Cell Phone Usage & Reimbursement Policy

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guidelines governing the provision, use and support of cellular telephones by and for Northwest Indian College employees.

II. Policy:

a. This policy outlines:
   i. the administration of cell phones, both those that are provided by NWIC and personal phones partially supported by NWIC
   ii. the use of personal cell phones for and at work
   iii. the personal use of business cell phones, and
   iv. the safe use of cell phones by employees while driving.

III. NWIC provided/supported cell phones

a. A NWIC employee is eligible for a NWIC provided/supported cell phone when his/her supervisor determines that a cell phone is necessary for the employee to conduct their employee duties and to be responsive to the needs of the college/supervisor/department.
b. The supervisor shall negotiate with the employee either the purchase/assignment of a phone on an NWIC plan or partial reimbursement of an existing personal cell phone plan.
   i. Phones/equipment purchased by NWIC are the property of NWIC and shall be turned in to the supervisor when they are no longer needed and/or the employment relationship ends
   ii. NWIC shall not purchase phones and/or equipment for use on a personal cell phone plan
   iii. Reimbursement of personal cell phone plans shall be:
      1. Partial – NWIC shall not cover the entire portion of the employees bill
      2. Limited to $50./month maximum
      3. Prorated based on actual employment
c. Some departments require cell phones that are not assigned to a specific employee, but are assigned to different employees as necessary to meet the needs of the department/college (such as maintenance)
   i. Departmental cell phones shall be managed by the Department Supervisor
   ii. Departmental cell phones are not eligible for reimbursement of a personal cell phone plan
d. Some employees will be provided with cell phones so that they can be contacted in an after-hours emergency (such as members of the crisis management team). As such, these employees are expected to be available by cell phone 24 hours/day.
e. NWIC provided cell phones are intended for business use only.

IV. Supervisory Responsibility

a. Supervisors shall be responsible for oversight of employee cell phone usage and shall monitor and review such usage periodically to ensure that use is appropriate and that prudent fiscal management guidelines are followed. This periodic review shall include an assessment of each authorized employee's need to use a cell phone for business purposes.
b. Supervisors shall be responsible for notifying the Business Office if:
   i. The employee is no longer eligible for an NWIC provided/supported cell phone
   ii. The NWIC provided cell phone is lost/stolen
   iii. The employee is required to establish a reimbursement for personal calls on an NWIC provided cell phone.

c. As with any policy, management employees are expected to serve as role models for proper compliance with the provisions above and are encouraged to regularly remind employees of their responsibilities in complying with this policy.

V. Procedures

a. NWIC provided cell phone
   i. The supervisor will coordinate establishment of the account and purchase of the cell phone with the NWIC Business and Purchasing Offices, utilizing established purchasing protocols.
      1. Employees in possession of company equipment such as cellular phones are expected to protect the equipment from loss, damage or theft. Upon resignation or termination of employment, or at any time upon request, the employee may be asked to produce the phone for return or inspection. Employees unable to present the phone in good working condition within the time period requested (for example, 24 hours) may be expected to bear the cost of a replacement.
      2. Employees who separate from employment with outstanding debts for equipment loss or unauthorized charges will be considered to have left employment on unsatisfactory terms and may be subject to legal action for recovery of the loss.
   ii. The monthly bill will be forwarded to the Business Office in a timely manner, with the appropriate Purchase Requisition, for payment.
   iii. "Overages" to the monthly plan shall be reviewed for the need to increase the plan and/or the potential affect of personal phone calls and for reimbursement to NWIC for those calls.
      1. Reimbursements to NWIC for personal use of the cell phone shall be made promptly and fully.

b. Partial Reimbursement of a Personal Cell Phone Plan
   i. The Supervisor and employee shall negotiate an agreement for reimbursement of a portion of the employee's personal cell phone plan.
      1. The agreement must be documented by a memo/agreement signed by both the supervisor and employee or by a Cell Phone Authorization Form.
         a. A copy of the agreement documentation shall be maintained in the department and a copy forwarded to the Business Office for backup documentation relative to future reimbursements.
         b. The agreement documentation will identify the employee and the employee's personal cell phone number.
   ii. Reimbursement shall be made through the Business Office upon receipt of a copy of the personal cell phone bill (or pages necessary to document charges for the employees cell phone number) and a Purchase Requisition, signed by the appropriate budget authority.

VI. Safety Issues for Cellular Phone Use

a. Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone for business use are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are strongly encouraged to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling over is not an option, employees are expected to: comply with state and local laws requiring use of hands-free technology; keep the call short; refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional discussions, and; keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.

b. In situations where job responsibilities include regular driving and accepting of business calls, hands-free equipment will be provided to facilitate the provisions of this policy.
c. Employees whose job responsibilities do not specifically include driving as an essential function, but who are issued a cell phone for business use, are also expected to abide by the provisions above. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.
d. Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

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---Karyl Jefferson