

Title: Telephone Policy  
Policy Number: 710  
Effective Date: July 1, 2009  
Revision Date:  
Authorized by: Board of Supervisors

Policy:

This policy outlines the use of county telephones, personal cell phones and PDA's during working hours.

Comments:

- (1) Pottawattamie County discourages personal telephone calls while at work. Personal telephone calls should be made during an employee's lunch or break period. Personal calls whether they are placed from the office or received into the office shall be held to a minimum. Under no circumstances shall a member of the general public, an elected official, a county employee or a member of the Board of Supervisors have to wait for assistance as a result of a personal telephone call.
- (2) Personal calls should be local unless an emergency situation exists and the employee has prior approval from his/her department head or immediate supervisor. If a long distance call is granted on a county telephone, it shall be to the cost of the employee.
- (3) While at work employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones and PDA's as is expected for the use of County phones. Excessive personal calls and texting during the work day, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Employees are encouraged to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the County's policy.
- (4) Pottawattamie County will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones or PDA's brought into the workplace.
- (5) Employees in possession of County equipment such as county cell phones or PDA's 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.

- (6) All employees are expected to follow applicable state or federal laws or regulations regarding the use of cell phones or PDA's at all times.

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone or PDA for business use are expected to refrain from using their phone while driving – use of a cell phone or PDA, whether personal or County issued, while driving is not required by the County. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call or use hands-free operations, refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional matters 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. Texting is prohibited while operating a vehicle for county business.

- (7) Hands-free equipment will be provided with County issued phones and PDAs to facilitate the provisions of this policy.
- (8) Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their cell phone or PDA, whether County issued or personal, while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.
- (9) The use of camera phones, PDA's or other audio or video recording capable devices within the County may constitute not only an invasion of employees' personal privacy, but may breach confidentiality of County protected information. Therefore, the use of camera or other video-capable recording devices within Pottawattamie County is prohibited without the express prior permission of the Department Head and of the person(s) present at the time. This prohibition is specifically applicable to restrooms and locker rooms, if applicable.
- (10) As with any policy, Department Heads and Supervisors 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.