a violation of this policy by the employee. The System shall bear such costs in the event the termination of the employee's service provider contract is required due to a change in System policy or other reason unrelated to the employee's violation of this policy.

**INFREQUENT USE OF PERSONAL CELL PHONE:** In those cases where an employee is not eligible for a communication device supplement or chooses not to apply for a supplement and the employee uses his or her personal cellular telephone to make System-related calls, the cost of such calls may be reimbursed to the employee if the System-related calls cause the individual to exceed the number of minutes included in his or her personal calling plan. A reimbursement form showing any such excess charges attributable to System-related calls must be submitted, with appropriate documentation, to the Office of Financial Affairs for approval under System Accounts Payable policies.

**EXCEPTIONS:** Special circumstances regarding an employee's job duties may justify exceptions to this policy. Such exceptions must be approved by the System Director of Financial Operations.