

EAST COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE
Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

SUBJECT: Cell Phone Usage

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PAGE: 1 of 2

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APPROVED BY: _____
Board Chair

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of mobile telephones and communication devices, whether issued by the District or personally owned, while on-duty or when used for authorized work-related purposes.

POLICY:

East County Fire & Rescue allows members to utilize District owned cell phones and to possess personally owned cell phones in the workplace. While cell phones in the workplace can assist in the mission of the department, they can also contribute to an unprofessional appearance. In addition, cell phone use while driving creates a potential danger for personnel and the public. As the department is engaged in service to the public, maintaining a safe and professional tenor is mandatory for all personnel to uphold.

All cell phone use, whether District or personally owned, shall be in compliance with District policies, and local, state, and federal laws.

SCOPE:

This policy shall apply to all District members while on duty or representing East County Fire & Rescue. The term "Cell Phone" shall apply to all wireless electronic devices capable of receiving or sending phone calls, text messages, and/or emails.

PERSONAL CELL PHONES:

Members may carry a Personal Cell Phone while on duty subject to the following conditions and limitations:

1. The District will not reimburse any member for the cost of their Personal Cell Phone.
2. The District is not responsible for loss or damage to a Personal Cell Phone.
3. Use of Personal Cell Phones shall not interfere with the performance of job tasks.
4. Use of Personal Cell Phone while on duty shall be governed by the same safety restrictions as provided for District Cell Phones.
5. Personal Cell Phones may be used for the recording of audio, video, or photos while on duty and shall be compliant with Policy 10.5.15 Taking of Photos and Video.
6. Any member that uses a Personal Cell Phone for District business acknowledges that such use may subject the Personal Cell Phone to review or inspection by the District if necessary to identify communications or data that is stored on the

phone when such communications or data may be responsive to a request under the Washington State Public Record Act. Review or inspections by the District shall be compliant with Washington State Law.

7. Any member that creates or receives communications or data related to the administration of District business, that may be identified as a public record, on a Personal Cell Phone is responsible to insure that such communications and data are provided to the District's record retention officer on a regular basis.

DISTRICT OWNED CELL PHONES:

The District may, at its discretion, assign a District Cell Phone to any member or apparatus. Such District Cell Phones shall remain the sole property of the District and shall be subject to inspection or monitoring at any time without notice or cause. District Cell Phones are to be used to conduct the business of District as outlined below:

1. District Cell Phones are an augmentation to the district's communication system, not a substitute for radio communication designated for transmission through the emergency communication center. Members shall not use the District Cell Phones for car-to-car communication when other means are available and appropriate.
2. The personal use of District Cell Phones is generally not permitted. Only incidental and necessary personal calls that are of limited number and duration and do not conflict with the proper exercise of Fire department duties will be allowed.
3. Members shall not download apps or ringtones to District Cell Phones without the approval of the Fire Chief or designee.
4. Members shall not use District Cell Phones to access social networking sites for any purpose that is not official District business.
5. District Cell phones shall not be used while driving emergency response vehicles. Calls may be made while driving a staff vehicle only if it is done "hands free".
6. Members that are assigned a District Cell Phone shall be responsible for the safekeeping of the District Cell Phone.
7. The safekeeping of District Cell Phones that are assigned to an apparatus shall be the responsibility of the shift Captain or acting officer. When the District Cell Phone is not in the immediate possession of the shift Captain or acting officer, it will be placed in a designated location on the apparatus.
8. Lost or damaged District Cell Phone shall be reported immediately to a Chief Officer.