Central Texas College District Human Resource Management Operating Policies and Procedures Manual
Policy No. 296: Telephone/Cellphone Usage

I. PURPOSE

Establish guidelines to protect the College, its telephone resources, and employees from liability, harassment, and business interruptions due to inappropriate telephone usage.

II. SCOPE

This document applies to all users, using property owned or operated by CTC, that have been granted use of Central Texas College's telephone resources for use at work, home, or while traveling. Users include, but are not limited to, students, faculty, staff, interns, work study, volunteers, vendors, and guests of the College.

III. USE AGREEMENT

Telephone resources are to be used only for the College-related activities for which they are assigned. These resources include all business telephone conversations and voicemail messages on CTC equipment. CTC reserves the right to limit, restrict, or extend telephone privileges and access to its telephone resources. Administrative units within the College may define additional procedures and conditions for use of telephone resources under their control so long as they are consistent with this policy statement.

IV. GUIDELINES

A. General

1. The campus telephone system provides service for conducting Central Texas College business. Use of the telephone system is restricted for CTC business communications.

2. Deans, division and departmental directors are responsible for checking their monthly departmental telephone statement for personal calls. Employees making long distance personal calls from the College must reimburse the College for the cost of their calls.

3. Third-party calls may not be charged to a CTC telephone number nor will collect calls be accepted by CTC.

4. Calls to 900, 976 or any other "pay" numbers are prohibited.

5. The 800 numbers to CTC are for business purposes only. Do not use the 800 numbers to receive personal calls.

6. After-hours calls are routed to voicemail if the extension has voicemail enabled. Calls to the main number are answered by the auto attendant system which notifies the caller that the campus is closed but offers the caller options to transfer to another site or to a person's voicemail box.

B. Cell Phones

1. Unless otherwise authorized, CTC provided cell phones must be used only for business purposes. In addition, employees should only use a CTC provided cell phone when a less costly alternative does not exist. Employees must fully reimburse CTC for any personal use of a college provided cell phone.

2. Deans, division and departmental directors are responsible for checking their monthly departmental cell phone statement for personal calls. Employees making long distance personal calls from the College must reimburse the College for the cost of their calls.

3. Employees should keep a record of each call and its business purpose. Calls are itemized on a monthly statement and should be identified as personal or business. Employees should retain any supporting evidence of the business calls. This information should be submitted to the employee's Dean or Director, who must maintain these records to support the exclusion of the phone use from the employee's wages.

4. If the employee uses a CTC provided cell phone for personal usage or fails to maintain records of all calls, the IRS requires CTC to report the cost of the personal calls and a pro rata share of the monthly service charges as income to the employee on their W-2.

5. Employees must adhere to all federal, state, or local rules and regulations regarding the use of cell phones while driving. Accordingly, employees must not use cell phones if such conduct is prohibited by law, regulation, or other ordinance.

6. Employees should not use hand-held cell phones for business purposes while driving. Should an employee need to make a business call while driving, he/she should locate a lawfully designated area to park and make the call.

7. Employees may use hands-free cell phones to make business calls, but only in emergency situations. Such calls should be kept short and should the circumstances warrant (e.g., heavy traffic, bad weather), the employee should locate a lawfully designated area to park and continue the call.

C. Personal Cell Phones

Employees should limit use of personal cell phones including text messaging to their authorized break and lunch periods. Personal cell phones should be used outside the work area or in designated break areas. The employee should notify their supervisor of any anticipated or expected emergencies involving the use of a personal cell phone.

D. Voicemail/Message Boxes

1. Voicemail should not be used as a substitute for staff coverage. It should only be used as a backup when staff is unavailable.

2. Return phone messages within one business day of retrieving the message.

3. Voicemail box recordings should include:

   a. Person's name and title.
   b. Department name.
   c. A brief message stating you are unavailable and asking the caller to leave a message including a name and telephone number.

4. Alternate voicemail recordings should be used when you are expected to be out of the office for a day or more because of travel or vacation. Your message should include:

   a. Length of absence.
   b. Alternate point of contact (if applicable).
   c. Whether you will retrieve and respond to messages during your absence,

5. Automated message boxes must be approved by the Chancellor and submitted to the Director of Information Technology Customer Service in writing. Once approved, the Director of Information Technology Customer Service will contact the department to obtain the necessary information to create the message box.

E. Etiquette

1. Create a favorable impression by adhering to the following guidelines:

   a. Be tactful, courteous, and polite.
   b. Answer each call quickly, courteously, professionally, and with a helpful attitude within two rings.
   c. Identify yourself and the department.
   d. Speak clearly.
   e. Listen carefully.
   f. If you need to leave the line to obtain information, give the caller the option of waiting or being called back. If the caller waits, give progress reports every 30-45 seconds. When you return to the line, thank the caller for waiting.
   g. Keep in mind that every time you make or receive a call at work, you are representing yourself, your department, and the College.

2. When transferring a call to another extension, you should:

   a. Notify the caller that you will transfer them to another extension.
   b. Give the caller the extension, the person's name or the department to which they are being transferred.
   c. Stay on the line with the caller until the appropriate party is reached.
   d. Notify the receiver that you are transferring a call and give them any information you have available.

3. When leaving messages, be sure to include your name, the company name, and your full telephone number, i.e. 254-526-xxxx.

V. CONSEQUENCES OF MISUSE

A. Abusive calls, inappropriate use of the telephone system such as personal long-distance calls, damaging telephone equipment**,** unauthorized personal cell phone usage or other violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

B. The I.T. Telephone Technician has the authority, when directed by the Information Technology Director of Customer Service, to work with the police in obtaining information concerning malicious or threatening calls. The on-campus location and extension of the number placing the calls may be provided as part of the investigation.