Wireless Communication Devices

On April 17, 2006, Governor Haley Barbour approved Senate Bill Number (S.B. No.) 2398. This bill has an effective date of July 1, 2006 and contains provisions for use of wireless communication devices by state officers and employees. The following policy is a result of the passage of this bill, as well as current Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Summary/Purpose: To provide eligibility and requirement guidelines for university issued wireless communication devices.

Policy:

A university owned wireless communication device will be provided to employees who have a documented official university business need for a communication device and continue to meet eligibility requirements as defined below.

Definition:

Wireless Communication Devices are cellular telephones, standard and two-way pagers, personal digital assistant (PDA) devices having wireless communication capability including telephone, e-mail, and internet access, or any similar device that performs some or all of these functions.

Eligibility:

Employees assigned a university owned wireless device must meet one of the following requirements:

- On-call and After-Hours Support Personnel - employees who are on-call for emergency maintenance or support after-hours and/or on weekends/holidays.

- Crisis Management Team - employees who are members of the University’s Crisis Management Team.

- Other - employees whose job requires the service of a wireless communication device in order to accomplish the mission of the University, as determined by the Chancellor or his designee (Full written justification is required).

Procedures:
The departmental chair/director is responsible for determining if an employee requires a university issued wireless device in order to effectively conduct university business. The departmental chair/director and employee are both responsible for deciding on the most cost effective device and/or service (the lowest cost device and service that will carry out its intended use must be selected). Once a determination is made, the departmental chair/director must complete a Wireless Communication Device Issuance Request form located at http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/telephone_exchange/. This form must include full justification of the need for the device and associated service and must be submitted to the Chancellor or his designee for final approval. A copy of the approved form and signed copy of the Wireless Communication Device Policy must be maintained in the employee’s departmental personnel file for audit purposes.

Purchase of the device, activation, and monthly service fees are the responsibility of the department. The following process must be followed to purchase a university owned wireless device. **Only vendors listed by the State of Mississippi Information Technology Office can be used. This list can be accessed at http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/telephone_exchange/**.

- A purchase order must be obtained through normal procedures from Procurement Services and the number recorded on the Wireless Communication Device Issuance Request form.
- An approved Wireless Communication Device Issuance Request form, including purchase order number, must be provided to the cellular vendor to obtain service.
- The employee must go to the cellular store to receive the wireless device or contact the vendor representative and arrange for the device to be delivered to the department.
- Only the lowest cost cellular telephone, pager, or personal digital assistance device which will carry out its intended use may be purchased. With the exception of the University’s Crisis Management Team text messaging is not an allowable university expense.
- Once the wireless device is activated, a property tag must be obtained from Procurement Services. The device must have a property number assigned whether it was purchased or received at no cost.
- Detailed billing **must** be applied to each wireless device account, to provide documentation for departmental personnel to verify calls made to and from the device. (All billings are considered public records subject to disclosure under the Mississippi Public Records Act.)
- A completed Wireless Communication Device Issuance Request form, including purchase order number, must be mailed or faxed (7010) to the Telecommunications Center.

**Failure to follow this process will result in a personal liability to the employee.**

Wireless communication devices and services provided by the University will have the following stipulations:
• Communication devices shall be used for university business only. No personal use (incoming or outgoing) of any manner or for any reason will be allowed.
• A state agency shall not reimburse any officer or employee for use of his or her personal wireless communication device.
• Only one wireless device is allowed per employee.
• Cellular plans are to be selected based on the number of minutes required for the employee to conduct university business. Package minute plans are not to be construed as free minutes and are not provided for personal use.
• Regardless of vendor, the wireless device must be assigned to a university account for billing purposes (not a personal account).
• The vendor will send the monthly service bills to the Telecommunications Center for processing and payment. The department will have access to the detailed bill for verification purposes.
• Users must review itemized wireless invoices monthly and indicate the names of individuals called and the business purpose of all calls.
• Use must be tracked, verified, and signed by the employee and the supervisor at each billing cycle to indicate accuracy.
• A copy of the signed bill must be retained in departmental files for audit purposes.
• The departmental chair/director will be responsible for monitoring the wireless device usage and ensuring that all requirements are met.
• When an employee ceases employment with the University, the wireless device must be returned to the University.

Due to documented safety concerns, the University does not support or condone the use of cellular telephones while an employee is driving. This restriction applies both to hand-held and hands-free phones. Also, employees should be aware that cellular telephone transmissions are not secure transmissions. Confidential information regarding official business should be transmitted from a secure environment.

Non-compliance with this policy will result in disciplinary action by the University, which could lead to termination.