

System-wide Policy:	
FI0730 - Telephones and Other Communication Devices	
Version: 4	Effective Date: 06/10/2024

SECTION 1. Policy Statement

I. Scope; University-Provided Devices

- A. University employees may obtain cellular telephones, data plans, and air cards (often referred to as “hot spots” for mobile internet access) to conduct University business in one of two ways:
 - i. By contacting their supervisor regarding the process to obtain a cellular telephone or other communication device; or
 - ii. Requesting a technology allowance.
- B. Employees may obtain a communication device by following this policy and must not obtain a communication device any other way (for example, departments other than the applicable telephone services office must not directly purchase communication devices).
- C. Employees must comply with applicable laws and regulations when using a communication device.
- D. Employees must be careful when: storing, processing, or transmitting confidential or sensitive University information on a University-provided or personal communication device; and employees must be careful when utilizing University information technology resources. Accordingly, employees must take all appropriate steps to secure the device, such as encryption, passcode or password, etc.

II. Approval Process

- A. Campuses must maintain an approval process for reviewing an employee’s request to obtain either a device or a technology allowance.
- B. For technology allowances and for cellular telephones, the approval process must include review by the applicable Chief Business Officer or designee. For clarity, departmental approval is sufficient for all other types of devices covered by this policy.

III. Acceptable Use; Department’s Responsibility

- A. Employees using a University-provided device, or using personal devices on University time or University technology resources, are subject to IT0110—Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources.
- B. Departments are responsible for ensuring that all departmental users have read and understand this policy and the University’s IT0110 – Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources.
- C. This policy and IT0110 apply to:
 - i. University-owned devices; and
 - ii. Personal devices used to store, process, or transmit University information; and
 - iii. Personal devices that are otherwise connected to University information technology resources.

IV. Employees’ Responsibility

- A. Employees must never loan their University-provided communication devices to anyone other than University employees. When an employee loans their communication device to another employee, the original employee remains fully responsible for use of the communication device.

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- B. Employees are responsible for coordinating the repair of University wireless device through Telephone Services.
- C. Employees must immediately report any theft or loss of University wireless device to the applicable telephone services office.
- D. Upon separation from University service, employees must return University wireless devices to their department.

V. Public Records

- A. Various Tennessee laws, including the Tennessee Public Records Act (T.C.A. § 10-7-503, et. seq.) make any record related to University business a public record. A record is still a public record, regardless of whether the record was made or received on or through a University-provided resource or a personally owned resource).
- B. State and federal law each contain certain exemptions to the Public Records Act. Public records are subject to inspection by any citizen of Tennessee, including a representative of the media. Billing records or any other record of communications (such as e-mails) made or received on a University provided or personal wireless device in connection with the transaction of University business are subject to inspection unless confidential under federal or state law.

VI. Technology Allowance

- A. An employee may obtain a technology allowance to offset the business use of personal wireless devices as well as home Internet connection. The allowance will be paid every regular pay period to the employee through the payroll system and will be identified separately on their payroll remittance.
- B. If an employee obtains an allowance rather than a communication device from the University, the employee is then responsible for purchasing their own device and/or service. The allowance is intended to offset the business use of these devices/service and not as a reimbursement for the total cost of them.
- C. Under Internal Revenue Service regulations, the allowance represents taxable income and will be reported on the Wages and Tax Statement (W-2). The purpose of the technology allowance is to reflect actual costs, but in no case may the allowance exceed \$125.00.

SECTION 2. Reason for the Policy

The University recognizes that cellular telephones, data plans, and the ability to remotely connect to the internet are routinely needed by various employees to efficiently perform their University responsibilities. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for obtaining these services. Campuses and units have the option to establish more restrictive procedures with respect to this policy.

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SECTION 3. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all University employees.

SECTION 4. Procedures

The University has not established systemwide procedures for this policy.

SECTION 5. Definitions

N/A

SECTION 6. Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance

Violations of this policy or IT0110 – Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. See HR0525 – Disciplinary Action for more information on disciplinary action.

SECTION 7. Responsible Official & Additional Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation			

SECTION 8. Related Policies/Guidance Documents

FI0705 – Travel

IT0110—Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources
