

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Information Technology

Number: 10.03.05

AREA: User Guidelines and Responsibilities, Security

SUBJECT: Responsibilities for Use of Telecommunications Resources
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I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the use and administration of University of Houston telecommunications resources as well as the administration of Monthly Communication Plan Allowance and Communication Equipment Allowance programs. This document applies to the use of university telecommunications equipment, products, services, and other resources by university employees, students, contract workers or others with access to these resources.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Houston provides telecommunications equipment, products, services and other resources for use by its employees and students for business related to employment and educational responsibilities. Use of university telecommunications equipment, products, lines or services that results in toll charges to the university is restricted to official university business (SAM [03.A.19 – Personal Use of Telecommunications Equipment](#)).

Use of university telecommunications equipment, products, services and other resources for personal or other non-university purposes resulting in additional charges to the university is strictly prohibited. It is the responsibility of the employee to determine which resources are restricted to university use.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Long distance authorization code: The caller ID or code assigned to authorized university employees on a University of Houston Computing and Telecommunication Services Department Long Distance Calling Card, enabling long distance calls from university telephones.
- B. Vendor issued long distance calling card: A card issued by an authorized long distance carrier for charging long distance services.
- C. Additional charges: Any usage that results in an additional charge above and beyond the regular, fixed monthly service charge.

- D. UH 800/888 long distance numbers: Contracted long distance service lines for which charges are billed to the responsible department.
- E. Telecommunications resources: Equipment, products, services and other resources including, but not limited to: telephones, fax, data lines, video call equipment, voice mail, pagers, cellular telephones and 800/888 lines.

IV. PROVISIONS

- A. Personal use of university telephones and other telecommunications resources that does not incur additional charges may be permitted in moderation, subject to departmental restrictions and supervisor approval. Individual departments may set internal guidelines governing personal use of telephones and other telecommunications resources.
- B. The first responsibility of employees during scheduled work hours is to their work. Employees are to use university resources for work-related purposes. Employees shall use resources in accordance with departmental guidelines and this policy and procedure. Misuse of university telecommunications resources is cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination and to the possibility of criminal charges.
- C. Long distance
 - 1. An approved University of Houston long distance authorization code is required to place long distance calls or send long distance faxes via the University of Houston telephone system. Use of the long distance authorization code is limited to calls required in the performance of the employee's job responsibilities. Use of UH long distance authorization codes for personal or other non-university long distance calls or faxes is prohibited. Any non-university long distance calls that must be made on university telephones shall be placed using the employee's personal long distance calling card.
 - 2. An employee may be issued a long distance authorization code by the Information Technology (IT) Department through submission of a properly completed IT Work Request Form. The request requires the approval of the employee's supervisor and the appropriate business administrator (certifying signature). The security of long distance authorization codes is the responsibility of the employee to whom it is issued. Codes must not be left in unprotected places or in any way exposed to use by unauthorized individuals. Loss of the code or suspicion of abuse of the long distance authorization code must be reported immediately to the department business administrator and to IT.

Individuals with long distance authorization codes and/or vendor issued long distance calling cards leaving the employment of the university or transferring to another university department must surrender the above items to the current department business administrator.

It is the responsibility of the department business administrator to return calling cards and to notify IT via the termination clearance form or IT Work Request to deactivate or transfer the long distance authorization codes for terminating or transferring employees.

3. It is the responsibility of the departmental or college/division administrator to ensure that reports are distributed in a timely manner. All personal charges, including the applicable sales and use taxes, which are incurred by employees using the university's telecommunications equipment, must be reimbursed within 10 days from the billing date. All personal charges, including applicable sales and use taxes, which are incurred by employees using the university's long-distance network must be reimbursed within 10 days from the billing date.
4. Charges generated using the number appear on monthly statements and are billed to the department.
5. On a monthly basis, IT will make available on-line reports of use for each employee with a long distance authorization code. Reports will reflect each call charged with the long distance authorization code to the university and the related charges. Personal calls charged to personal calling cards and toll-free calls will be indicated with a zero cost.
6. The business administrator shall review the long distance expenditures. Any indication of abuse or irregularity noted by the employee or the administrator must be addressed at once.
7. IT shall be notified to take corrective action immediately.
8. If there is sufficient evidence to indicate that unauthorized charges are being made, please follow the guidelines for reporting fraud listed in [SAM 01.C.04 – Reporting/Investigating Fraudulent Acts](#).
9. Departments may arrange for university 800 or 888 numbers to facilitate incoming long-distance calls for certain university business. All university 800/888 numbers must be contracted through IT. Calls made to the University of Houston 800 and 888 numbers are charged to the university as long distance service and are not to be used for personal or other non-university use.

