

# University of Wyoming

## Mobile Communication Device Policy

### **Introduction and Purpose**

This policy allows the University to meet its fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of the State of Wyoming by providing guidelines for the use of mobile communication devices for University business purposes.

### **Definitions**

**Mobile Communication Device:** A mobile communication device is a mobile telephone, email appliance, wireless personal digital assistant, or a device combining two or more of those functions. Mobile telephones are broadly construed here to include devices based on COMA, TOMA, GSM, and PCS digital technologies and follow-ons, as well as satellite telephones.

**Adequate Service:** A mobile communication device service is adequate when it is sufficiently fast, sufficiently convenient, and sufficiently secure to allow the user to conduct University business in an efficient manner that safeguards the integrity and security of sensitive University information.

**Personal calls:** Non-business phone calls that are made or received on UW owned devices that are of more than minimal duration and are non-essential.

**Temporary Loan:** University-owned mobile communication devices may be loaned to employees for temporary use. When traveling on University business, an employee may keep a University device in his/her/their or her possession full time, but must return it to the University department or IT promptly at the end of the travel period.

**UW Alert System:** A text messaging notification system designed to keep the students, faculty, and staff of UW informed during an emergency situation. The UW Alert system was created to provide an additional measure of safety and security for campus.

### **Policy**

In general, the University will not own mobile communication devices or service plans for permanent assignment to individual employees. Employees whose job duties include the frequent need for a mobile communication device may receive extra compensation, in the form of a mobile communication device allowance, to cover business-related use of their personally owned device, service plan and/or equipment. No further reimbursement for mobile communication device costs is available to employees who receive such an allowance.

UW may, in some cases, purchase and own mobile communication devices to be assigned to groups (departments, offices, laboratories, etc.) and which may be loaned temporarily to individual employees or be shared by groups of employees for specific business purposes. Additionally, mobile communication devices that are required to conduct research projects and charged to sponsored program budgets may be obtained by departments.

Mobile communication devices should not be selected as an alternative to other means of communication -- e.g., land-lines, pagers, and radio devices -- when such alternatives

would provide adequate but less costly service to the University. For example, if having a cell phone is sufficient for accomplishing official university business, then it is not permissible to use university funds to acquire a personal technology device that also features email and access to web pages.

All employees with mobile communication device allowances under this policy will register with the UW Alert System as a condition of receiving the monthly allowance. More information can be found at [here](https://uwyo.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1940/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=30905).  
(<https://uwyo.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1940/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=30905>)

## **Procedures**

### **1. Frequent Use of Mobile Communication Devices for Business Purposes**

#### **a. Establishment and Payment of Allowance**

If a University employee's job duties include the frequent need for a mobile communication device, the employee is eligible for an allowance to cover mobile communication device expenses. An allowance may be requested using the UW Mobile Communication Device Allowance form, which can be found [here](http://www.uwyo.edu/hr/files/docs/payroll-office/uw-mcd-allowance-hcm.doc). (<http://www.uwyo.edu/hr/files/docs/payroll-office/uw-mcd-allowance-hcm.doc>)

The request for an allowance may be made any time during the year. Once approved, the allowance will remain in place until the responsible Supervisor or DHR submits a change through the HCM Individual Compensation process. The dollar amount requested is a monthly reimbursement based on the allowance table found in Appendix A.

UW Mobile Communication Device Allowance for newly qualified employees will go into effect within 30 days of receipt in the Payroll Office.

The employee is required to notify his/her/their Supervisor or DHR immediately when a decrease in business use occurs, so that they can take appropriate action.

This allowance does not constitute an increase to base pay, and will not be included in the calculation of retirement contributions or of percentage increases to base pay due to annual raises, job upgrades, etc.

Allowances for mobile communication devices, as outlined in this policy, are treated as paid under a non-accountable plan and treated as taxable income even if the device is required for the employee's job.

#### **b. Determination of Dollar Amount of Allowance**

An employee may receive no more than one voice allowance, one data plan (internet) allowance and one equipment allowance regardless of the number of mobile communication devices an employee chooses to own or operate.

Determination of the dollar amount of the allowance is made at the department level prior to submitting a request for a mobile communication

device allowance, please see the pre-determined amounts in Appendix A.

The Supervisor or DHR is responsible for updating or terminating the individual compensation process in HCM, should there be changes in allowance amounts or eligibility.

c. Use of Device

The employee must retain an active mobile communication service contract as long as a mobile communication device allowance is in place. Because the employee owns the mobile communication device personally and the allowance provided is taxable income, the employee may use the device for both business and personal purposes, as needed. The employee may, at his/her/their own expense, add extra services or equipment features, as desired.

Use of the device in any manner contrary to local, state, or federal laws will constitute misuse, and will result in immediate termination of the mobile communication device allowance.

Employee is responsible for safeguarding any data on the mobile communication device and controlling its use.

University records stored on electronic devices, whether owned by the University or by the employee or a third party, remain the sole property of the University. University records should not be downloaded or stored on personal devices.

