

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS
EMPLOYEE POLICY MANUAL
2. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

2.11 CELLULAR TELEPHONE

- PURPOSE** 2.11-1 County employees whose job duties require constant communication may be entitled to extra compensation, in the form of a cell phone allowance, to cover the business-related expenses of operating a cell phone.
- ELIGIBILITY** 2.11-2 Cell phone allowances will be at the discretion of the Elected Official/Department Head that has an established Mobile Telephone Budget (Line 7423). Cell allowances cannot exceed the amount currently budgeted in that Department's line 7423 and shall adhere to the defined allowance amounts.
- 2.11-3 Administration of the cell phone allowances will be made between the Elected Official/Department Head and Human Resources.
- EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES** 2.11-4 In order to receive a cell phone allowance, the employee must have a cell phone available to them for business purposes as long as the cell phone allowance is in place. County employees receiving a cell phone allowance are personally liable for any contractual agreement that they enter or any other arrangement for cell phone use. The cell phone allowance is intended to cover **most** of the cost of the cell phone expenses related to work duties. However, the employee will pay **any** costs exceeding the amount of the cell phone allowance to the cell phone provider.
- 2.11-5 The phone is considered the employee's personal property. The initial purchase of the cell phone, accessory equipment, and activation fees will be the responsibility of the employee. Any repairs, replacements, upgrade or purchase of prepaid time of the phone device **will not be reimbursed by the County**.
- 2.11-6 Employees will ensure that the mobile telephone service is reliable in Montgomery County, Texas.
- 2.11-7 Any number changes must be reported to the employee's respective Elected Official/Department Head.
- FEEES FOR CONTRACT CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS** 2.11-8 Contract termination fees (if assessed by the service provider) will not be paid or reimbursed by the County. This includes termination fees of employees who quit, are terminated, transfer to another department, or are moved into another position with no cell phone allowance.

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**PAYMENT OF
ALLOWANCE**

2.11-9 Once determined that an employee is eligible, the Elected Official/Department Head may assign allowances based on the following tiers of usage:

Allowance Amounts (monthly):

- Tier 1 = \$20
- Tier 2 = \$40
- Tier 3 = \$70
- Tier 4 = \$80

2.11-10 The cell phone allowance will be processed through Montgomery County Payroll as taxable income and is subject to standard payroll withholdings to the extent required by Federal Law.

2.11-11 The allowance will be paid bi-weekly.

**CELL PHONE
USAGE**

2.11-12 Workplace – Employees receive a cell phone allowance due to the critical need to maintain accessibility with County staff and officials in order to ensure the uninterrupted flow of services to our constituents. Excessive personal calls during the work day, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and is distracting to others. Employees should endeavor to make or receive personal calls during designated breaks, lunch periods, before and after working hours. Excessive time spent on personal calls may warrant disciplinary action at the discretion of the Elected Official/Department Head.

2.11-13 Operating a motor vehicle – When operating a vehicle in the course of one's employment, either county or personally owned, safe operation of the vehicle is the employee's primary responsibility; employees are personally liable for any misuse of a cell phone. Employees who need to take or make a call while driving must pull off the road and be parked in a safe location before making or receiving a phone call. The County shall not be responsible for any failure to obey any state, county or other law or regulations prohibiting cell phone use.

**RECORDS
REQUESTS**

2.11-14 County employees must understand that use of their personal cell phones for business purposes may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Information Act.

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**INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY**

2.11-15 For all cell phones, regardless if they are County-owned or employee-owned, connections to County messaging services or County-licensed applications may be loaded and configured only as authorized by Information Technology (IT), consistent with the IT cellular telephone policy. IT can provide only limited support for personal cell phone devices and will not provide troubleshooting services for employees who elect to purchase devices with operating systems other than those recommended by IT.

2.11-16 Should a County-owned or employee-owned device become lost, stolen or otherwise become a risk to the County computing environment, IT maintains the right to remove County messaging or County-licensed programs from the device remotely.