

**UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER
PERSONAL USE OF UNIVERSITY-ISSUED COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

State of RI - Policy/Procedures Number A-69

Effective Date: 3-21-07

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Purpose:

The following policies and procedures regulate employees' use of University owned communication devices, as well as the use of personal cell phones and other portable communication devices during work hours according to State of Rhode Island Policy A-69.

1. PERSONAL USAGE OF URI COMMUNICATION DEVICES

University Telephone systems

The use of the University's land-based telephone system, cell phone, or other portable communication devices used for personal calls displace business calls. When excessive time is spent on personal calls, the University's business goals and purposes are compromised. These policies and procedures apply to employees' use of any of the University provided communication devices, and regulate employees' use as well as the use of personal cell phones and other portable communication devices during work hours. Employees are expected to take care of their personal business during non-working hours. Accordingly, personal phone calls that are not of an emergency nature must be held to a minimum and must not interfere with the University's business.

Personal cell phone or other portable communication devices

The using of personal cell phones or other portable communication devices during work hours may adversely affect your job performance and the University's business goals and purposes. Therefore, University employees are permitted to use personal cell phones or other portable communication devices while at work on a limited basis to avoid interference with the performance of his or her job functions.

2. CELL PHONES OR OTHER COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Certain University employees may be provided a University-owned communication device or receive a stipend for cell phone or other portable communication device which are needed in order to carry out their job responsibilities and for the benefit of the University. Positions authorized for URI cell phone or portable communication device usage is determined by the following criteria and must be approved by supervisor or department head:

- Safety requirements indicate having cell phone is an integral part of performing duties of job description
- More than 50% of work is conducted in the field
- Required to be contacted on a regular basis
- Required to be on-call (24/7)
- Critical decision maker
- Other business requirements

2.1 Employee Responsibilities

1. If the wireless communication device that has data capabilities is stolen or missing it must be reported to the employee's supervisor, campus police, wireless device service provider and to University Computing Systems as soon as possible.
2. Wireless communication devices covered by this policy are used in part to conduct University business and/or to create, receive, send or store University data and/or education records of students. As a result, information contained on wireless communication devices covered by this policy are also subject to Federal and State data maintenance and protection laws (e.g., FERPA, records retention requirements), as well as the RI Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). An employee receiving a University wireless device stipend must comply with Federal and State requirements and assist the University in providing access to information about or contained on the wireless communications devices covered by this policy in response to requests for such data or information by third parties as required by Federal and/or State law.
3. Employees are expected to delete all University data from the personal wireless communication device when their employment with the University is severed, except when required to maintain that data in compliance with a litigation hold notice.

2.2 Additional Regulations

1. Additional oversight/reporting responsibilities may be required if an employee's job responsibilities are subject to formal governing body by-laws and regulations (i.e. NCAA regulations)

3. UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR BUSINESS RELATED CELL PHONE AND OTHER PORTABLE COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The following options are available for Business related cell phone and other portable communication devices.

1. University owned cell phone or other portable communication device may be assigned to an employee or departmental device.
2. Employee cell phone stipend paid through payroll.
3. Employee reimbursement for personal communication device used for business purposes paid through accounts payable.

3.1 University-Owned Cell Phones or other portable communications device

Employees who are issued University-owned cell phones or other portable communication devices are required to keep the units turned on, updated, and batteries charged. Furthermore, employees must have such devices in their possession when on duty or on call.

University-issued cell phones and other portable communication devices should be used for *University-business only* and should **not** be used as a substitute for a personal cell phone or other portable communication device. The University will allow for de minimis personal use if the following parameters are met:

- Use is infrequent, appropriate and short in duration
- Use does not interfere with work
- Use does not involve added cost to the University

The University will implement a periodic review by management to verify that employees are following the terms of this policy. This review will include an examination of the carrier billings to ensure only active and authorized users are assigned University-issued cell phones and other portable communication devices; and that cell phone, text messaging and data usage is consistent with this policy. Excessive personal use of University-issued cell phone will result in reimbursement to the University, and possible forfeiture of device.

Departments are responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that University-issued cell phones and other portable communication devices are used in compliance with this policy.

Employees must return any University-issued cell phone, or other portable communication device at the request of their supervisor, or if employment is terminated. If the device is not returned, the department must have the service agreement terminated immediately and notify URI payroll of the cost of the device in order to report the income on the employee's W-2.

3.2 Cell Phone or other portable communications device stipend

An option is available for full time state employees to be paid a stipend instead of being issued a URI cell phone or communication device. A stipend will be issued to those employees in positions authorized for URI cell phone usage. See [URI Controller Policies](#) website for more information. "Stipend for Cell Phone Procedures" or for Athletic Departments "Athletic Cell Phone Stipend Procedures".

3.3 Personal Cell Phone or other portable communications device

If an employee uses a personal communication device in the performance of his or her job function, they may seek reimbursement for such usage from the University. To request reimbursement, an Invoice Voucher must be completed (minimum cumulative dollar amount \$25) and approved by URI Department Head or Supervisor with documentation attached identifying the business calls and purpose. The rates of reimbursement are calculated as in paragraph 4.1.

4. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

4.1 To Employees

The employee shall review the bill(s) for personal communication devices and mark his/her business calls. The employee shall attach certification and/or explanation of business purpose for each call. The department's business office needs to prepare the [URI Invoice Voucher Form](#) (cumulative minimum amount \$25) and submit it to the Accounting Office for payment. Any business calls made during a billing period will be reimbursed to the employee by dividing the total used minutes (business and personal) into the total amount billed for the billing period irrespective of the fact that business usage minutes caused the allotted minutes to be exceeded. The basis for this policy is the following presumptions: One, use of a personal cell phone for

business calls is voluntary by the employee. Two, that such voluntary usage will be de minimis.

5. TAXATION

6.1 Cell Phone Stipend Taxation:

The cell phone stipend is taxable income to the employee; therefore, the individual will be taxed according to the IRS and State regulations. Employee will receive a separate payroll check/direct deposit from URI PeopleSoft Internal Payroll. The stipend will be reported to IRS on form W-2. The stipend amount is not considered salary for the purposes of computing retirement or other employee benefits. All cell phone stipends must be direct deposited to the employee's bank account. See [Cell Phone Stipend Procedures](#) for more details.

6. ENFORCEMENT

Any employee who violates this policy related to the use and/or reimbursement of University-provided communication devices may be subject to disciplinary action. Repeated or continued violation of this policy may lead to termination of employment.

Forms, policy and procedures are available from the URI Controller's website: [URI Controller Policies](#).