

# DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



social development

Department:  
Social Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## TELECOMMUNICATION INSTRUMENTS POLICY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In terms of the Public Finance and Management Act (PFMA) Section 38 (b), the accounting officer for a department is responsible for the effective, efficient, economical and transparent use of the resources of the Department.

Section 38 (c) (i) and (ii) further states that the accounting officer must take effective and appropriate steps to collect all money due to the department and prevent unauthorised, irregular and fruitless and wasteful expenditure as well as losses from criminal conduct.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to make available appropriate telecommunications resources (instruments) and to ensure effective and efficient utilisation and management of these resources in order to enable officials to perform their duties adequately in an endeavour to achieve maximum service delivery in line with the objectives of the Department.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise, the –

“**consultant**” means an expert who charges a fee for providing advice or a service in a particular field to the Department and is not an employee of the Department;

“**Department**” means the department of Social Development;

“**Director-General**” means the Head of Department of Social Development;

“**Program Manager**” means an official of the Department of Social Development appointed as such by the Director General;

“**employee**” means an employee contemplated in section 1 of the Public Service Act, 1994, read with section 1 of the Public Service Amendment Act (Act 13 of 1996); and Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2002.

“**telecommunication instruments**” means all telecommunication equipment and facilities including telephones, telephone lines, P.A.B.X., cellular phones, answering machines, and transmitters or any service or apparatus which constitutes a communications facility.

“**Ministry**” means the Office of the Minister of Social Development;

**“official”** means an employee of the Department of Social Development and includes a person appointed in terms of section 15 of the Public Service Act, 1994, as amended;

**“senior management service”** mean officials from the rank of Director upwards.

#### **4. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

This policy therefore has been drafted within the framework of the following prescripts:

The Public Service Act, 1994 (Column II of Schedule 1);

The Ministerial handbook;

The Public Financial Management Act; 1999 and as amended;

Treasury Regulations, as amended;

Senior Management Service Handbook

#### **5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

The policy is divided into two parts. Part I: management and utilisation of telephones, facsimiles machines and related equipments. Part II: management and utilisation of cellular phones equipment.

This policy, unless certain parts thereof indicate otherwise, applies to all officials and/or employees of the Department and the Ministry. The arrangements under Part II of this policy do not apply to the Director-General, Deputy Minister and the Minister.

## **6 PART I: TELEPHONE AND FACSIMILE MACHINES**

### **6.1 Telephones**

- 6.1.1 Officials shall use departmental telephone equipments and services primarily for official business purpose.
- 6.1.2 Officials may use the departmental telephone facilities only for essential private calls. Such private calls shall not exceed an amount of R60.00 per month. Programme/Responsibility Managers must ensure that their subordinates certify all private calls in excess of the R60, 00 limit and pay for the excess private call costs. They must also identify any possible misuse of official telephones for private purposes and take corrective steps.
- 6.1.3 This amount of R60.00 may be reviewed from time to time to mitigate against increasing communication costs due to inflation.
- 6.1.4 Misuse of the official telephone is misconduct and will be dealt with through the normal disciplinary procedures of the department.
- 6.1.5 Private calls made from the department telephones must not adversely affect the performance of the employee or the department and must be of reasonable duration and frequency.
- 6.1.6 All officials are required to pay for their private calls at the cashier in the Finance Section or request that the amount be deducted from their salaries. All monthly telephone accounts should be compiled on a prescribed form per section and be authorised by the relevant Programme/Responsibility Manager. An authorised form must reach the Finance Section on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.
- 6.1.7 Telephone accounts that remain outstanding for more than 30 days from the date of invoice/statement will be recovered in full from the relevant official according to the procedures set out in the departmental revenue management and debt management policies.
- 6.1.8 Consultants, unless the contract or service agreement provides otherwise, are not permitted to use departmental telecommunication instruments for private purposes. In cases where department telecommunication instruments have been utilized for private purposes, all related costs shall be reimbursed to the department.

### **6.2 Facsimile Machines**

- 6.2.1 Facsimile machines are effective, reliable, time labour saving devices. Such should be utilised primarily for official purposes. Only when it is deemed necessary official documents may be sent by mail.

6.2.2 Programme / Responsibility Managers should monitor and limit the use of facsimile machines for private purposes. Officials must be encouraged to use a fax to email facility for the purpose of cost saving.

