

**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Kate Thunstrom, City Administrator  
**SUBJECT:** City Cellular Phone Policy - REVISED  
**DATE:** September 15, 2025

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**OVERVIEW:**

Currently, the city offers a Cellular Phone Reimbursement for qualified full-time positions that have requirements to utilize their personal cell phone. Considering the heightened and increasing risks of cyber security, mixing personal and city devices is adding to our risk level. When mixing the uses of our devices it creates opportunities for data leakage, vulnerabilities to phishing and social engineering, unmonitored applications and increases the chance of accidental or malicious data breaches.

Additionally, by making a switch to city issued devices, instead of a stipend, the city will benefit from a reduction in expenses. In the policy today, Staff receive a financial stipend of either, \$75.00 or \$45.00 per month, depending on the position. Updating the policy to a city issued device will reduce this expense for eligible employees to a city cost of \$40.00 per month. Phones can be purchased for a little as \$0.99 and staff will have a selection of phones set by the Administrator. There are no activation fees and is a continuation of the provider that currently works with emergency management and city issued Hot Spots.

Staff is proposing a change to the Personnel policy for eligible positions to change from a stipend process to a city issued cellular device following the proposed language below. An effective date of November 1, 2025, has been put in place to allow time to order phones, get the process in place and remove the stipends from the appropriate staff transferring. Employees that transfer will not receive a stipend beginning in November.

At the September 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting, the Council requested a change in policy. As it was presented, staff would have an option of either keeping the stipend or obtaining a device. The council requested that the option be removed and that all employees receive a device. The language below reflects the changes that will be made to the personnel policy language moving forward, as revised.

## **Proposed Personnel Policy language change:**

### ***CITY ISSUED CELLULAR DEVICE***

*To ensure that employees with job duties requiring regular and consistent cellular phone use have access to a reliable device and service plan while maintaining fairness and fiscal responsibility.*

#### ***1. Provision of Cellular Phones***

- a) The city will provide a cellular phone and service plan to employees whose roles require regular use for city business purposes.*
- b) The cellular phone and service plan will be selected, owned, and managed by the City of St. Francis.*

#### ***2. Staff, existing and new***

- a) Effective November 1, 2025, the city will transition from providing a stipend to providing a city-issued device.*
- b) All employees who currently use their personal cellular device for City business and receive a stipend shall transition to a city provided cellular device.*
- c) Once an employee transitions to a city-provided device, the reimbursement option will no longer be available to them.*

#### ***2. Staff Covered by Bargaining Agreements***

- a) Employees covered by an existing bargaining agreement may continue to receive a stipend until the current agreement expires.*
- b) Upon implementation of a new agreement, employees will transition to a city-provided device.*

#### ***3. Ownership and Use***

- a) City-issued cellular phones remain the property of the City and must be returned upon separation of employment if employee wishes to remain in good standing*
- b) Personal use of City-issued phones is permitted if use is directly related to city business but must not interfere with business use or result in additional cost to the city.*
- c) City-issued cellular phones may not be used in place of or replace an employee's personal phone. City issued devices are for city business.*

#### ***4. Administration of Devices***

- a) Department Heads, Administrator and Supervisors will be issued a city cellular device upon hire.*
- b) Department Heads are responsible for identifying which positions require city cellular devices for business purposes.*
- c) Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the City Administrator*
- d) This policy will be reviewed periodically for effectiveness and fiscal responsibility.*

## **ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED:**

Council to review and consider approval of the updated Personnel Policy, *Cellular Phone Reimbursement* language to *City Issued Cellular Devices*, effective November 1, 2025.