

Forrest County Cellular Phone Policy

Purpose

To establish guidelines for the issuance and usage of county-owned cellular telephones as well as procedures for monitoring and controlling costs related to cellular telephone use in connection with county business. This policy outlines the cellular phone options supported by Forrest County, guidelines for appropriate use, and other administrative issues relating to cellular phone acquisition and reimbursement. This policy was created in order to enhance employee safety, limit county liability, and help manage telecommunications costs.

County cell phones are provided to improve customer service and to enhance business efficiency. Cell Phones are not a personal benefit and should not be used as a primary mode of personal communication.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and other persons who have or are responsible for any cellular device issued by Forrest County to conduct business on behalf of the County.

General

It is the policy of Forrest County to consider the issuance of a cellular device when the responsibilities of an employee require:

- The employee to be reachable immediately.
- The employee to be “on call” outside of normal business hours.
- The employee to be away from a fixed workstation where timely communication is difficult to transact.

The final decision on whether an employee will be issued a cellular device rests with the County Board of Supervisors. However, cellular devices will not be issued to student workers, contract employees, temporary personnel, consultants, or other workers that do not have a compelling use for a Cell Phone.

The County Administrator of Forrest County has ultimate authority interpreting and administering the County Cellular Phone Policy.

Issuing a Cellular Telephone

Employees requiring the use of a county-owned cellular phone must go through an application process and clearly define why the phone is needed. Application forms must be approved and authorized by the employee’s department head before submission to the Board of Supervisors.

Once the Board of Supervisors has given approval for the issuance of a county cellular telephone, the County Administrator or the County Inventory Clerk will notify the cellular company to arrange for the new service. The County Administrator and/or the County Inventory Clerk will be responsible for determining the best plan and equipment for the county. In order to take advantage of volume pricing discounts, Forrest County has standardized cellular device equipment, cellular service packages, and cellular accessories.

Company-Owned Cellular Phones: Appropriate Use

It is imperative that cellular devices owned by Forrest County used to conduct county business be used appropriately, responsibly, and ethically. The following must be observed:

1. County-owned cellular devices are property of Forrest County and must be treated, used, and safeguarded as such. If an employee damages or loses a county-issued cellular phone, the employee must notify the Administrator or Inventory Clerk immediately.
2. No employee is to use a company-owned cellular phone for the purpose of illegal transactions, harassment, or obscene behavior, in accordance with other existing employee policies.
3. All costs associated with issued cellular telephones will be allocated to the appropriate department.
4. Monthly itemized bills will be received by the county and reviewed by the County Administrator.
5. Any service minutes that are “included” in the monthly plan are property of Forrest County.
6. The employee will be asked to reimburse Forrest County for personal calls placed while traveling on county business.
7. Using a cell phone while operating a motorized vehicle is strongly discouraged. Employees should plan to allow placement of calls prior to driving. When an employee must use their cell phone, while driving, they should keep conversations brief, avoid unnecessary calls, and no calls should be made if driving conditions are hazardous. If it is necessary for the employee to read or write while taking the call, the employee should pull off the road.

Policy Non-Compliance

The Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, and the employee’s immediate Supervisor will be advised of any breaches of this policy and will be responsible for appropriate remedial action, which may include revocation of the privilege to use Forrest County cellular devices and disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of employment.

Cell Phone Request Form

Requesting Department: _____ Date: _____

Employee: _____ Position: _____

Type of Service Requested: () New Service

() Change in Service Phone #: _____

() New Phone Phone #: _____

() Phone Accessory

() Battery

() Carrying Case

() A/C Charger

() D/C Charger

() Other _____

Reason for Service/Change: _____

APPROVAL

Department Head: _____ Date: _____

Signature

County Administrator: _____ Date: _____

Signature

Board of Supervisor Approval: _____ Book: _____ Page: _____

Date