

**Eastern Kentucky University**  
**Cellular Reimbursement Guidelines & Procedures**  
**Revised 03/31/2019**

## **I. Purpose and Scope**

These guidelines establish procedures and protocols for the authorization, deployment, and use of the cellular reimbursement program or University-owned services.

## **II. Guidelines and Procedures**

Effective November 1, 2016, the University no longer provides newly issued cellular devices for the use of individual employees. Employees whose duties and responsibilities require them to maintain significant voice (cell phone) contact with the University while away from the office or to be accessible after normal working hours may be eligible for a monthly, nontaxable cellular reimbursement for the business-related use of personal cellular service.

An employee receiving a cellular reimbursement must maintain an active cellular contract and must notify his/her supervisor and his/her appropriate Vice President when the service is discontinued.

Cellular reimbursements will not be provided as a means to increase employee compensation.

## **III. Procedure**

### **1. Procedure**

#### **1.1. Cellular Reimbursement**

Qualified employees whose job duties require the frequent need for cellular service as listed in section 1.2.1 may receive a cellular reimbursement to cover business-related use of an individual's personal cellular service. The guidelines assume that for most employees, the device will be used for both business and personal use, and it is appropriate for the University and employee to share the overall costs. Thus, the reimbursement amount is not intended to cover 100% of the monthly service plan cost.

Depending on job requirements, qualified employees are eligible for either a \$10.00 monthly cellular reimbursement (\$120 per fiscal year) or a \$35.00 monthly reimbursement (\$420 per fiscal year). Reimbursements are not allocated by service category (such as voice, data, text, etc.) and are intended to be reflective of the level of expected need for University business contact or interaction.

The cellular reimbursement is not considered part of the employee's base compensation and is not subject to any University salary increases or adjustments. The cellular reimbursement may

be increased, decreased, or eliminated should the nature of the employee's job change. An employee's cellular reimbursement is subject to review and cancellation by the University.

## **1.2. Authorization**

### **1.2.1. Qualified Employees**

It is the responsibility of an employee's Department Head/Director to determine whether the employee's job requires a cellular reimbursement. To receive a cellular reimbursement, an employee must meet one or both of the following criteria:

- The employee is **required** to spend a considerable amount of time outside his/her assigned office or work area during normal working hours and is **required** to have regular access to telephone and/or internet connection.
- The employee is **required** to be accessible outside of normal working hours. (This is not intended to include occasional or incidental access.)

The University defines the following business purposes as qualifying instances where a cellular reimbursement may be granted:

- The employee is responsible in emergency matters where they must be available to be contacted and/or respond in the event of an emergency.
- Employees who frequently need to be contacted in an immediate or timely manner during or after regular business hours to respond to situations pertinent to their assigned job responsibilities. (If the contact is deemed by the Department Head/Director as occasional usage, please refer to Section 3 of this document.)
- Employees who typically work in the field or at job sites where access to electronic communication devices is not readily available.
- Employees who are responsible for monitoring buildings, systems, and/or equipment which utilize data transmissions and/or text messages for transmitting information.
- Employees who frequently travel or are out of the office and need to be in contact with University personnel or affiliates to conduct University business.

**IMPORTANT: For hourly employees, there are restrictions on work-related activities conducted outside normal working hours. Hourly employees must have prior approval for any work-related activities conducted outside regular working hours.**

**Employees and supervisors must consult the Eastern Kentucky University Employee Handbook for further information and guidance.**

### **1.2.2. Obtaining Authorization and Approval**

Authorization is subject to Department Head/Director recommendation, with approval from the appropriate Vice President. The decision to incur a University business expense for cellular reimbursement must be evaluated by the Department Head/Director from a

cost/benefit perspective. Department Heads/Directors must consider other viable options such as existing landline phones, pagers, or other less expensive communication devices. In addition, with respect to data access and/or email access, employees may be able to use a University laptop computer for business purposes.

The employee must retain a cellular service for as long as the cellular reimbursement is provided. The employee is responsible for the entire purchase cost of the cellular device; a cellular device purchase is not a reimbursable expense.

### **1.2.3. Department Responsibilities**

Department Heads/Directors must conduct annual reviews of the necessity for cellular access and use of a cellular device. The Department Head/Director may at any time change or eliminate an employee's cellular reimbursement as necessary.

