



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES	POLICY NO. 307.2	EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/04	PAGE 1 of 7
APPROVED BY:  <div style="text-align: right;">Director</div>	SUPERSEDES 12/05/90	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 10/01/89	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide policy and guidelines for the issuance of cellular telephones and to ensure compliance with the Los Angeles County (LAC) Cellular Telephone Policy and the LAC Fiscal Manual, Section 4.5.0.

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On April 23, 1996, the County of Los Angeles issued a County Cellular Telephone Policy Statement in addition to providing management controls over cellular telephones. Such management controls include the issuance of a departmental cellular telephone policy and accompanying procedures. To ensure that all County policy and procedural requirements are met, the Department has also considered the applicable sections of the LAC Fiscal Manual.

POLICY

- 3.1 The Department of Mental Health (DMH) assigns cellular telephones to DMH employees whose duties and responsibilities clearly require cellular telephones to conduct County business and not on the basis of convenience, seniority or position.
 - 3.1.1 To provide further clarification as to when a cellular telephone may be assigned, the following justifications are provided:
 - 3.1.1.1 When the employee's job assignment is such that he/she must be immediately accessible to members of the Board of Supervisors, their staff and/or the Director of the Department.
 - 3.1.1.2 When the employee's assignment involves extensive time in the field, for example, MET/SMART, PMRT, Homeless Outreach, GENESIS, AB34, etc.
 - 3.1.1.3 When the employee's job duties are performed where hard-wired telephones are not available.



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3.1.1.4 When a manager/supervisor requires more than one cellular telephone (pool/library) for use by his/her employees to ensure the effective and efficient performance of their duties.

3.1.2 DMH will **NOT** authorize payment for employee owned cellular telephones.

PROCEDURE

CELLULAR TELEPHONE REQUIREMENT APPLICATION

- 4.1 Requests for a cellular telephone must be submitted to the Administrative Deputy on an "Application and Cell Phone Control Agreement" form (Attachment I).
- 4.2 Clearly explain how one of the justifications provided in 3.1.1.1 through 3.1.1.4 applies to the employee for whom the cellular telephone is being requested.
- 4.3 Authorization requires the signatures of **ALL** of the following:
 - the appropriate Program Head or Manager
 - the appropriate District Chief or equivalent
 - the Mental Health Analyst or designee as identified by the Executive Staff responsible for the fund/orgs.
 - the appropriate Executive Staff member or designee
- 4.4 The Administrative Support Bureau (ASB) shall maintain an up-to-date cellular telephone inventory list that includes all appropriate identification numbers.
- 4.5 Department issued cellular telephones are to be used for County business **ONLY**, except in cases of emergency.
- 4.6 The use of cellular telephones is to be minimized and conventional communication means are to be used when practical.
- 4.7 Managers who have been issued cellular telephones for assignment within their respective area shall document all such assignments. At a minimum, documentation shall include the name of the manager, the name of the recipient, cellular telephone identification number, and the date assigned/returned. Cellular telephones that are not assigned shall be secured by the person responsible for their control.



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IDENTIFICATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF PERSONAL CALLS

- 5.1 Each assignee will receive a monthly cellular telephone bill listing the calls placed, i.e., date, number called, number of airtime minutes used, etc. This bill will be distributed by the DMH Accounting Division and will include instructions on how to verify business and emergent personal calls.
- 5.1.1 Personal cellular telephone calls are defined as non-work related calls made using DMH assigned cellular telephones including cellular telephones that may be provided to employees from a cellular telephone pool/library.
- 5.1.2 Effective April 2003, the County Fiscal Manual established County policy for the reimbursement of personal use of cellular telephones. Section 4.5.3 of the Manual requires employees to reimburse the County (DMH) at the per minute rate specified in the cellular service agreement.
- 5.1.3 County policy regarding reimbursement by employees for personal use of cellular telephones is as follows:
- 5.1.3.1 If the plan covering the employee's DMH issued cellular telephone is a Flat-Rate Plan, per minute charges begin with the first minute used. Employees shall reimburse the DMH for each personal call at the per minute rate specified in the service agreement.
- 5.1.3.2 If the plan covering the employee's DMH issued cellular telephone is an Anytime Minutes Plan that provides users with a specified number of minutes for a fixed monthly fee, the employee is required to reimburse DMH for the lesser of 1) all personal calls or 2) all additional minutes that exceed the number of minutes specified in the plan. See the example below.



