

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

No. 717

Section: Property

Title: Mobile  
Communications  
Devices

Adopted: August 21,  
2014

Revised: September 19,  
2019

717 Mobile Communications Devices

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish general guidelines for the issuance and utilization of mobile communications devices by officials, staff and other authorized persons within the District.

**Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, the following phrase shall have the following meaning:

**Mobile communications device** - Any portable wireless telecommunications equipment that is provided by the District and utilized for the transmission and/or reception of voice, video, or computer data. Such devices include, but shall not be limited to, cellular or mobile telephones, pagers, two-way radios, wireless modems, and portable Internet appliances.

**Authority**

The School District of Philadelphia (“District”) may, in its sole discretion, provide mobile communications devices to certain employees for the express purpose of enhancing the safety, security, and operational efficiency of administrative and school-based operations.

**Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent shall designate a District official to administer the implementation of this policy. The appropriate Chief administrator, i.e., the Superintendent and those senior administrators reporting directly to the Superintendent, in addition to the General Counsel and Chief of Staff of the Board of Education (“Board”), shall further designate an official to administer the issuance of mobile communications devices within their respective divisions subject to the following guidelines, which shall be made known to all appropriate officers, directors, managers and other District personnel.

The official designated by the Superintendent to administer the implementation of all mobile communications devices within the District shall:

- 1) Maintain direct oversight of the inventory of equipment, service contracts, rate plans, and internal controls for all mobile communications devices.
- 2) Ensure compliance with applicable regulatory policies and procedures.

The Superintendent and Chief Information Officer shall by mutual agreement, be permitted to except any provision contained within this policy provided that such exception is deemed a critical operational necessity.

**Guidelines:**

Mobile communications devices shall be used for the sole and express purpose of conducting official business and maintaining operations of the school District. Personal, excessive, or commercial use of a mobile communications device is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. [1][2]

An employee may be issued a mobile communications device for the performance of job-related duties and responsibilities only if the employee:

1. Is in an active full-time position; however, secretarial or other office support staff are not eligible for issuance of a device; and
2. Is required to perform the majority of their duties away from their primary work location; or
3. Has a frequent and regular need for immediate communication for either emergency communication purposes or for productivity enhancement.

The Superintendent and Chief administrators are authorized to use the limited budgetary funds allocated to their respective divisions to provide mobile communications devices to employees who, in their judgment, require a mobile communications device and satisfy the guidelines contained herein. [3]

Requests for the consideration of the issuance of mobile communications devices must be submitted directly to the Office of Information Technology.

Persons not directly employed by the District including, but not limited to, students, volunteers, and consultants, or employees who are retired, on extended leave, or hired on a per diem basis shall not be eligible for the issuance or retention of a mobile communications device.

Mobile communications devices may not be used for routine and regular communication or when an equivalent, more cost-effective means of communication is available, unless necessary for safety or emergency purposes.

Use of mobile communications devices is subject to management review, monitoring and auditing by the District. Audits may be performed on the usage and internal controls of mobile communications devices subject to the Public School Code and Board policy. [2] [4]

All employees issued a mobile communications device are required to surrender the device(s) upon termination of employment with the District, after a reassignment of job duties or immediately upon request at any time by an official of the District. Surrendered devices must be returned to the Office of Information Technology.

The use of a mobile communications device while operating a school bus or other motorized vehicle is strictly prohibited, unless necessary for safety or emergency purposes and in accordance with applicable laws. [5]

All mobile communications devices shall be acquired in strict accordance with this policy. An administrative office or school shall not be permitted to purchase or contract directly for the acquisition of a mobile communications device or related service.

Failure to comply with any Board policies or administrative procedures regarding mobile communications devices issued by the District shall result in appropriate disciplinary action and/or reimbursement of associated costs. [1] [2]

#### Financial Responsibilities

An employee issued a mobile communications device shall be financially responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged equipment, as well as any and all personal or unauthorized usage of services in conjunction with the device. [2]

An employee shall not be reimbursed for use of a personal mobile communications device or telecommunications services unless specifically authorized in advance of such usage by the Superintendent, Chief Finance Officer or Chief of Staff of the Board.

To ensure proper tracking of District expenditures, the use of a District Administrative Activity Fund for any mobile communications device or telecommunications charge is strictly prohibited.

**Legal References:**

1. **Policy 317. Conduct/Disciplinary Procedures**
2. **Policy 815. Acceptable Use of Internet, Technology, and Network Resources**
3. **Policy 624. Capital Asset Policy**
4. **Policy 619. District Audits**
5. **75 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 3316. Prohibiting Text-based Communications**
6. **Policy 617. Administrative Activity Funds**