### **6.3 Control Measures**

6.3.1 Programme/Responsibility Managers must ensure that all necessary steps are taken to prevent the abuse of departmental telephone and facsimile instruments. Managers may be required to respond to all queries related to the alleged misuse of telephone and/or facsimile facility within their programmes.

6.3.2 Applications for a new or improved telephone service must be submitted to the Directorate: Supply Chain Management together with the following information:

- i) A detailed motivation in the prescribed form;
- ii) Approval by the relevant programme /responsibility manager.

6.3.3 The Directorate: Internal Control will monitor the telephone expenditure trends and advise the Programme Managers on corrective steps to be taken where misuse is detected.

## **7 SEMI-OFFICIAL AND OFFICIAL TELEPHONE FACILITIES IN RESIDENCES**

### **7.1 Basis for allocation**

7.1.1 The Director-General, or a person delegated by him/ her, may approve that an official telephone or facsimile machine be installed in the private residence of an official at the departmental costs, provided this is considered essential and is in the interest of the Department and where there are no other cost effective and cheaper means of communication.

### **7.2 The Ministry**

7.2.1 All expenses incurred in connection with the installation and rental of telephone and facsimile facilities at the official residences of the Minister/ Deputy Minister shall be debited to the Department.

7.2.2 In circumstances where the Minister/ Deputy Minister stay in his/her own home from time to time, in addition to the official residence, the cost of the installation and rental of the telephone and facsimile machine in the private home will be paid from the departmental funds, but only when used for official purposes.

### **7.3 The Director-General**

7.3.1 Official telephones and facsimile machines may, at departmental expense, be granted to the Director-General as referred to in Column II of Schedule I of the Public Service Act, on the following basis. The Department will pay for:

- i) The installation costs of a telephone and facsimile instruments of their choice at their residences at the headquarters, as well as in Cape Town for parliamentary duties.
- ii) A member who is already in the possession of a telephone and facsimile systems may replace it with a system of his or her choice, in which case the installation or exchange expenditure may be paid by the department.
- iii) The monthly rent of the telephone and facsimile lines at the headquarters as well as the telephone in Cape Town.
- iv) If the residence at either the headquarters or Cape Town is leased during the sitting of Parliament or during the recess, no rent or call expenditure in respect of the telephone and facsimile systems is payable from departmental funds.

### **7.4 Revision of allocations**

7.4.1 Allocated official and semi-official telephone facilities shall be reviewed regularly to ensure that the considerations that were applicable at the time of allocation still exist.

### **7.5 Arrangements in respect of semi-official telephones during absence from duty**

7.5.1 During absence from duty for longer than three months the telephone service shall be:

- i) discontinued immediately;
- ii) converted to a private service should the person so desire; or
- iii) continued if the Director-General considers it to be in the public interest.

### **7.6 Transfer or re-installation of semi-official telephones**

7.6.1 Where a person employed by the Department to whom semi-official telephone has been allocated,

- i) is transferred on behalf of the Department, the total expenses involved in the transfer or re-installation of the relevant telephone service are payable by the Department;

- ii) move at own accord, that is without being requested by Department, the Department pays on a 50-50 basis for the re-installation of the telephone service; and
- iii) by own choice replace the instrument according to colour or model or change the position of the instrument within the same room or to another room within the same dwelling, all relevant expenses are payable by the official.





## **8 PART II: CELLULAR PHONES**

### **8.1 Utilization of private cellular phones for official purposes**

- 8.1.1 All officials on the Senior Management Service (SMS) automatically qualify to use their privately owned cellular phones for official purposes and are entitled for reimbursement by the Department for expenses incurred in respect of official cellular phone calls and monthly fixed costs for their respective packages, as they are expected to be available on a 24 hour basis.
- 8.1.2 All other officials (other than those mentioned in 8.1.1) who need to utilise a private cellular phone on a permanent basis for official purposes must submit a motivated submission, through their immediate supervisors, to the Programme Managers and/or the Chief Financial Officer, in cases where no Programme Manager has been appointed, for approval. This power or function may not be delegated to levels lower than Programme Manager.
- 8.1.3 The Programme Manager reserves the right to disapprove such an application if she/he is convinced that such an application is not justifiable. Such approval may be rescinded or withdrawn should any official fail to comply with the conditions of this policy or is found to be abusing the privilege of participating in the policy or their duties do not require frequent utilization of the cellular phone for official purposes.
- 8.1.4 After approval has been obtained, officials who have not yet entered into a contract of their own may enter into a contract with a registered service provider and network (Vodacom, MTN, Cell C or Virgin Mobile) of their choice. (Officials already in possession of private contracts will not be refunded for connection fees and costs for upgrading to better packages).
- 8.1.5 Officials are entitled and restricted to the following cellular phone packages:

