

Overview

In order to simplify the Division Mobile Device program and provide users with freedom of choice and personal responsibility for their mobile device plan, the Division provides a hybrid model of providing cell-phones to employees. To this end, two options will be provided:

1. A Division procured device with an appropriate voice and data plan, or
2. Reimbursement for an employee's use of a personal device to carry out Division business activities.

For staff in permanent positions that require mobile connectivity, Division mobile devices will still be provided when requested. For those whose positions are funded by initiative dollars or who are temporary in nature or where there is limited need for a mobile device in their capacity as Division employees, a personal mobile device is recommended.

All other employees may submit infrequent business-related mobile device expenses for individual reimbursement. Employees may receive either a monthly phone allowance or be reimbursed for the actual costs of their work related mobile device use. Employees may not receive both options. Mobile devices should not be selected as an alternative to other means of communication (e.g., land-lines, pagers, radios) when such alternatives would provide adequate, but less costly service to the Division.

Eligibility for Division Devices

Employees are eligible for Division devices when:

1. The individual is away from their workstation on a regular basis as a result of the nature of their duties and responsibilities.
2. The individual requires real-time access and response capability to the Division's electronic resources while away from their workstation (such as email and their calendar for scheduling of work-related appointments).
3. The nature of the work assigned requires the individual to be reasonably available outside of normal office hours or while out of the office for appointments and other activities. There are also four potential uses that cell phones now cover:
 - a. Voice and telephone coverage
 - b. Texting and email
 - c. Internet access while travelling or outside of Division facilities
 - d. Mobile video or application use

Any portion requiring large amounts of items b, c and d, may require the use of a smartphone which provides advanced features and functions. Where possible, it is still advisable to use WIFI services that may be present at hotels, conferences or other locations. This may also reflect pedagogical needs for educational staff as well as related support from Information Technology Services.

4. The expectation is that the employee's position will continue to exist for the duration of the contract. This may not be the same individual in the role, but due to the contract length (typically three years) the position should continue to exist. For those roles that may exist for a shorter period, it is recommended that a personal device be used with the reimbursement plan.

Procurement

The approval to procure a mobile device shall be that of the school/regional services administrator. The mobile device shall be the most cost effective model available for the Division while meeting the needs of the staff member's job description.

Acceptable Use

Any PHPS purchased mobile device activity for personal "for profit" business use is prohibited. Unacceptable use of Division mobile devices may result in the cancellation of the privilege of the use of the device. Unacceptable use may also be considered misappropriation of Division funds, resulting in disciplinary action which may include termination of employment. AP 80-05 Technology Acceptable Use applies to all mobile devices, same as it applies to laptops and computers.

Personal Use

Mobile devices supplied by the Division may be subject to periodic audit by Information Technology staff. There should be no expectation of privacy on the part of the employee. If personal communications are of a private matter, the employee should use their own device. If a Division mobile device is used for personal activities, it should be limited in both time and duration. Personal activities should never exceed the billing plan. Data related to personal use may be reviewed as part of the standard review of device use. As per Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) guidelines, such personal use will not be considered a taxable benefit if it does not result in additional charges over the basic Service Plan cost.

The Division may withdraw permission for any or all business or personal uses of its network or information systems at any time.

Costs

Schools/regional services areas are responsible for all costs related to the mobile devices assigned to employees, including hardware, accessories, service plans and overages. In addition, the school/regional services area will be responsible to ensure that all costs incurred due to personal use by their staff are reimbursed to the Division.

Detailed statements will be sent to the Accounts Payable department by the vendor for payment. School/regional services area budgets will be charged for the full cost of the service. The Accounts Payable department will send copies of the detailed billings to each school/regional services administrator, who will review the monthly bills for their site and ensure that any employee personal cost is reimbursed to the Division.

Overages Caused by Personal Use

Employees will be allowed to incur additional costs outside of the basic Service Plan, providing these costs are reimbursed monthly to the Division by the user. Examples include text messaging and personal long distance and roaming charges.

Safe Operations

Employees are prohibited from using the mobile device while driving a motor vehicle unless using a hands free headset of similar device that allows them to drive in a manner that is considered to be safe within Alberta Motor Vehicle Regulations.

