

For: FSA Offices

Using Personal Cellular Phones While In Official Travel Status

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

Cellular phones are becoming more a part of the business environment. In some cases, employees may be requested to use personal cellular phones and/or provide personal cellular phone numbers for official use.

The Agency policy currently states that:

- personal cellular phones shall **not** be used for official business unless an **approving official** determines, **in advance**, that an employee’s job requires using a personal cellular phone and agrees to reimbursement for these calls
- cellular phones should be used **only** if no other means of communication such as government telephone systems, government calling cards, or public phones are available
- employees and approving officials are responsible for ensuring that the calls were made according to regulations governing communication expenses incurred while on official travel.

B Purpose

This notice provides guidance in managing the use of personal cellular phones while in official travel status.

C Contacts

If questions about this notice:

- County Offices shall contact State Offices
- National and State Offices shall contact FSA’s travel office at 703-305-1408.

Disposal Date	Distribution
May 1, 2007	All FSA Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

D Labor Management Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, bargaining may be requested to the extent allowed by applicable statutes. Where contract language already addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

2 Managing the Use of Cellular Phones

A Action

The approving official shall:

- submit a written approval, in advance, if requiring employees to use personal cellular phones while in travel status
- create a written phone log to track reimbursement of calls

Note: The phone log **must** provide the date of call, time of call, phone number, reason for call, claim amount, employee's signature, and approving official's signature.

- determine the reimbursement amount and allow reimbursement on AD-616
- shall only reimburse employees for the actual cost of calls

Note: Activation and maintenance fees, voice mail, service plan, phone equipment, accessories, etc. will **not** be reimbursed.

- stress the dangers of using a cellular phone while driving.

Note: Employees should wait until they are at a set location or be required to use a hand free device if taking official phone calls while driving.

Note: Approving officials may request documentation if amounts claimed appear excessive.

B Effective Date

This policy takes effect immediately.