

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Kate Thunstrom, City Administrator
SUBJECT: City Cellular Phone Policy
DATE: September 2, 2025

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.

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

- *The city will provide a cellular phone and service plan to employees whose roles require regular use for business purposes.*
- *The cellular phone and service plan will be selected, owned, and managed by the City.*
- 2. **Existing Staff (Hired Prior to November 1, 2025)**
 - *Employees who are currently using their personal cellular phone for City business may choose one of the following options:*
 - a. *Continue with the reimbursement arrangement at the following rates:*
 - *Department Head, Chief, Supervisor, and Building Official – \$75.00 per month*
 - *Payment as outlined in a Bargaining Unit Agreement*
 - *Bottle Shop Manager and other Staff as authorized by the Department Head – \$45.00 per month*
 - b. *Transition to a City-provided cellular phone and service plan.*
 - *Once an employee transitions to a City-provided phone, the reimbursement option will no longer be available to them.*
- 3. **New Staff (Hired November 1, 2025 or After)**
 - *All new employees in positions requiring a cellular phone for business purposes will be provided with a city-issued cellular phone and service plan.*
 - *The reimbursement option will not be available to employees hired after the effective date of this policy.*
- 4. **Ownership and Use**
 - *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*
 - *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.*
 - *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.*
- 5. **Administration of Devices**
 - *Department Heads are responsible for identifying which positions require cellular phones for business purposes and will receive a city issued device.*
 - *Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the City Administrator*
 - *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.

Attachments: none