



## FAQS - Guide for Cellular and Other Mobile Computing Devices *Employees and Supervisors*

- FAQS – Employees, Pg 1-3
  - FAQS – Supervisors, Pg 4-5
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### FAQs - Employees

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**1. I am an employee and I think I need a business cell phone. What is the process to obtain one?**

There is a two part process: approval and procurement.

- **Approval.** In order to receive a state-provided cell phone, your supervisor and an authorized administrator must review your job responsibilities and certify your eligibility. See System Procedure 5.22.2 and the form entitled “Authorization and Annual Review for Cellular and Other Mobile Computing Devices”. The supervisor and authorized administrator will determine your need for voice, texting and data service.
- **Procurement.** After you are deemed eligible for a cell phone or wireless device and a plan has been chosen for you, the Director of Purchasing or authorized designee will contact the service provider to order the phone and set up the service.

**2. I have a business cell phone with a voice plan and now want to add a data plan onto it. What is the process to add the plan?**

As with the voice plan, in order for you to add a data plan to your state-provided cell phone, your supervisor and an authorized administrator must review your job responsibilities and certify your eligibility for the increase in service. See System Procedure 5.22.2 and the form entitled Authorization and Annual Review for Cellular Devices and Other Mobile Computing Devices.

**3. I do not have a business phone. I would like to access business e-mail on my personal phone at my own expense. What is the process to set up access?**

Employees may use their personal devices to access their system e-mail, if the personal phone has an operating system supported by SMSU. For assistance, contact the SMSU Helpdesk at extension 6111 or email [helpdesk@smsu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@smsu.edu).

**4. I have been assigned a state-owned laptop computer. I travel a great deal and would like the computer to have the ability to access the internet via cell technology (also called “mobile broadband card” or “mobile card”). What is the process to set up access?**

Internet connectivity via the cell system is charged at a flat monthly rate. Like cell phone services (voice, data or texting) your supervisor and an authorized administrator must determine the need for this service and certify your eligibility, based on the criteria in System Procedure 5.22.2.

**5. May I use my state-provided cell phone for personal use?**

**Essential only.** Personal use of a cellular device and plan issued under System Procedure 5.22.2 is prohibited. Personal use may result in revocation of the employee's cellular device and plan usage. Except in the case of an essential use, the employee is subject to disciplinary action for the unauthorized use of the cellular device or plan. A call is considered essential if the employee establishes that the personal call was:

1. an unsolicited and isolated incoming call; or
2. of minimum duration, urgent in nature, and could not have been made from a different telephone.

**Personal calls while on travel status.** Certain bargaining agreements or compensation plans provide that an employee in travel status overnight may claim expense reimbursement for actual personal telephone calls up to a defined limit. Employees who are issued a cellular device may make limited personal calls in lieu of claiming such reimbursement for calls while in travel status.

**6. I sometimes use my personal cell phone for state business. May I be reimbursed for part of my monthly bill?**

Occasional business call expenses made from an employee's personal cellular device are eligible for reimbursement if the employee has incremental costs directly attributable to the business calls. Incremental costs are actual verifiable costs that are separately identified for each state call in excess of the standard monthly service fee.

Reimbursement will be made only if the business calls were reasonable and caused the employee to exceed the employee's plan minutes. For example, if the personal plan is for 1000 minutes and in a given month the employee uses 950 personal and 100 business minutes, the employee would only be eligible for reimbursement for the incremental costs associated with the 50 minutes that exceeded the plan.

If the next month under the same plan the employee had 900 personal and 100 business minutes, the employee would not be entitled to reimbursement because the

business calls made did not cause the employee to incur additional (incremental) costs on the employee's phone bill.

To qualify for reimbursement, an employee must prepare an Employee Expense Report and submit the documentation (a copy of the service contract, a copy of the bill, and notations as to who was called and the business purpose of each business call). The employee's supervisor must review the documentation and sign the report. If reimbursement requests are routinely submitted, the supervisor should consider the assignment of a cellular device to the individual employee.

