

Cellular Phone and Camera Use

Supersedes:

Effective: 06-01-09

Cellular telephones, personal digital assistants (PDA), and other portable electronic devices have become commonplace tools within our society and serve as a valuable resource. However, their use must not interfere with employee safety, privacy, or patient care. To prevent distractions in the workplace and to ensure the safety and privacy of all personnel and the patients that we serve, this policy is intended to outline the acceptable use of personal electronic devices while on duty.

1. Personal cellular telephones are permitted to be carried while on duty, but should be placed on silent mode and allow voice mail to answer the call. Devices must be carried in such a way that they will not interfere with the physical requirements of the job and will not fall off or cause others to be distracted by the presence or appearance of the device.
2. Cellular phones may be used for personal purposes while on duty, except that phone use must not cause a delay in responding to an assignment or attending to a patient. Upon receipt of an assignment, department members must immediately terminate any personal cell phone calls.
3. Personnel are prohibited from using cellular telephones (voice, text messaging, or “direct connect”) at any point between the dispatch of a call and the time that the assigned incident is complete, except for work-related purposes directly related to that assignment (such as calling Dispatch Operations to assist in resolving an on-scene logistical situation).
 - 3.1. If cellular communication is necessary for a work-related purpose while operating a department vehicle and cannot be reasonably delayed until the vehicle is parked, the passenger should handle the call. In the case of a Department member working alone and stopping the vehicle is not practical, the work-related phone call should be as brief as possible and the user should utilize a “hands-free” device if available
4. Department members are prohibited from using a cellular phone or PDA (including voice calls, text messaging, or “direct connect”) for personal use when operating a department vehicle.
5. Use of a personal camera- whether cell phone camera, stand-alone camera, or cameras contained on any other such personal device (whether digital or conventional film) at any point between the dispatch of a call and the time that the assigned incident is complete is strictly prohibited.