D. University long-distance calling cards

The University of Houston contracts with a designated vendor for long distance calling card services when away from the university. University calling cards may be authorized for employees who travel and need calling cards for university business purposes. All calling card arrangements must be made through IT.

E. Communication Allowance for cell phones, personal digital assistant (PDA) or devices that allow for two-way communication and Internet services.

1. A department may elect to monetarily contribute to the employee's purchase and operation of a wireless communication device and/or Internet service when such employee's job duties, in the opinion of the department head, necessitate the provision of such equipment. In such case, the monetary contribution shall be provided in one or both of the following forms:

- a. Communication Equipment Allowance: provides a periodic (no more often than once every three years) monetary contribution towards the employee's personal acquisition of a wireless communication device and/or Internet service and payment of initial activation fees. A department shall process such allowance in accordance with guidelines established by the Payroll Department.
- b. Monthly Communication Plan Allowance: provides a monthly salary supplement for the operation of a wireless communication device and/or broadband Internet service. Such supplement is provided to the employee for as long as the employee's department head determines he/she qualifies under this policy. An employee may only receive two salary supplements – one for a wireless communication device and one for home Internet service.

F. Communication Allowance Provisions

1. A wireless communication device is considered to be the personal property of the employee and accordingly shall be used in any way the employee deems appropriate. Any service contract the employee might enter into regarding the acquisition or operation of a communication device and/or Internet service is personal to the employee. The university shall have no obligation or make any guarantees with respect to such contract to the employee or service provider.

2. Allowances paid to the employee are considered taxable compensation paid through the payroll system and accordingly are subject to required tax withholdings (see SAM [03.D.06](#)). Payment of such taxes incurred is the responsibility of the employee and shall not be reimbursed to the employee by the university. A Monthly Communication Plan Allowance and a Communication Equipment Allowance are not considered entitlements, are not part of an employee's base salary, and may be changed or withdrawn by the university at any time.
3. The department head is responsible for the following:
 - a. Determining whether the employee's position requires a wireless communication device and/or Internet service based on the job duties and responsibilities.
 - b. Determining the source of funds to be used to pay for a communication device and/or Internet service.
 - c. Determining the appropriate Communication Allowance for the employee within the monthly allowance amounts approved and published by the university.
 - d. Approving a Personnel Action Request (PAR) to authorize this transaction. Copies of the approved PAR shall be retained in the employee's departmental personnel file. Annually, each department head shall evaluate the ability to continue to provide employees granted a Monthly Communication Plan Allowance salary supplement in the context of its overall budget. A Monthly Communication Plan Allowance salary supplement may be established at any time during a fiscal year and may be changed or withdrawn at any time for any reason by the department head.
4. Employees are responsible for the following:
 - a. Paying all amounts due as agreed between the employee and providers of communication or internet services.
 - b. Providing the department with the current wireless communication number within five working days of activation.
 - c. Notifying the department head within five working days of inactivation of the device or service. An employee is prohibited from continuing to collect a Monthly Communication Plan Allowance when the service or device is no longer active or needed for the performance of the employee's job responsibilities.

5. An employee receiving a Monthly Communication Plan Allowance and/or a Communication Equipment Allowance from the university may not receive additional allowances for the same or similar equipment or service from another university department or another component university of the University of Houston System.
6. Annually, the Purchasing Department will publish the Monthly Communication Plan Allowance and the Communication Equipment Allowance rates. Such amounts are not intended to fully reimburse the employee for their total out-of-pocket costs given that the device is expected to be used by the employee for both business and personal use.

G. Other Toll Calls

Other types of telecommunications may result in charges to the university and are restricted to university business use. One example is directory assistance calls, which require use of the long distance authorization code even for local directory assistance. Any non-university directory assistance calls that must be made on university telephones shall be placed using personal long distance cards.

- H. Use of university facilities, equipment, or other resources for consulting or other non-university business activities is prohibited unless a financial arrangement has been made between the individual and the university and has been approved by the department head or director prior to the employee's use for the external purpose.**

V. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsible Party: Associate Vice President for Information Technology and
Chief Information Officer

Review: Every 3 years, on or before June 1

VI. APPROVAL

Jim McShan

Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance

Donald J. Foss

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Renu Khator

President

Date of President's Approval: April 7, 2008

VII. REFERENCES

UH System Administrative Memorandum [03.A.19 - Personal Use of UHS Telecommunications Equipment or Services](#)

World Wide Web: [University of Houston home page](#); access "Computing"

Index Terms: 800/888 numbers
Cellular telephones
Employee use of university resources
Long distance
Long distance calling card
Mobile telephones
Telecommunications equipment
Telecommunications resources
Toll calls