**7. I have a personal cell phone that I use for business purposes. My cell phone has a fixed-rate (unlimited) data plan for my personal use. In addition to the personal use, I use the data plan for work purposes. May I receive reimbursement for part of the monthly data plan?**

Employees may only receive reimbursement for occasional, actual expenses related to cell phone use. If you have an unlimited data plan on your personal cell phone, there is no incremental cost to you to use the personal cell phone/data plan for work purposes; thus, you are not entitled to reimbursement. If you have substantial business use, discuss your need for an employer-paid separate phone with your supervisor.

**8. I inadvertently used my state-provided cell phone for a personal call. What corrective steps must I take?**

Employees must reimburse the state for all personal calls at the rate of 40 cents per minute. A check for reimbursement must be attached to the monthly cell phone invoice highlighting any personal use.

All employees with state-provided cell phones must review the cellular device invoice monthly and identify any use not permitted under System Procedure 5.22.2. Next, the employee must initial the invoice and submit it to the employee's supervisor or authorized administrator assigned to review and approve it.

## FAQs - SUPERVISORS

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### 1. What is the approval process for issuance of a cell phone to an employee (or to add voice, text, or data service)?

- The supervisor of an employee requesting the device and plan must determine if the employee meets the threshold eligibility requirements contained in System Procedure 5.22.2 (see form: “Authorization and Annual Review for Cellular and Other Mobile Computing Devices”). If approved, forward to Administration for final approval.
- An authorized administrator must approve the request. On this campus, “authorized administrator” means a member of the President’s Cabinet.
- Documentation to support the decision to issue the device and plan must be retained by the appropriate campus administrative unit consistent with records retention standards and be available for review and audit.

### 2. What is the procurement process for cellular phones and plans?

All devices and plans must be procured under SMSU’s exclusive rights contract. To request a cellular phone and plan the employee must submit a completed Authorization and Annual Review for Cellular and Mobile Devices form to the Director of Purchasing. The form must be accompanied with the phone type and plan information requested by the employee. Upon receipt of the approved documents, the Director of Purchasing shall place an order for the phone and notify the requestor when the phone is received. This form is completed annually to ensure that the need for the device and plan continues to meet Minnesota State System Procedure 5.22.2. Information regarding specific phone and plan options is available by contacting the Purchasing Clerk, Christy Johnson, at extension 6215.

### 3. How often do I need to review invoices of employer-provided phones?

**Monthly review of invoices is required.** All employees with state-provided cell phones must review the invoice monthly and identify any use not permitted under System Procedure 5.22.2. Next, the employee must initial the invoice and submit it to the employee's supervisor or authorized administrator assigned to review and approve it. When approved, the supervisor should keep the invoices in a file so that they are available for review and audit. Please notify the Business Office if you have any questions.

Note: Personal use of a cellular device and plan issued under Minnesota State System Procedure 5.22.2 is prohibited. Personal use may result in revocation of the employee's

cellular device and plan usage. Except in the case of an essential use, the employee is subject to disciplinary action for the unauthorized use of the cellular device or plan. A call is considered essential if the employee establishes that the personal call was:

1. an unsolicited and isolated incoming call; or
2. of minimum duration, urgent in nature, and could not have been made from a different telephone.

Employees must reimburse the state for all personal calls at the rate of 40 cents per minute. A check for reimbursement must be attached to the cell phone bill highlighting the personal calls.

#### **4. What are my other responsibilities as a supervisor?**

**Annual review of continued need for device plan, and level of service is required.** The employee's supervisor and authorized administrator must annually review and document the continued business need for the device and plan (see form: Authorization and Annual Review for Cellular and Other Mobile Computing Devices).

File invoices monthly. The employee's supervisor must review and approve the invoices monthly and keep the invoices in a file so that they are available for review and audit. Please notify the Business Office if you have any questions.