

## Cellular Telephone Use Guidelines

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### Introduction

The effective management and application of information technology (including cellular telephones) improves the quality of service delivered to Washington's citizens, the productivity of the state work force, and the overall cost effectiveness of state operation. Agencies whose staffs use cellular phones should have policies and procedures in place for acquisition, appropriate usage, and control. Rather than issuing a formal policy, the Department of Information Services (DIS) is releasing these guidelines to assist agencies with the development of their individual policies.

### Statutory Authority

The provisions of RCW 43.105.041 detail the powers and duties of the ISB, including the authority to develop statewide or interagency information services and technical policies, standards and procedures.

### Scope

These guidelines apply to all executive and judicial branch agencies and educational institutions, as provided by law, that operate, manage, or use IT services or equipment to support critical state business functions.

### Exemptions

None.

### Guidelines

#### *Sample Agency Policy*

The following guidelines provide an example of elements to be addressed when developing an agency policy:

**Business needs should determine which agency employees use cellular telephones.** Government use of cellular phones is increasing as employees are asked to do more with less. Cellular technology provides assistance with disaster recovery and

offers portable alternatives for immediate communication. Time and distance can be managed more effectively.

**Cellular telephones are to be acquired following the agency's and the Information Services Board's approved information technology investment policy and procedures.** The following factors may impact agency costs for cellular phones and should be reflected in the acquisition decision:

- Higher cellular usage costs compared to alternative communication choices
- State contract rate vs. personal billing account rate
- Level of employee usage
- Reimbursement for usage
- Type of equipment and number of lines

State master contracts shall not be used to obtain cellular equipment or services for personal use. Agencies and employees are not prohibited from accepting group discount rates for purchasing and using cellular phones offered separately from the state master agreement.

**The agency reserves the right to monitor the use of all state-owned cellular telephones.**

- Cellular telephones should not be used when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient, and readily available.
- Records shall be maintained to monitor **shared usage** of cellular phones.

**Cellular transmissions are not secure.**

- Employees should use discretion in relaying confidential information.
- Reasonable precautions should be made to prevent equipment theft and vandalism.

**An inventory of agency-owned cellular equipment should be maintained for internal auditing purposes.**

#### **Maintenance**

Technological advances and changes in the business requirements of agencies will necessitate periodic revisions to policies, standards, and guidelines. The Department of Information Services is responsible for routine maintenance of these to keep them current. Major policy changes will require the approval of the ISB.

#### **Definitions**

**Cellular telephone:** Portable phone equipment that connects via switched cell-to-cell or wireless communication.

**Cellular transmissions:** The communications link, established via radio frequency that connects cellular phone calls.

**Security:** Provision that assures safety, protection, or defense.