#### **(a) Deputy Director-General and Chief Director Communications**

- i MTN (Business package) – Procall 1000
- ii Vodacom (Business package) – Talk 1000
- iii Cell C (Business package) – Business Chat 1000
- iv Virgin Mobile – any package. The department will reimburse the cost of subscription and cost of any units utilised (whether official or private calls) up to a maximum of the cost of the subscription of Procall 1000, Talk 1000 or Business Chat 1000 whichever is the highest i.e. If the cost of subscription on Virgin Mobile is higher than these other three packages then the department will only reimburse the cost of subscription of the highest of the above packages.

- In addition, the department will reimburse any costs incurred for official calls made up to R400.
- For any additional official calls made in excess of R400, officials must provide motivation and seek approval from the Director-General or the CFO, to obtain reimbursement.

**(b) Chief Directors**

- i MTN (Business package) – Procall 600
  - ii Vodacom (Business package) – Talk 500
  - iii Cell C (Business package) – Business Chat 700
  - iv Virgin Mobile – any package. The department will reimburse the cost of subscription and cost of any units utilised (whether for official or private calls) up to a maximum of the cost of the subscription of Procall 600, Talk 500 or Business Chat 700 whichever is the highest i.e. If the cost of subscription on Virgin Mobile is higher than these other three packages then the department will only reimburse the cost of subscription of the highest of the above packages.
- In addition, the department will reimburse any costs incurred for official calls made up to R400.
  - For any additional official calls made in excess of R400, officials must provide motivation and seek approval from the Deputy Directors-General, the CFO or the COO, for reimbursement of excess calls.

**(c) Directors**

- i MTN (Business package) – Procall 300
  - ii Vodacom (Business package) – Talk 240
  - iii Cell C (Business package) – Business Chat 400
  - iv Virgin Mobile – any package. The department will reimburse the cost of subscription and cost of any units utilised (whether for official or private calls) up to a maximum of the cost of the subscription of Procall 300, Talk 240 or Business Chat 400 whichever is the highest i.e. If the cost of subscription on Virgin Mobile is higher than these other three packages then the department will only reimburse the cost of subscription of the highest of the above packages.
- In addition, the department will reimburse any costs incurred for official calls made up to R400
  - For any additional official calls made in excess of R400, officials must provide motivation and seek approval from the Deputy Directors-General, the CFO or the COO, for reimbursement of excess calls.

**(d) Other officials (Deputy Directors and lower ranks)**

- i MTN (Business package) – Procall 220
  - ii Vodacom ( Business packages) – Talk 120
  - iii Cell C (Business package) – Business Chat Standard
  - iv Virgin Mobile – any package. The department will reimburse the cost of subscription and cost of any units utilised (whether for official or private calls) up to a maximum of the cost of the subscription of Procall 220, Talk 120 or Business Chat Standard whichever is the highest i.e. If the cost of subscription on Virgin Mobile is higher than these other three packages then the department will only reimburse the cost of subscription of the highest of the above packages.
- In addition, the department will reimburse any costs incurred for official calls made up to R400.
  - For any additional official calls made in excess of R400, officials must provide motivation and seek approval from the Deputy Director-General, the CFO or the COO, for reimbursement of excess calls.

- 8.1.6 The Director-General may, only under special circumstances and on submission of a written motivation, grant permission for use of other cost-effective package either on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 8.1.7 An official must, at all times, ensure that his/her cellular phone is insured against theft, loss or damages and the costs thereof will not be refunded by the Department.
- 8.1.8 All accessories (e.g. long life batteries, leather pouches, hands free car kits etc.) have to be purchased by officials themselves and will not be refunded by the Department.
- 8.1.9 Officials have to make use of the free cellular phone (equipment) that is included in the packages given by service providers. Should an official prefer any other brand or model available in the market, he/she will be responsible for the cost of the cellular phone and will under no circumstances be refunded by the Department. The equipment must, however, comply with the requirements of the Global System Mobile Communication (GSMC) cellular network.
- 8.1.10 All officials other than SMS (see paragraph 8.1.1) who are affected by this Part of the Telecommunication Instruments Policy (cellular phones) shall be required to sign an agreement with the Department undertaking to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy before they may participate. No claims will be honoured by the Department until such an undertaking has been signed and a copy of which will be filed at the Finance Section. **Annexure A.**