Employees who access University records on their personal device have a responsibility to report theft or loss of that personal device to supervisors. Employees should exercise good judgment regarding the reasonableness of using personal devices to access University records and should only use personal devices to access University records if authorized and necessary to fulfill their job duties.

d. Documentation and Review Requirements

When services are initiated, a copy of the UW Mobile Communication Device Allowance form must be kept on file with Human Resources. These files are subject to audit at any time by UW Internal Audit or external auditors engaged by the University, the state, or the federal government.

The Supervisor or DHR is responsible for an annual review of employee business-related mobile device use, to determine if existing mobile communication device allowances should be continued as-is, changed, or discontinued. If the department chooses to change or discontinue the allowance, the Supervisor or DHR must follow the appropriate process via HCM Individual Compensation.

e. Fees for Contract Changes or Cancellations

If for any reason unrelated to University business needs the mobile communication service contract is modified or terminated prior to the end

of the contract period, the employee will bear the cost of any fees associated with that change or cancellation. For example, the employee quits and no longer wants to retain the current mobile communication service plan for personal purposes.

### **Exceptions to the Allowance Method**

While the University generally will not provide mobile communication devices to employees, there are some exceptions to this rule.

The University owns and retain a certain number of mobile communication devices as departmental pool phones and for emergency use, or disaster response/recovery purposes.

In all cases when the University provides mobile communication devices for use by employees, the use of those devices is for the purpose of official UW business.

Requests for other exceptions to this policy may be made by submitting a written request to Human Resources with the approval and signature of the appropriate university Vice President.

### **Individual Responsibilities**

When utilizing mobile communication devices for University business, employees have the following responsibilities:

- Avoid using the device under any circumstances where such use might create or appear to create a hazard, including use while operating a motor vehicle.
- Remember that mobile communication device technology is susceptible to being intercepted or overhead. Refrain from discussing business of a confidential or proprietary nature while using the device.
- Replacing lost or damaged equipment at the employee's expense.

## **Appendix A – Executive Summary**

### **Purpose:**

Provide guidelines for the use of mobile communication devices (MCDs) for University of Wyoming business purposes to meet the university's fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers of the State of Wyoming. Encourage use of personally owned devices to minimize substantiation requirements, compensate employees for business use, and avoid excess taxable wages.

### **Policy:**

Provide extra compensation to cover business use and one-time purchase of a personally owned device and service contract, in the form of a taxable MCD allowance, for employees whose job duties include the frequent need for an MCD.

### **Procedures:**

UW Mobile Communication Device Allowance form may be submitted any time of year. Completed and signed forms are submitted to the Payroll Office, Room 353, Hill Hall or to [payroll1@uwyo.edu](mailto:payroll1@uwyo.edu). Total allowance requested is determined by Supervisor or DHR, approved by the Cost Center Approver and the Appointing Authority and must be updated when business use decreases or is terminated via system processes. An employee may receive no more than one voice allowance (partial or full), one data allowance and one equipment allowance regardless of the number of MCDs an employee chooses to own or operate. Allowance does not increase base pay and is not included in the calculation of retirement contributions and annual salary adjustments.

### **Examples of Allowances:**

| <b>Job Duty Requirements</b> | <b>Partial Voice Allowance</b> | <b>Voice Allowance</b> | <b>Data Allowance</b> | <b>Equipment Allowance</b> | <b>Total Allowance</b> | <b>Substantiation</b>                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                              | <b>\$20</b>                    | <b>\$40</b>            | <b>\$30</b>           | <b>\$10</b>                | <b>\$80</b>            |                                                                                                                                                 |
| Employee Example 1           | x                              |                        |                       |                            | \$20                   | Employee's job duties require only voice services at a partial allowance.                                                                       |
| Employee Example 2           | x                              |                        |                       | x                          | \$30                   | Employee's job duties require only voice services at a partial allowance. Department has additionally chosen to provide an equipment allowance. |
| Employee Example 3           |                                |                        | x                     |                            | \$30                   | Employee's job duties require data services only.                                                                                               |
| Employee Example 4           |                                | x                      |                       |                            | \$40                   | Employee's job duties require only voice services.                                                                                              |
| Employee Example 5           |                                |                        | x                     | x                          | \$40                   | Employee's job duties require data services only. Department has additionally chosen to provide an equipment allowance.                         |
| Employee Example 6           | x                              |                        | x                     |                            | \$50                   | Employee's job duties require voice services at a partial allowance and data services.                                                          |

|                     |   |   |   |   |      |                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Employee Example 7  |   | x |   | x | \$50 | Employee's job duties require only voice services. Department has additionally chosen to provide an equipment allowance.                                     |
| Employee Example 8  | x |   | x | x | \$60 | Employee's job duties require voice services at a partial allowance and data services. Department has additionally chosen to provide an equipment allowance. |
| Employee Example 9  |   | x | x |   | \$70 | Employee's job duties require voice and data services.                                                                                                       |
| Employee Example 10 |   | x | x | x | \$80 | Employee's job duties require voice and data services. Department has additionally chosen to provide an equipment allowance.                                 |