Termination of Employment or Leave

A mobile device user must surrender the Division owned mobile device upon termination of employment. This also applies to staff who are on leave and who are not handling any Division business.

Security

The mobile device user is responsible for the security of the device, and the confidentiality of the Division information it contains. The device is the property of the Division, issued to carry out Division business, and should only be used by the authorized user. At no time shall the user provide access to the device to anyone else, including family members and colleagues. Any device used for Division business purposes should be secured by encryption and locked with a password. Both of these requirements are automatically enforced when connecting to the Division's email service.

Student data, images or video should only be left on mobile devices temporarily. Due to the possibility of loss or theft, these devices should be viewed as representing a greater risk. As such they should not be used for long term storage. Instead their primary purpose should be for immediate connectivity and creation of data.

Reimbursement for Personal Mobile Devices

This Administrative Procedure does not apply to mobile device reimbursements for bus drivers. These reimbursements are found in AP 70-113 Bus Driver Reimbursements.

Employees meeting the eligibility criteria can apply for an allowance by completing the Mobile Device Reimbursement Request Form (Form 8-20). This allowance does **not** constitute an increase to base pay, and will **not** be included in the calculation of pension benefits, or percentage increases to base pay due to annual raises, etc.

The dollar amount of the mobile device allowance should cover the employee's average monthly **business-related** expenses. These expenses are the cost of basic equipment, and the cost of the employee's monthly mobile device plan. The allowance is intended to offset costs related to the least expensive plan that provides adequate services for the employee's job requirements. Upgrades to basic equipment (special cosmetic or technical features, etc.) or mobile device use unrelated to business cannot be considered in the allowance calculation. A copy of the employee's monthly bill must be included as part of the reimbursement request submission.

Administration will use the following schedule to determine the appropriate allowance:

1. Level 1: Occasional use of basic communication, mobility and cloud services - \$20 per month
 - *Intended to reimburse employee expenses associated with ownership of a mobile device and the accompanying mobility plans, when the employee's assignment includes an expectation that they will occasionally need to use a mobile device to:*
 - communicate (call, text,);
 - and or because they are occasionally expected to be away from their desk;
 - and or they occasionally need to access cloud services
2. Level 2 - Frequent use of basic communication, mobility and cloud services - \$40 per month
 - *Intended to reimburse employee expenses associated with ownership of a mobile device and the accompanying mobility plans, when the employee's assignment includes an expectation that they will often need to use a mobile device to:*
 - communicate (call, text, or video);
 - and or because they are often expected to be away from their desk, and or assigned to multiple locations and or because their job requires them to work outside of typical hours and or they frequently need to access cloud services
3. Level 3 - Consistent need for advanced communication, mobility and cloud services - \$50 per month
 - *Intended to reimburse employee expenses associated with ownership of a mobile device and the accompanying mobility plans, when the employee's assignment includes an expectation that they will consistently need to use a mobile device to:*
 - communicate (call, text, or video);
 - and or because they are frequently expected to be away from their desk, and or assigned to multiple locations and or because their job requires them to work outside of typical hours and or they consistently need to access advanced cloud services

The reimbursement should **be a maximum of 60%** of the total of a typical mobile device bill. This is to avoid any potential issues with taxable benefits.

All reimbursements should be reviewed by the employee's supervisor once a year to validate that they are still suitable.

All allowances must include justification.

Employee Use of Mobile Devices

Where an employee regularly uses a Division mobile device for personal use, they shall reimburse the Division at the rate of \$20 per month for its use.

The following procedure shall be used:

1. The employee shall complete Form 8-20 – Personal Use Authorization.
2. A \$20 per month payroll deduction will be applied.

The \$20 per month charge will be reviewed annually to ensure the costs of personal use are being adequately recovered from the employee. If personal use results in overages significantly greater than \$20 (\$50 or more) or there are repeated overages, the employee's supervisor is responsible to review the billing and take corrective action. That may include moving the employee to a reimbursement model (employee owned device) or increasing the payroll deduction.

Reference

[AP 70-113 Bus Driver Reimbursements](#)

[AP 80-05 Technology Acceptable Use](#)

[Form 8-20 Mobile Device Reimbursement Request](#)