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EXAMPLE

If the assigned cellular telephone has a 500 Anytime Minutes Plan with a fixed monthly fee is \$45.00 and the provider bills each additional minute used at 30 cents per minute.

Minutes Used	Reimbursable Amount
The employee used 450 minutes in a monthly period.	No reimbursement is necessary because the number of minutes used (450) is less than the number of minutes in the plan.
The employee uses 550 minutes in a monthly period. As the employee used 50 more minutes than included in the plan, DMH requires the employee to review the bill and identify personal calls. The employee identified 80 minutes of personal calls and 470 minutes of DMH business calls.	The employee used 50 more minutes than were in the plan, which is less than the 80 minutes of personal calls identified. Therefore, the employee must reimburse DMH for the lesser amount of 50 minutes at 30 cents per minute or \$15.
The employee uses 550 minutes in a monthly period. As the employee used 50 more minutes than included in the plan, DMH requires the employee to review the bills and identify personal calls. The employee identified 40 minutes of personal calls and 510 minutes of DMH business calls.	The employee used 50 more minutes than were in the plan, which is greater than the 40 minutes of personal calls identified. Therefore, the employee must reimburse DMH for the lesser amount of 40 minutes at 30 cents per minute or \$12.

- 5.1.4 The Accounting Division will provide instructions/forms for purposes of calculating the cost of personal cellular telephone calls.
 - 5.1.4.1 The Accounting Division will identify an employee to contact should there be questions or assistance needed in completing reimbursement calculations.
 - 5.1.4.2 The Mental Health Analyst or designee will also verify calculations. If the Mental Health Analyst or designee finds through the verification process a high rate of accuracy in the calculations, verification may be performed on a sample basis.
- 5.2 The Mental Health Analyst or designee as identified by the Executive Staff member responsible for the fund/org. will be accountable for ensuring billing verifications are returned by the date specified in the Accounting Division instructions distributed with the bills.



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- 5.3 The Accounting Division will be responsible for monitoring the receipt of the cellular telephone verifications.
 - 5.3.1 In the event payment is not received by the date specified in the initial distribution, the Accounting Division will issue follow-up letters to both the Mental Health Analyst or designee and the employee.
 - 5.3.2 In the event payment is not received by the due date specified in the Accounting Division's follow-up letter, the Chief Deputy Director will issue a second follow-up letter to both the Mental Health Analyst or designee and the employee.
 - 5.3.3 If there is no response to the Chief Deputy Director's follow-up letter, the Accounting Division will take appropriate action(s).

- 5.4 The Accounting Division will be responsible for reporting to the cellular telephone carrier any calls the employee identifies as not having made. Based on the results of the follow-up with the carrier, appropriate action will be taken.

- 5.5 To ensure employees return billing verifications and that all information provided by the employee is accurate to the extent possible, the billing verification must be signed by the employee, the Deputy Director and the Mental Health Analyst or designee.

OTHER ACCOUNTING DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Upon receipt of the monthly billing for cellular telephone usage from the service carrier, the DMH Accounting Division shall desk audit the bill. This includes verifying that the bill is in compliance with the terms of the contract/agreement with the service carrier.
 - 6.1.1 If the desk audit results in the identification of any over-billings, the payment amount shall be reduced accordingly.

- 6.2 Following completion of the desk audit, the Accounting Division shall issue payment to the service carrier.

