



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 3.15

Subject:	Telecommunication Services
Authority:	TCA 4-3-1007 (6), 9-18-102, 37-5-105 (3), 37-5-106, Financial Integrity Act of 1983; Finance and Administration Policy 17
Standards:	None
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Employees
Policy Statement:	
The Department of Children's Services shall ensure that long distance calls from state telephones, cellular service airtime and other telecommunication services are used exclusively for State of Tennessee official business.	
Purpose:	
To comply with the requirements of the Department of Finance and Administration (F & A) Policy 17 for the issuance, usage and monitoring of state-issued telecommunication devices and services as appropriate. It is also a DCS responsibility for establishing and maintaining internal controls in accordance with the Financial Integrity Act (TCA 9-18-102).	
Procedures:	
A. Assignment/ request of state- issued telecommunication devices/services	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. DCS employees may be issued State telecommunication devices or other telecommunication services, as appropriate, if required for their job duties and requested by their immediate supervisor.2. All requests to issue or cancel telecommunications devices and services are made by completing and submitting a service request in the State's Service Request System See DCS Policy 7.16 Procurement of Telecommunications Equipment and Services and the Telecommunications Request Procedure for more information.
B. Employee responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Long Distance Calls from Land Lines and Cellular Services</u><ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Long distance calls and cellular service airtime on state telephones are for conducting <u>State of Tennessee official business</u> and must not be used for personal calls.b) Any long distance calls or cellular airtime of a personal nature must be conducted on the employee's time using the employee's personal telephone or other appropriate means.c) State-issued cellular phones are to <u>only</u> be used for <u>State of Tennessee official business</u>, regardless of whether the telephone calls are local or long

distance.

2. Internet Connectivity and Other Telecommunication Services

Usage of smart phones, tablet computers, mobile hotspots and other devices or services provisioned to employees by the State of Tennessee, shall adhere to the DCS policy [7.2 Acceptable Use Network Access Rights and Obligations](#) that complies with the access rights and obligations as established by the Department of F & A, Strategic Technology Solutions Division.

3. Personal Telephone Usage

- a) Telephones in DCS offices are only to be used for State of Tennessee official business. Any calls of a personal nature placed from a DCS office should be conducted on the employee's time, except in the event of an emergency. In the event a personal long distance telephone call is made from a business telephone, the call must be charged to the employee's home telephone, personal calling card or other appropriate means.
- b) Personal long distance calls may not be charged to a state telephone number. Employees have an obligation to limit, to a bare minimum, the number and duration of personal calls during work hours.
- c) Obvious telephone abuse (*i.e.*, charging personal long distance telephone calls on a business telephone) has a direct monetary effect on the department. Other less obvious abuse (*i.e.*, making/receiving excessive personal calls) has a direct effect on the employee's productivity. Excessive use can be defined in terms of the number of calls, the duration of calls, or combination of both.

4. Directory Assistance and Other Telecommunication Charges

- a) Since the State is charged extra for *directory assistance calls* (*i.e.*, 1-411 or 1 + area code 555-1212, etc.), employees are encouraged to use telephone books or internet sites such as www.switchboard.com for locating telephone numbers.
- b) Certain telecommunication charges are not authorized, including but not limited to, the following:
 - ◆ 900 (premium rate) numbers;
 - ◆ Third party calls; and
 - ◆ Unauthorized international calls.

5. Collect Calls

It is the general policy of the State of Tennessee **not** to accept collect calls from the general public. Collect calls from employees should be accepted only for State of Tennessee official business and only when necessary. Other reasonable alternative methods must be explored before making or accepting a collect call to or from another employee. If a collect call must be accepted in the event of an emergency or other unusual situation, the employee accepting the call **must log** all collect calls. The reason for the collect call must be fully explained on the log. Logs should be maintained on file until reviewed and reconciled with the billing report.

	<p>6. Employees who are re-assigned or terminated must turn in all telecommunication devices and related equipment and accessories to their supervisor as outlined in DCS policy 4.27, Employee Exit Interview. The supervisor/designee must ensure that telecommunication devices, related equipment and accessories are returned to the DCS Office of Information Technology (OIT) Telecommunications Unit.</p>
<p>C. Reimbursement for business calls placed from or charged to <u>personal</u> telephone bills</p>	<p>Telecommunication charges, incurred by state employees while on official business, are reimbursed according to the State of Tennessee Comprehensive Travel Regulations and DCS policy 3.16 Reimbursements for Employee Expenses and are subject to the following limitations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local phone calls on official business are reimbursed. 2. Long distance telephone calls, telegrams and fax charges on official business are reimbursed provided a statement is furnished indicating the date, name and location called.
<p>D. Monitoring and reporting misuse/abuse</p>	<p>DCS is required by F & A Policy 17 to develop a system to identify inappropriate and unnecessary long distance calls and cellular service airtime. The DCS Office of Finance and Budget (OFB) directs and supports the monitoring of misuse/abuse of telecommunications.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each DCS Central Office division, regional office, and YDC Manager/designee is responsible for monitoring telephone use and investigating and reporting misuse or abuse to the OFB immediately. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ When misuse or abuse is discovered, Human Resources (HR) assists the manager in identifying appropriate action. ◆ OFB also notifies Internal Audit (IA) of any suspected cases of abuse so that IA may report the findings to the Comptrollers Offices on the department's Monthly Fraud, Waste Report. 2. Each DCS central office division, regional office, and YDC Manager/designee systematically uses various monitoring reports as listed below or other methods to monitor telephone usage. DCS OFB Management <u>may</u> require the logging of all long distance calls if circumstances warrant. Detailed reports that are available for monitoring include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Calls Over 60 Minutes and \$5 ◆ Telecom Usage Bills Over \$75 ◆ See the Telecom Reports Training Aid for more information on using these telecommunication exception reports. 3. The OIT Governance & Administration Unit updates the billing exception reports each month. They also provide, upon request, individual call details for a billing number on the Telecom Usage Bills Over \$75 Report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ See the Telecommunications Request Procedure for more information. ◆ Guidelines that may be considered for monitoring telecommunication bills can be reviewed in F & A Policy 17.

E. Disciplinary action	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Appropriate disciplinary action is administered to employees responsible for telephone misuse/abuse. In determining the appropriate type of disciplinary action, management should consider whether the employee's usage is considered to be misuse or abuse. In addition, management should consider the following factors in determining disciplinary action:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Recurring misuse/abuse;b) Dollar amount of incorrect or improper calls;c) Nature of calls;d) Employees intent or attempt to deceive or cover-up calls; ande) Amount of lost work time.2. The Rules of the Department of Personnel 1120-10-.06 <i>Examples of Disciplinary Offenses</i> identify the following causes which can be considered for disciplinary action:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Inefficiency or incompetency in the performance of duties;b) Careless, negligent or improper use of State property or equipment; andc) Willful abuse or misappropriation of State funds, property or equipment.3. Management consults with the Division of Human Resources and proceeds with disciplinary action in accordance with personnel rules and policies as applicable. Disciplinary actions begin at the appropriate step that may include an oral warning, written warning, suspension without pay, transfer or demotion, or dismissal.4. In addition, management seeks restitution for all improper calls or improper use of business telephones, devices and services. Employees who have previously received disciplinary action and subsequently continue to misuse/abuse telephone usage receive the appropriate progressive level of disciplinary action.
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F. Reimbursement	<p>Employees subject to reimburse the State of Tennessee follow the procedures outlined below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write a check or purchase a money order for the amount owed (no cash is accepted). Make check or money order payable to the <u>Department of Children's Services</u>; 2. Include a copy of the billing statement/report highlighting item for reimbursement or if the billing statement/report is not available, write on the check the telephone number and month for the reimbursement; 3. Include a work telephone number on the check or money order; and 4. Send/bring check or money order and/or billing statement/report to: <p style="text-align: center;"> Department of Children's Services Office of Finance and Budget Attn: Receivables Section UBS Tower, 8th Floor 315 Deaderick Street Nashville, TN 37243-1290 </p>
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Forms:	<i>None</i>
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Collateral documents:	<p><u>DCS Policy 3.16 Reimbursements for Employee Expenses</u></p> <p><u>DCS Policy 7.2, Acceptable Use Network Access Rights and Obligations</u></p> <p><u>DCS Policy 7.16 Procurement of Telecommunications Equipment and Services</u></p> <p><u>Department of Finance and Administration – Policy 17 Telecommunication Services</u></p> <p><u>State of Tennessee Comprehensive Travel Regulations- (Telecommunications Costs While on Travel Status – Pg. 9)</u></p> <p><u>Telecommunications Request Procedure</u></p> <p><u>Telecom Reports Training Aid</u></p>
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Glossary:	
Term	Definition
	None