

MOBILE COUNTY COMMISSION

Policy Relating to Use of Communication Devices

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1, 2010

Policy # 100-02

PURPOSE: Communication devices are intended to be used primarily for official business; the County recognizes, however, that employees may occasionally need to make personal use of communication devices, and does not wish to prohibit such use altogether. The realities of the work environment require that the County address the personal use of communication devices by employees.

APPLICABILITY: As used in this policy, the term communication device includes County-owned or -supplied computers, telephones, cell phones, smartphones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers, email devices and similar devices that make or receive phone calls, leave or receive voice messages, send or receive electronic messages (email) or text messages, surf the Internet, or download or otherwise allow for the reading of and responding to email. This policy does not apply to use of the County radio communication system.

GUIDELINES: Permissible Uses of Communication Devices

The overriding principle governing personal use of communication devices is that reasonable and incidental personal use of such devices is authorized only so long as (1) the County incurs no additional cost from that use, other than the minimal cost incurred from ordinary wear and tear; and (2) the use does not inappropriately interfere with official business.

Employees may make incidental personal use of communications devices during business hours that is necessary and reasonable. Examples of necessary and reasonable communication include:

- Communications to alert household members about working late or other schedule changes
- Communications to make alternative child care arrangements

- Communications with doctors, hospital staff, or day care providers
- Communications to determine the safety of family or household members, particularly in an emergency
- Communications to reach business or government agencies that can only be contacted during work hours
- Communications to arrange emergency repairs to vehicles or residences

GUIDELINES: Inappropriate Uses of Communication Devices

Personal use of communication devices which affects the performance of an employee's duties, interferes with the County's work, endangers County property, or is disruptive to co-workers, is inappropriate. Inappropriate uses of communication devices include, but are not limited to:

- Any personal use that could cause congestion, delay of or disruption of service to County communications, communication devices, or other County equipment
- Any use for commercial purposes, in support of "for-profit" activities or any other outside employment or business activity such as commercial consulting for pay, sales or administration of business transactions, or sales of goods or services
- Any use for political purposes
- Any excessive use for personal or other non-official purposes
- Any use that involves gambling, pornography, hate or violence, or for activities that are inappropriate or offensive to co-workers or the public, such as the use of remarks that ridicule others on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, sex, handicap, national origin, or sexual orientation
- Any use in violation of state or federal law

VIOLATIONS: Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Acknowledgment of Receipt

Employee's Signature

Printed Name

Date