- 6.3 In compliance with LAC Auditor-Controller's requirements, cellular telephone bills shall be retained until the State Short-Doyle Medi-Cal Audit but not less than five (5) years.

CANCELLATION/TERMINATION

- 7.1 Upon an employee's termination from County service or transfer to another organizational unit or department, the employee/assignee must return the assigned cellular telephone to the ASB.



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- 7.2 In order for ASB to process the release of the cellular telephone, the assignee must sign a Cellular Telephone Assignee Agreement, which is part of the application form.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT BUREAU (ASB)

- 8.1 If a Department issued cellular telephone is lost, the assignee must notify the ASB that, in turn, will notify the service carrier to temporarily interrupt service. The assignee is financially responsible for the lost cellular telephone and must reimburse the cost to DMH within ten (10) days.
- 8.2 If a Department issued cellular telephone is stolen, the assignee must provide a police report and a Security Incident Report to the ASB.
- 8.2.1 If a police report is not provided within thirty (30) days of the theft, the assignee shall be responsible for reimbursing the Department for the stolen cellular telephone.
- 8.2.2 An employee found to be responsible for reimbursing the Department for a stolen cellular telephone must reimburse the Department within three (3) business days after being notified by ASB of the amount owed.
- 8.2.2.1 ASB is responsible for determining the amount of reimbursement for a lost/stolen cellular telephone. The replacement value of a lost/stolen cellular telephone will be determined when the ASB is notified of the loss.
- 8.2.2.2 ASB will notify the employee of the amount to be reimbursed to the Department for the lost or stolen cellular telephone. A copy of the notice indicating the amount due will be sent to the DMH Accounting Division.
- 8.2.2.3 Reimbursement must be made by check payable to the Department of Mental Health and submitted to the DMH Accounting Division.
- 8.2.2.4 Upon reimbursement to DMH, the Accounting Division shall issue a receipt. This receipt shall be retained by the employee for property clearance and/or to obtain a replacement cellular telephone. The ASB will not replace a telephone without a receipt issued by the Accounting Division as proof of reimbursement.
- 8.2.2.5 In the event the employee does not reimburse the Department in a timely manner, the Accounting Division will request collection through Payroll. Should the employee have terminated service, the account receivable shall be referred to the Treasurer and Tax Collector.



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DMH BUSINESS CALLS ON PERSONAL CELLULAR TELEPHONES

- 9.1 In the event an employee makes necessary and occasional DMH business related calls using their personal cellular telephone, reimbursement will be at cost.
 - 9.1.1 The reimbursement calculations for personal cellular telephones varies, based on the information provided by the service carrier. Consequently, the Accounting Division is unable to provide standardized instructions for reimbursement calculations.
 - 9.1.1.1 Employees should contact the Expenditure Section of the Accounting Division to obtain instructions for calculating reimbursement.
 - 9.1.1.2 Instructions for calculating reimbursement will be similar to those used by employees calculating the reimbursement to the County for personal calls using a County assigned cellular telephone adjusted according to the carrier billing information provided.

- 9.2 A request for reimbursement for DMH calls on personal cellular telephones must be made on an Expense Claim Form (76E928), identifying the date of the call, name of the person/facility called, city and telephone number, and the amount charged.

- 9.3 A copy of the **entire** personal cellular telephone bill must be attached to the Expense Claim. The Expense Claim must be signed by the claimant, his/her supervisor, and appropriate Deputy Director or designee.

- 9.4 Following approval of all the required signators, the Expense Claim shall be forwarded to the DMH Accounting Division for processing.

AUTHORITY

Los Angeles County Cellular Telephone Policy Statement (1996)
 Los Angeles County Fiscal Manual, Policy 4.5.0
 Los Angeles County Fiscal Manual, Policy 4.5.3

ATTACHMENT Attachment I – Application and Cell Phone Control Agreement form

REVIEW DATE This policy shall be reviewed on or before August 1, 2009.