

PROVISIONS FOR CELL PHONES / PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDS) FOR DIVISION EMPLOYEES

Background

The Division views cell phones and other PEDs as instrumental in keeping our staff both safe and connected to the rest of the Division. The Division also recognizes the value that cell phones can provide in keeping our students and staff with a line of communication to keep them safe when away from the school on field trips and during highway travel. The Division does not support the use of cell phones or PEDs as replacements for landline phones, administrative assistants or other more economical means of communicating.

Cell phones and PEDs will be provided to or cost shared with employees per the following guidelines.

Guidelines

- 1. Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)** – PEDs such as Smartphones and other similar devices may be provided to or cost shared with employees in circumstances where it is determined by the Division that it is necessary for the employee to perform their duties effectively and safely.

Smartphones and alike will not be provided or cost shared by the Division for employees unless their job requires both extensive travel and a need to be electronically connected to the Division network. Further, schools are not permitted to use Division or Student funds to purchase or subsidize Smartphones or cell phones for school based staff.
- 2. Division Provided Cell Phones (assigned to employees)** – Where it is determined by the Division that a cell phone is necessary for an employee to perform their duties safely and effectively one will be provided to the employee by the Division. Circumstances where school based staff would be assigned cell phones are limited as most school based staff do not travel extensively or spend significant amounts of time off of school grounds. Application for cell phone reimbursement shall be made using AP 143-1 Division Personal Cell Phone Reimbursement Request form.
- 3. Pool Cell Phones** – Schools may and should make available pool cell phones for general use during school related activities such as field trips and highway travel. The cost of these phones will be covered by decentralized budgets and should use economical calling plans or calling cards. The Division reserves the right to

reduce the number of pool cell phones at a school if it is determined that an excessive amount are in use.

4. **Cell phone allowance** – There may be situations where it is deemed to be beneficial to the Division or a School for a staff member to have a cell phone, but not to the extent that the employee requires a phone to be provided to them by the Division. In such a situation the employee may provide a cell phone at their cost with the Division providing a monthly allowance to cover a portion of the staff member's bill determined to be related to Division business. The cost of allowances for school based staff will be covered by decentralized budgets. The maximum allowance payable will be \$55 per month for phones requiring data plans. For phones that do not require data plans, the monthly allowance will be capped at \$30 per month.

Positions eligible for monthly cell phone allowance:

Division Maintenance personnel (not assigned to a specific school)

Division Transportation personnel

IT Personnel

School Principals

Division Student Services Personnel

Approved Division Personnel

Senior Staff

Caretakers

5. All allowances will be paid at the Division level. For eligible staff to be paid a cell phone allowance their Supervisor must forward the name and cell phone number of the individual and the proposed monthly allowance amount to the Division Office. The Division Office will verify that the employee is eligible for a cell phone allowance based on their position.

Allowances will be paid monthly by the Division, with no allowances paid during July and August for school based staff unless the staff member is required to work the calendar year and not the academic year.

6. The Northwest School Division (hereafter referred to as 'NWSD') will allow an employee who:

- a) is entitled to a division cellular phone, and
- b) has received approval from their supervisor,

to substitute their own personal phone in place of their assigned phone, and receive compensation, so long as it meets the criteria laid out in this document.

Current NWSD contract

If the employee currently has a cell phone assigned to them with a contract that cannot reasonably be cancelled or transferred, it will be at the discretion of the NWSD as to whether or not substituting and reimbursing the employee for their personal phone is feasible at that time.

Carrier Requirements

The carrier (e.g. SaskTel, Bell, Telus, etc.) which the employee's personal cell phone is with must have coverage in all geographic areas of the NWSD in which the employee's job requires them to work. If the user's employment requires a cellular plan including data, there must be at least 3G or higher availability. SaskTel, Bell, and Telus, and Virgin Mobile all currently have acceptable data coverage.

Reimbursement of Services

In certain circumstances, the NWSD will not provide a business cell phone but rather reimburse the employee for use of their phone on a monthly basis as a substitute for using a NWSD phone.

Voice Service

This level of reimbursement allows for \$30.00 per month to cover a portion of the employee's monthly service plan. Covered in this are basic voice cellular service and SMS (basic text messages) to meet NWSD job duties.

Voice + Data Service

This level of reimbursement allows for \$55.00 per month to cover a portion of the employee's monthly service plan. Covered in this are voice cellular service, SMS, plus data phone or Smartphone features that provide access to email or web based services that would be required to meet NWSD job duties. **In order to be approved for this level the employee must present a copy of the user's cellular contract or a monthly bill outlining the data plan.**

If it is discovered that an employee receiving this level of reimbursement is not utilizing the data usage as required by their job duties (e.g. not utilizing NWSD E-mail on their mobile device) as indicated by the head of their department, the NWSD may decline reimbursement of services and take necessary action to prevent further misrepresentation.

Approved: January 10, 2025