All approved cellular reimbursements will be charged to the respective Department Head's/Director's budget. A Department Head/Director must confirm that employees in his/her department have obtained and maintain the service for which the employee receives a cellular reimbursement.

Cellular reimbursements will not be applied retroactively. The cellular reimbursement will begin on the first day of the pay period after the completed and approved request form is received by Human Resources.

The Department of University Procurement is authorized to approve or enter into any cellular contract on behalf of the University. No other organization within the University may extend existing University cellular contracts or enter into any new University cellular contracts.

### **1.2.4. Fees for Contract Cancellations**

The individual cellular contract is the employee's responsibility. In no event will the University be responsible for any overages or termination charges, with exception of reimbursable overages described in section 3 below.

### **1.2.5. Discounts for Cellular Service**

The University may negotiate discounts with cellular vendors for the procurement of individual cellular service. The Department of University Procurement will work with various cellular providers to develop discounts that may be passed on to University employees.

## **2. Employee Cellular Service Problem Resolution**

The employee is personally responsible for all equipment and monthly cellular service charges. All support for cellular service is provided by the cellular provider selected by the employee. The University cannot offer support for individually-owned cellular devices.

The Information Technology Technical Support Services Department will provide support for

University-provided software that is used on mobile devices to synchronize devices with University email accounts, calendars, or other University systems and services. The qualified employee will be responsible for his/her contract; therefore, the individual must contact the cellular provider with any billing/service issues.

### **3. Reimbursement of Cellular Plan Overages**

If an employee is not eligible for the cellular reimbursement program, the employee may request reimbursement for the actual extra expenses of business calls. However, reimbursement for per-minute “air time” charges is limited to the total overage charge shown on the invoice (i.e., expenses for minutes included in the plan will not be reimbursed). The individual should make personal payment to the cellular provider and submit a request for reimbursement to the University.

- Example 1: An employee’s personal phone has a 600 minute plan that costs \$40.00 (plus fees and surcharges). This month the employee used a total of 300 minutes of which it was determined that 100 of those minutes were business calls for EKU. The calls associated with work did not cause any overage charges on the employee’s bill; therefore, the employee is not eligible to request reimbursement for the calls.
- Example 2: An employee’s personal phone has a 600 minute plan that costs \$40.00 (plus fees and surcharges). This month the employee used a total of 650 minutes of which it was determined that 100 of those minutes were business calls for EKU. The calls associated with work did cause the employee to go over on the plan; therefore, the employee is eligible to request reimbursement for the calls. The employee may request an amount equal to the 50 minutes of overage charges incurred for the month.

Individuals who continually have reimbursable business calls should request evaluation for a cellular reimbursement plan.

### **4. University-Owned Service**

Information Technology will maintain a University-sponsored account providing services for non-individual use. Limited exception may be granted with proper justification and support and must be approved by the President’s Council.

#### **4.1 Departmental**

Information Technology may provide departmental cellular devices. A departmental cellular device is a shared voice/data device that does not leave the campus and is turned in by each employee at the end of his/her shift. Phone bills for departmental cellular devices will be reviewed monthly by Department Heads to verify business use. The authorizing department will be responsible for all charges incurred by the device.

### **5. Cell Phone Use While Driving**

Eastern Kentucky University does not recommend the use of any mobile device while driving. If

while driving it becomes necessary to use a mobile device, it is recommended that the employee pull completely off the road and come to a complete stop in a parking area or other safe place before using a mobile device.

## **6. Misuse of Cellular Service**

The misuse of the cellular service – using it in ways inconsistent with University regulations or with local, state, or federal laws – will result in immediate cancellation of the cellular reimbursement.

## **7. Oversight of the Cellular Reimbursement Program**

According to Kentucky Revised Statutes 164A.560, the treasurer of the university shall not approve any disbursement unless he/she determines that the disbursement satisfies a liability of the institution incurred for authorized purposes. As such, the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration is the final arbiter of any cellular reimbursement to an employee of the university.

The Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, or his/her designee, may also confirm that cellular reimbursements are still reasonable and substantiated by business necessity. This confirmation may be performed on a sampling basis.