



## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

### 5.4 PERSONAL WIRELESS DEVICES POLICY

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set clear guidelines regarding the use of personal wireless devices in the workplace. Examples include but are not limited to smartphones, tablet/iPad, mobile broadband routers and Wi-Fi hotspots, feature phones, satellite phones, laptops with embedded mobile broadband modems or USB attached mobile broadband modems. This policy aims to balance the need for employee productivity, security, and personal convenience while ensuring that City operations are not disrupted, sensitive data is protected, and the City maintains a distraction-free work environment.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, temporary, inters, fellows, and contract employees of the City of Providence. It covers all personal wireless devices, including but not limited to smartphones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches, and other wireless-enabled gadgets.

Nothing in this policy shall supersede, modify, or diminish any rights, benefits, or obligations contained within applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) or laws. In the event of a conflict between this policy and a CBA, the CBA shall prevail for covered employees. For all other employees not covered by a CBA, this policy shall govern.

#### Policy

To maintain a focus on work productivity and minimize distractions, the following guidelines govern the personal use of wireless devices while on duty at the City of Providence:

##### 1. Personal Device Usage During Work Hours

- A. Personal use of cell phones, tablets, laptops, or other wireless devices should be limited to break times, rest periods, and other non-work-related times. Use must be conducted in a manner that does not disrupt the workplace.
- B. Devices may not be used at any work site where its operation is or may be a distraction to other city employees or the public, even if the use is on a break.
- C. Given that departments within the City may have distinct and different operational needs and security requirements, personal device usage may be prohibited or restricted depending on the needs within those departments.
- D. Devices may not be used when performing safety sensitive duties, such as operating machinery or vehicles of any kind, or at times when the employee is responsible for the supervision and care of children, the elderly, or people with special needs.

##### 2. City-Provided Devices

Employees who are provided with City-issued wireless devices must adhere to the City's guidelines for using these devices. Personal use of City-issued devices should be limited to situations in the most extreme of circumstances, where it does not compromise work performance or security. See the Information and Systems Security Policy for more information.

##### 3. Security and Privacy

Personal devices must not be used to store or access confidential City information. Any use of personal devices for City-related work must comply with data protection and privacy standards.

##### 4. Prohibited Activities



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- A. Devices may not be used for any activity that violates city policy, including accessing or distributing any material of a pornographic, discriminatory, violent, harassing, or offensive nature
- B. Personal wireless devices should not be used for unauthorized recording (e.g., photos, videos) of confidential meetings or City premises. See the Workplace Recording and Surveillance Policy for additional information.

### 5. **Access to Work-Related Applications and Systems**

- A. Employees using personal devices for work-related tasks may be granted access to certain work applications, software, or networks, but such access must be approved by the IT department.
- B. Employees may use personal devices when necessary to perform their duties for the City, such as making work-related calls, sending text messages to colleagues or supervisors, or accessing City email accounts. If such usage becomes frequent or essential, employees should discuss the possibility of being issued a City-owned device with their supervisor.
- C. The use of a personal wireless device connected to a City WiFi or an employee's City assigned email account, is governed by the Information and Systems Security Policy.

### 6. **Emergency Situations**

Employees may occasionally find it necessary to use their personal cell phone or wireless device during working hours when dealing with personal matters of an urgent or time sensitive nature. All such use should be minimized, and employees must notify their supervisor when such minimal but necessary use of personal devices is expected.

### 7. **Compliance**

Employees who fail to adhere to the Personal Wireless Devices in the Workplace Policy may result in corrective and disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending on the nature of the violation. It is the responsibility of the department director and/or designee to ensure that employees adhere to this policy and address any concerns of compliance with employees in accordance with City policies and standards.

#### **Related Policies:**

Email Use Policy  
Information and Systems Security Policy  
Laptop Computer and Mobile Device Policy  
Discipline Policy  
Code of Conduct

#### **Other Related Information:**

Local 1033 Collective Bargaining Agreement