

# **CELL PHONE STIPEND POLICY (formerly Employee Wireless Communication Policy)**

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## **I. PURPOSE:**

To establish policy and guidelines for the provision of a cell phone stipend for employees who have documented an official university business need for a cell phone.

## **II. SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, and administrators who, as a part of their official university duties, have a constant and recurring need for using a cell phone. The cell phone stipend is intended to reimburse the employee for the business use of the device. The stipend is not intended to fund the cost of the device nor is it intended to pay the entire monthly bill.

## **III. OBJECTIVE:**

To assist the university in achieving maximum productivity and cost-effectiveness when employing wireless communication technology as a business solution; comply with IRS Regulations on wireless communication as described in special substantial rules applicable to listed property; and effectively manage the reimbursement of costs associated with the business use of personally owned wireless devices and plans.

Qualifying employees will receive a stipend to assist with the costs of wireless service to carry out University business. This stipend provides the employee with compensation to help defray the cost of acquiring and maintaining wireless services that would be used in whole or in part to conduct University business. This amount will be added to the employee's salary. The stipend compensation is taxable income and is subject to withholdings. Payments will be issued through the payroll system and will be included on employee's W-2 forms.

Stipends do not constitute an increase in base pay, and will not be included in any calculations utilizing base pay including but not limited to the calculation of percentage increases to base pay due to annual salary increases, job promotions or salary reclassifications, or retirement contributions.

## **IV. POLICY:**

### Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for the cell phone stipend, the employee must have a justified business need, defined and approved by the supervisor that includes one or more of the following:

- The duties of the position may lead to potentially dangerous scenarios and situations with no other acceptable or reliable means of alternative communication.
- The duties of the position require that the employee regularly work in the field and the employee needs to be immediately accessible.
- The duties of the position are such that immediate emergency response is critical (e.g., executive, police, or emergency responder) or the employee is responsible for critical infrastructure or operational support and needs to be immediately accessible at all times (e.g., telecommunication, computer, or network responder).
- The duties of the position require a significant amount of travel during regular work hours or outside normal work hours for the purpose of conducting official university business during which the employee requires access to information technology systems to render the employee more productive and/or the service the employee provides more effective.

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- The duties of the position make it necessary that the employee be accessible to communicate with senior management at any time.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES RECEIVING STIPEND**

When a wireless communication stipend has been approved and provided to an employee for the conduct of official business, the employee must comply with the following:

The employee will provide the phone number to their supervisor or department head/chair within five days of activation and will be available for calls during those times specified by the appropriate department management by having the device turned on and on the employee's person. The employee must also register his/her device with the University Emergency Alert Notification system.

In most cases, the employee may select any wireless carrier whose service and plan meets the requirements of the job responsibilities, as determined by the supervisor or department head.

The employee must notify the supervisor immediately when the employee no longer meets the eligibility criteria. The employee must notify the supervisor within 5 working days if the employee's wireless service has been cancelled. The supervisor bears responsibility for notifying the Payroll Office of such changes. The employee agrees to reimburse the University for any stipend received in violation of the terms of this policy.

Management may periodically request that the employee provide a copy of the first page of the phone bill in order to verify that he/she has an active wireless phone plan. Management may also periodically request documentation of substantial business use. It is also expected during any request (Right to Know, Legal Review) that devices may be reviewed for record retention and non-destruction of materials.

The employee is responsible for all charges on his/her personal wireless plan. If the employee leaves the position, he/she continues to be responsible for the contractual obligations of his/her wireless plan. Slippery Rock University assumes no liability for cancellation charges or any other charges associated with an employee's use of a cell phone.

The employee is personally responsible for complying with international, federal, state, and municipal laws regarding the use of wireless phones and other communication devices, including but not limited to use while driving. Slippery Rock University assumes no liability for employee's failure to observe applicable laws and regulations and the employee agrees to indemnify, hold harmless and defend Slippery Rock University and its officers, agents and employees from all liability and/or claims in relation to any personal injuries to any person whatsoever, or any losses or expenses due to such personal injury or due to instances of or damage to personal property, arising from or related to the use of the employee's cell phone for business purposes.

The employee should exercise discretion in transmitting confidential business- related information over any wireless network.

### **STIPEND ALLOWANCES**

The Cell Phone Stipend Request form (attached) defines maximum stipends to be paid to an employee. A stipend for the wireless communication equipment will not be provided.

*The University may assign cell phones, two-way radios and/or pagers to individual departments when university services are required. These devices are earmarked for business use only. Personal use of these departmental cell phones is prohibited. Wireless communication devices provided by the University are not eligible for a stipend allowance.*

# CELL PHONE REQUEST FORM

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## JUSTIFICATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM (New/Revised)

Employee Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the Cell Phone Stipend Policy and I understand this is a taxable benefit.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section A: Justification of Business needs to be completed by Supervisor. Please check applicable box(es).

The duties of the position may lead to potentially dangerous scenarios and situations with no other acceptable or reliable means of alternative communication.

The position duties require the employee to work regularly in the field and needs to be immediately accessible.

The position duties require immediate emergency response or the employee is responsible for critical infrastructure or operational support and needs to be immediately accessible at all times.

The position duties require a significant amount of travel during regular work hours or outside normal hours but are related to official university business and needs access to information technology systems, in which the judgment of the university, render the employee more productive and/or the service the employee provides more effective.

The position duties require response and decision making to life-threatening or public safety issues and situations.

The position duties make it necessary that the employee be accessible to senior management at any time.

The President/Vice President/Chief deems it necessary to ensure the flow of information and critical support of the university mission.

Check all that apply: Voice: \$600.00/year \_\_\_\_\_ Data: \$600.00/ year \_\_\_\_\_ Text: \$96.00/year \_\_\_\_\_

*The stipend is paid monthly and prorated based on the effective date.*

Please note: Smartphones equipped with Exchange ActiveSync offer the best mobile interaction with SRU's email systems. Remember to inquire through the vendor about the presence of Exchange ActiveSync before acquiring a new phone.

**Complete:** Fund center name and fund center number (to be billed): \_\_\_\_\_ Entire funding will be transferred from the fund center to cover fiscal year cycle. It is the responsibility of the Department to notify the Payroll Office of any changes to the employee eligibility taxable stipend. The stipend will continue until otherwise notified.

**Section B: Dean/Director Check one:** Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

Dean/Director/Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section C: President/VP/Chief Check one:** Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_

President/VP/Chief Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return Completed Request form to Payroll Office:**  
104 Maltby Avenue, Suite 203  
Slippery Rock, PA 16057  
[payroll@sru.edu](mailto:payroll@sru.edu)