

# Colusa County Cell Phone Policy

**POLICY NUMBER: 316**  
**DATE ADOPTED: June, 1, 2010**  
**Amended June 15, 2010**  
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## I. Purpose

This policy establishes the County's expectations regarding personal and county provided cell phones or personal digital assistants (PDA), collectively referred to as "cell phone(s)," including eligibility, responsibilities and reimbursement for use.

II. Employees and elected officials whose job duties require them to use a cell phone for official County business will receive County provided phones or will be asked to use their personal cell phones for business purposes for which they will be paid a monthly allowance as reimbursement for that use.

## A. Reimbursement Allowance for Business Use of Personal Cell Phone

### 1. Eligibility for Cell Phone Allowance

- a. **Board of Supervisors** members will be provided a cell phone allowance in amounts consistent with this policy at section II.A.3.b or as established by Board Resolution.
- b. **Elected officials** and Department Heads will be provided a cell phone allowance in an amount consistent with this policy at section II.A.3.b for him/herself subject to the terms and conditions outlined in this policy at sections II.A.1.c.
- c. **Employee** cell phone allowances must be approved by an employee's Department Head.
  - (1.) An employee's job duties must meet at least one of the following criteria to be considered for a cell phone allowance:
    - (a.) The job requires considerable time outside the office (travel, meetings, conferences, etc.) and use of an electronic device facilitates the effective maintenance of business operations while away.
    - (b.) The job requires the employee to be immediately accessible to receive, respond to and/or make frequent business calls and/or emails outside normal working hours and/or the office environment.
    - (c.) Job duties away from the office may expose the employee or others to immediate harm or danger (e.g., visits to homes of patients or clients).
  - (2.) All employees for whom a cell phone allowance is requested must satisfy the requirements identified in section 2 below.
- d. Cell phone allowances shall be charged to the expenditure account "Communications – Cell & Pagers". It is the Department Head's responsibility to ensure there is adequate funding budgeted in this account.
- e. The departmental eligibility criteria can be more (but not less) restrictive than the County criteria stated above.

### 2. Employee Responsibilities

- a. Sign the Cell Phone Acceptance/Reimbursement Form thereby certifying that s/he will provide the phone number within five days of activation and will be available for calls (in

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possession of the phone and have it turned on) during those times specified by his/her Department.

- b. Select any cell phone carrier whose service meets the requirements of the job responsibilities as determined by his/her Department.
- c. Inform the County to discontinue the allowance when the eligibility criteria are no longer met or when the cell service is cancelled. If such notification is not submitted within two weeks of no longer meeting criteria or service cancellation, the employee must repay any allowance received.
- d. Pay all charges on his/her personal cell phone plan. If the employee leaves the position, he/she continues to be responsible for the contractual obligations of his/her cell phone plan.
- e. Abide by all policies and Code provisions, including but without limitation Colusa County Driving Policy 501.1 and Chapter 45.

3. **Cell Phone Allowance Amounts**

- a. The cell phone allowance is intended to reimburse the employee for the average business use of the cell phone, not to pay the entire phone bill.
- b. The monthly cell phone allowances are based upon approximate usage as determined by Department Heads:
  - (1.) Basic Cell Phone:
    - < 300 minutes - \$20;
    - 300 – 700 minutes - \$30;
    - > 700 minutes - \$40
  - OR-
  - (2.) PDA (cell phone, email, internet need) = \$60.
- c. The level of the allowance provided is subject to change or cancellation without notice at any time as determined by the Department Head.
- d. Department Supervisors may periodically request documentation of business use to assess actual use and/or the level of use then needed for official County business.
- e. The monthly allowance is not considered part of base pay used for purposes of calculating percentage salary increases.
- f. Each Department shall create and maintain a Departmental "Cell-Phone Log" which shall identify all phones used in the Department under this policy by phone number, name of each employee receiving a cell-phone allowance and the amount of the allowance.
- g. Allowances are currently considered taxable income to the employee by the Internal Revenue Service.
- h. Allowances will be eliminated when an employee terminates.
- i. Allowances will be suspended when an employee is on a Leave of Absence lasting longer than 30 days. The Auditor's Office will be informed immediately in the event an allowance is suspended during a Leave of Absence.

**B. County-Provided Cell Phones**

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1. With the approval of a Department Head, the County may purchase cell phones and pay for service in certain limited circumstances—e.g., phones that rotate among bus drivers, on-call staff, safety personnel, or maintenance personnel.
2. A Department Head shall include in the Departmental Cell-Phone Log: the phone number, the name(s) of the person(s) to whom a phone is assigned and the terms of the assignment: shared, during work hours or at all times for each phone provided by the Department under this section B. In the event a phone is shared, the Department Head shall have included in the Departmental Cell Phone Log the dates and times of use by each employee assigned the phone.
3. Each Department must keep copies of all County-provided Cell Phone data, including but not limited to purchase invoices, and monthly invoices for use on file and available for internal or external audit.
4. Original purchase invoices and monthly service invoices must be included with the County claim form and submitted to the Auditor's Office for audit and payment.
5. No personal calls are to be made on a County issued cellular phone. Supervisors or their designees are expected to review the monthly bills of County-provided cell phones to ensure that no personal calls were made.
6. Employees issued County-provided phones are responsible to abide by all policies and Code provisions, including without limitation Driving Policy Number 501.1 and Code section 45.8.14 (To Use County Property with No Expectation of Privacy.)

**III.** Acceptance of an allowance or a County cell phone constitutes acknowledgement that an employee understands that cell phone transmissions are not secure and s/he should use caution in relaying confidential information over cell devices.

**IV.** This policy shall be effective July 1, 2010.

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