Employee Cell Phones / FIN-ITS-008

I. Purpose of the policy
   Establish the standards under which employees whose job duties include the frequent need of a cell phone may receive supplemental pay, in the form of a cell phone allowance (taxable stipend) to cover the business-related use of a cell phone plan. Additionally, it will also enable Plymouth State University to better control cell phone costs, as well as comply with current IRS guidelines.

II. Applicability and Authority
   Any employee whose job duties include the University sanctioned, frequent need of a cell phone.

III. Detailed Policy Statement

   This policy applies to Plymouth State University. It covers cell phones and other applicable wireless communications devices.

   A. Exclusions from the policy
      • Pagers
      • Two-way radios
      • Mobile devices owned by PSU and shared by department personnel for night and weekend support
      • Cellular lines used for meteorology field equipment

   B. Cell Phones and other devices requiring a cellular data plan
      • The University does not own cell phones for the use of individual employees.
      • Devices that have been lost or damaged are the responsibility of the employee.
      • PSU will not accept any liability for claims, charges or disputes between the service provider and the employee.
      • The employee pays all bills and fees.
      • Information Technology Services (ITS) is not authorized to deal with third-party carriers or service provider issues.

IV. Procedures
   • General
i. If a department head, and respective Principal Administrator (“PA”), determines that an employee’s job duties include the frequent need for a cell phone, then the employee may be eligible for an allowance to cover cell phone expenses.
   a. The allowance is not intended to fund the cost of the device nor pay the entire monthly bill.
   b. The assumption is that most employees use their wireless communication devices for both personal and business communications.

ii. Department heads are responsible for the annual review of employee business-related cell phone use to determine if existing cell phone allowances should be continued as-is, changed, or discontinued.

iii. A new PSU Cell Phone Allowance Request Form is required to be approved and re-submitted to Human Resources/Payroll each fiscal year.
   a. A full copy of the employee’s most recent cell phone bill may be requested for auditing purposes.

iv. PSU will pay a fixed amount even if the monthly cell phone costs exceed the allowance.
   a. If the amount of the allowance needs to be altered because of a legitimate, documented business purpose, employees will need to ask their department heads to adjust the cell phone allowance and submit a new approved form.
   b. The revised allowance will not exceed the maximum amount of the cell phone allowance as stated on the Allowance Request Form.

v. The cell phone contract will be between the carrier vendor and the employee. It will be in the name of the PSU employee who will be solely responsible for all payments to the service provider.

vi. Only one cell phone allowance will be provided per employee.

vii. The allowance will be terminated upon employee separation and will coincide with the effective date of the separation. The Supervisor is required to provide Human Resources with the date of separation.

viii. Each recipient of a cell phone allowance must notify Plymouth State University of his/her cell phone number and must continue to maintain the cell phone while in receipt of the allowance.
ix. Since the cell phone is owned personally by the employee, and the allowance provided is taxable income, the employee may use the phone for both business and personal purposes, as needed.
   a. The employee may add, at his or her own expense, extra services or equipment features, as desired.
   b. Service problems require that the employee work directly with the service provider for resolution.

x. ITS will support Smartphone/PDA users by providing settings for email and calendar functionality.

- Payment Method.
  i. The employee is required to assume purchasing and payment responsibilities.
  ii. The employee chooses the cell phone or other wireless communication device. Some cell phones/wireless communication devices are more compatible with PSU’s systems. Prior to purchasing, please review the ITS cell phone recommendations.
  iii. The type of service and contract is selected by the employee.
  iv. PSU will provide a taxable stipend for a portion of the monthly cellular service. Amount will be paid bi-weekly upon receipt of the signed Cell Phone Allowance Request Form.
     - For example, if you are approved for a $40/month cell phone allowance, this equates to $480 per year.
     - The $480 total will be divided by 26 pay periods. Please note that rounding may occur.
  v. If the employee terminates from PSU, the cellular contract will remain the employee’s full financial responsibility.
  vi. The stipend does not constitute an increase in base pay and will not be included in any percentage calculations for increase to base.

- Annual Renewal.
  i. Cell phone allowances are valid for a maximum of one year.
  ii. All cell phone allowances expire on June 30 of the current fiscal year. For those employees who wish to continue to receive an allowance it is necessary to complete a PSU Cell Phone Allowance Request Form annually.
iii. These forms are to be completed, printed, signed and submitted to your Supervisor by June 1 each year.

iv. Phone renewals are for fiscal years and are not guaranteed year to year. You may download the Cell Phone Allowance Request Form from our website.

V. Non-compliance

- Use of the cell phone in any manner contrary to local, state or federal laws will constitute misuse and will result in immediate termination of the cell phone allowance.

VI. Definitions

None

VII. Related Policies / References for More Information

- Acceptable Use Policy