## **8.2 Claims and reimbursement procedures**

- 8.2.1 Officials are responsible for the full payment of their monthly accounts to their service providers. The Department will reimburse them for costs incurred in relation to the connection to a network, monthly subscription, itemised billing, and official calls to maximum amount of R400.00.
- 8.2.2 The Department will not refund any excess amount above the official limit. Only the Deputy Director-General may approve reimbursement of official calls above R400.00 limit.
- 8.2.3 Claims for reimbursements should be made, on a prescribed "claim form" and be submitted together with the payment advice form to the Directorate: Financial Management and Administration. Itemised billing on which all official calls have been identified and the total cost thereof calculated, should accompany the payment advice forms at all times. Officials are encouraged to submit their claims on a monthly basis.
- 8.2.4 Only original invoices and/or statements must be submitted with the claim form for payment. If copies are furnished, the claimant must give reasons thereof in writing and these may only be paid upon approval by the Director: Financial Administration and Risk Management or Chief Director: Financial Management and Administration.
- 8.2.5 A claim will only be processed, if the details on the cellular phone account correspond with the details of the official submitting the claim.
- 8.2.6 Programme/ Responsibility Managers should budget for all cellular phone expenditure.

## **9 UTILISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL CELLULAR PHONES**

### **9.1 Departmental allocated cellular phones**

- 9.1.1 The responsibilities and nature of an official's scope of work shall determine whether the official qualifies for a departmental cellular phone. The following officials may upon approval by the heads in their respective offices qualify for departmental cellular phones due to the scope of their work:
- i) The Chief Director: Communication; private secretary; administration secretary; messengers; drivers; VIP protectors within the offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister and travel arrangement officials within the Directorate: Supply Chain Management.
- 9.1.2 After the necessary approval has been obtained, the Directorate: Supply Chain Management must be consulted for a cellular telephone to be

issued through the normal Procurement/ Supply Chain Management procedures.

- 9.1.3 The Directorate: Supply Chain Management is responsible for the maintenance and administration of the departmental cellular phones and the accounts with the service provider.
- 9.1.4 On termination of service or, transfer of an official to another Department, the official concerned shall return the cellular phone to the Logistics and Asset Management Unit.
- 9.1.5 The cost related to the cellular phone will be carried by the relevant Chief Directorate/ Directorate or component.
- 9.1.6 On the transfer/ secondment of an official to another Branch/ Chief Directorate/ Directorate, section, the need for such a cellular phone shall be re-determined or the cellular phone must be returned Logistics and Asset Management Unit.
- 9.1.7 Use of the cellular phone under this category is primarily for official purposes and all private calls must be identified on monthly basis and will be for the account of the official.

## **9.2 Departmental pool cellular phones**

- 9.2.1 Whenever a need arises for an official to use a pool cellular phone for official purposes on an ad hoc basis and for a specific period of time, a motivated request must be submitted to, and approved by, the respective Programme/ Responsibility Manager.
- 9.2.2 After approval has been obtained the request must be submitted to the Directorate: Supply Chain Management for issuing of the cellular phone. Officials that utilises the pool cellular phone must sign an undertaking with the Department for the period that approval was granted for them to use the cellular phone.
- 9.2.3 Pool cellular phones shall be signed for in a register when issued and on return by the official who requested the phone.
- 9.2.4 The Directorate: Supply Chain Management shall follow up and ensure that pool cellular phones are returned in time.
- 9.2.5 The Directorate: Supply Chain Management is responsible for the maintenance and administration of the departmental cellular phones and the accounts with the service providers.
- 9.2.6 The Directorate: Supply Chain Management will be responsible to monthly on receipt of invoices, distribute the itemised bills to the individuals for them to certify that calls made during the period that the cellular phone was issued out were all official. No private calls are allowed on pool

cellular phones unless under extreme circumstances and such private calls shall be for the account of the official.

- 9.2.7 Official are responsible for the safe keeping of the pool cellular phones while in their possession.

