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New Policy Restricts Cell Phone Use to MTA Business

- Employees must reimburse agency for personal calls
- Acknowledgement of Receipt form required

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(March 19, 2004) A new policy that took effect Feb. 1 requires employees and contract staff who were issued MTA cellular phones to submit a receipt form to the ITS Department no later than Tuesday, March 23.

The new policy restricts the use of MTA cell phones to agency business. It requires users to reimburse the agency for the cost of personal calls at the rate of 25 cents per minute.

The "Cell Phone Acknowledgement of Receipt Form" will serve as a record that employees who have MTA cell phones have read and accepted the terms of Cellular Phone IT4 policy.

The policy and the required receipt form are available on myMetro.net by clicking on "IT Policies" on the ITS Department web page. [Click here](#)

A standard formula

The 25-cent rate was derived from a standard formula that takes into account the total cost of a cell phone package that includes surcharges, long distance and roaming charges, plus taxes.

In accordance with the new policy, the ITS Department anticipates distributing the first of the cell phone bills to employees and contracted staff during the last week of April. The bills will account for the individual user's activity.

Employees should identify personal cell phone calls listed on their bills and reimburse the agency at the 25 cents per minute rate. Reimbursement payments should be made directly to the Treasury Operations office on the 21st floor.

"The accountability is required for compliance with the MTA/PTSC

How it works



- ITS monitors cell phone bills and issues copies of individual bills to users each month.
- Users determine personal calls and reimburse the agency at the rate of 25 cents a minute. Employees make reimbursement payments directly to Treasury and receive a receipt number to enter on the ITS Cellular Bill Certification Form as proof of payment.
- Employee submits completed Cellular Bill Certification Form for approval and sign-off by their respective supervisor or manager.
- Employee submits manager-approved Cellular Bill Certification Form to ITS by the specified deadline.

Employee Code of Conduct regarding telephone use," says Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett.

'No appearance of impropriety'

The code states that all MTA telephones should be used for agency business, but that "occasional and limited personal use is permitted as long as it does not interfere with the performance of your official duties and there is no appearance of impropriety."

The new policy may prove to be an efficient solution to the challenges of a rapidly changing and expanding realm of cell phone use in the workplace.

"The good news is that the policy is streamlining the use of cell phones and providing a significant cost savings to Metro," said Bennett. "For example, we were able to demonstrate inconsistencies in billing from our service providers and as a result pooled our packages into a lower general rate."

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