### **9.3 Upgrading of Departmental cellular phones**

- 9.3.1 The Directorate: Supply Chain Management will be responsible for the upgrading of the departmental cellular phone contracts when they are due.
- 9.3.2 Upgrading of the phones before the contract expire/lapse will not be allowed.
- 9.3.3 The Asset Disposal Board is responsible for the disposal of the departmental cellular phones that are considered to be obsolete in accordance with relevant prescripts and asset management procedures.

### **9.4 Loss, Theft, Damage and Replacement of Departmental cellular phones**

- 9.4.1 Departmental allocated and pool cellular phone instruments remain the property of the Department and the loss, theft or damage of such instruments shall be dealt with according to the regulations and policies applicable to theft and loss of State property.
- 9.4.2 An official should within 24 hours report any loss or damaged cellular phone instruments to the Directorate: Supply Chain Management which shall further report the matter to the Directorate: Internal Control for investigation.
- 9.4.3 Officials in possession of departmental cellular phones must report and open a case with the police in case of theft or loss within 48 hours.

## **10 INTERNATIONAL ROAMING CALLS**

### **10.1 Approval for International Roaming**

All officials that participate in the cellular phone policy qualify for roaming services when outside the borders of South Africa on official business.

- 10.1.1 All claims for official international calls must be approved by the Programme/ Responsibility Manager responsible for that branch or unit.
- 10.1.2 In cases where the claimant is at the level of a Programme Manager, the Director-General or where appropriate, the Chief Financial Officer must give approval.

10.1.3 Officials will only be reimbursed for officials calls made while abroad, if a copy of the travel plan, approved by the Minister of Social Development accompanies the claims.

## **10.2 Limits on International Roaming Calls**

10.2.1 In order to maintain and ensure effective control over international roaming calls concession, official international roaming call charges should not exceed a total average amount of R500.00 per day. The average cost will be calculated by dividing the total roaming call charges (including VAT) by the number of days spent outside the country.

10.2.2 Roaming call limits are in addition to the limit for official calls. In cases where official International roaming call charges are above the limit of R500, 00 per day officials must provide motivation to claim reimbursement for excess call charges.

10.2.3 Officials are encouraged to ask the office to call them back while abroad in order to limit the high costs of roaming. They are also encouraged to use public phones abroad should they need to speak with their families and friends for longer periods.

10.2.4 Programmes/ Responsibility Managers should implement economical, efficient and effective cost reduction measures for their respective functional areas. Such measures may include call restriction for specific destination.

## **11. MONITORING**

11.1 It is the responsibility of all Programme/ Responsibility Managers in terms of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) to ensure that official cellular phones are utilised cost effectively and that the expenses generated by them is economically justifiable.

## **12. PART III: 3G DATA CARDS**

### **12.1 Utilisation of official 3G data cards**

12.1.1 The Department will acquire 3G data cards to all eligible officials to enable remote access to the department network services while away from the office and to enhance service delivery.

12.1.2 The data cards are to be used for work related access to the Department of Social Development Intranet and Internet services.

12.1.3 It is the responsibility of the officials to use this service responsibly. Officials are not allowed to make phone calls and send sms (messages) using the data cards. Failure to adhere to this will result in the service being disabled immediately by default.

## 12.2 Allocation of 3G Data Cards

12.2.1 The allocation of data cards is applicable to:

- i) All permanent officials at level thirteen (13) and above;
- ii) Any other official who requires this service must submit a formal motivated request approved by their respective managers to the Chief Information Officer;
- iii) An acknowledgement of receipt of the data cards form must be signed by all eligible officials.

## 12.3 Bill Limit Facility

12.3.1 A monthly bill limit facility of R1000.00 per data card will be applicable to all eligible officials

## 12.4 Cost recovery

12.4.1 The Chief Directorate Information Management Systems and Technology will, on a monthly basis, submit usage bills to respective programme managers for costs recovery.

12.4.2 It is the responsibility of programme managers to ensure that there are sufficient funds within their units to cover expenditure incurred for the duration of the allocated data cards.

## 12.5 Damage, loss and theft


12.5.1 It is the responsibility of all officials to ensure that the 3G data cards are safeguarded and protected from any form of damage at all times.

12.5.2 It is the responsibility of officials to report any damage, loss and theft of the data cards to the Directorate: Internal Control and the Chief Directorate: Information Management Systems and Technology within twenty four hours.

## 13. EFFECTIVE DATE

13.1 This policy becomes effective on the date of the signature by the Director-General.

Signed on this 4 day of August 2008

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
DATE: