



## Telecommunications Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this Telecommunications Policy is to provide the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) employees with the requirements regarding the use of wired and wireless state telephone services, devices and equipment.

### Scope

The scope of this Policy includes employees, contractors, temporary personnel and other agents of ODA who use and administer telecommunications systems. State telecommunications systems include, but are not limited to, wired telephones, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones, wireless cell phones and smart phones as well as other telecommunication services and technologies.

### Background

ODA offers telecommunication systems to employees, contractors, temporary personnel and other agents to facilitate communication in the course of performing state business. As with any resource provided by ODA, the expectation is that it will be used for state business. This Policy outlines limited circumstances under which some personal use of state telecommunications systems may be acceptable. In general, employees, contractors, temporary personnel and other agents shall refrain from using state provided resources for personal use unless it is absolutely necessary. These resources are provided through the use of taxpayer dollars and this fact should guide and inform behavior when it comes to personal use. This Policy provides further guidance regarding the use of the equipment and features for after-hours use. No expectation of privacy should be present in the use of the equipment.

### Authority

Ohio IT Policy ITP-H.2, Use of State Telephones

### References

- a. Ohio IT Policy ITP-A.1, (Policy Regarding the Acquisition and Use of Computer and Telecommunications Products and Services).
- b. Ohio IT Policy ITP H.6, (Telecommunications Utility Services).
- c. ODA Comprehensive Information Technology Use Policy.

### Policy

Each ODA employee, contractor, temporary personnel and agent is responsible for the effective, efficient and responsible use of state-provided telecommunications systems pursuant to the following:

### Limitations on Personal Calls



Personal calls made using state wired or wireless telephone services shall comply with the following minimum requirements:

- a. When using a state telephone service, the number, frequency and duration of personal calls shall be kept to a minimum and, whenever possible, made during lunch hours or authorized breaks.
- b. When using a state wireless telephone service, personal calls made or received are only acceptable when wired telephone services are not immediately available.
- c. Personal long distance calls made using the state's wired telephone service are only acceptable if charged to a personal credit card or personal telephone card, or if billed to a non-state third party number.
  - i. In the case of an emergency, personal long distance calls may be made using the state's wired telephone service and charged to the state.
- d. Personal business, which involves an activity undertaken for profit or gain of any kind, shall not be conducted using a state telephone service.
  - i. Employees are prohibited from circulating their state telephone number as a telephone number at which they can be reached for personal business. Personal business cards and other such materials shall not have a state telephone number listed as a contact number.
  - ii. The following types of calls are prohibited if not related to official state business:
    - Pay-per-call numbers
    - Collect calls to state telephone numbers
    - Calls billed to state telephone services

### **Limitations on Call Forwarding during Business and non-Business Hours**

Capabilities of the state wired or wireless telephone systems permit employees to check their voicemail from various locations, including their home. Such capabilities also permit employees to forward telephone calls from their work telephone number to their personal or cellular telephone. Employees should be advised that checking voicemail or receiving telephone calls forwarded from the state telephone service may be considered work-related and may constitute time towards hours worked, including overtime. Accordingly, the forwarding of telephone calls to an employee's home requires approval of the Division Chief.

Without prior approval, or unless there is a work-related emergency, any employees who would be eligible for or would be owed overtime for working outside of their normal workday hours should not answer forwarded calls from their ODA telephone numbers, check work-related voicemail, or review and/or answer work-related email outside of their normal workday hours, or while on leave of any type. In the event of an urgent work-related situation, such supervisory approval may be granted after the event.

### **Expectation of Privacy**

While telecommunications access is provided as a tool to accomplish ODA's strategic goals and objectives ODA is subject to Ohio Public Records Act. Therefore, ODA reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store, at any time and without prior notice, any and all telecommunications use, as well as any and all materials, files, information, software, communications, and other content transmitted, received, or stored



in connection with this use. All such information, content, and files are the property of ODA. ODA employees have no expectation of privacy regarding the use of telecommunications systems. Network administrators may review telecommunications systems for various reasons, including, but not limited to, maintaining system integrity and ensuring employees are using the systems in accordance with this Policy.

### **Etiquette**

Employees are advised that while using any telecommunications systems supplied by the State, they continue to be subject to any etiquette and customer service policies, as well as policies regarding any type of harassment and discrimination. All employees have the responsibility to use all telecommunications systems in an efficient, ethical, and lawful manner.

### **Penalties**

Violation of this Policy may result in disciplinary action and may be a cause for termination.

### **Authorization of State Wireless Telephone Services and Issuing Wireless Telephones.**

Pursuant to the instruction of the Director and request of the Division Chief, the Assistant Director shall determine and approve which ODA staff shall be issued a wireless telephone. The Assistant Director shall consider the following:

- a. The job responsibilities for which the use of a state wireless telephone service is required. Wireless services may be considered in situations where:
  - i. Employee is identified as part of the essential staff for ODA's operation in the case of an emergency.
  - ii. Employee needs to be accessible during business hours and employee's job duties require him or her to attend off site business functions.
  - iii. Employee is a part of the support services staff and is required to be reachable in case of an emergency during off-hours.
  - iv. Employee is a deputy director or equivalent and the Director may require immediate access to the employee during business hours / non – business hours for urgent matters.
  - v. Employee is expected to immediately respond to critical requests, queries and questions in writing via e-mail during business non – business hours.
- b. The use of shared wireless telephones, when practical, is preferable to issuing individual wireless telephones. If a wireless telephone is shared, a log shall be maintained to track the responsible user and the dates and times the wireless telephone was checked out and checked in.
  - i. Wireless cell phone and/or smart phone issuance is solely discretionary and can be revoked when the Director, Deputy Director of Operations, or supervisor , decides the device no longer adds value or aids the employee in doing his or her job duties.

### **Procedures**



- a. The ODA Weights & Measures Chief shall manage and coordinate the issuance of all wireless devices and the ODA Information Technology Office (ITO) shall manage and coordinate the issuance of all VoIP devices.
- b. Each ODA employee assigned a wireless telephone shall be given a copy of Ohio IT Policy ITP-H.2, "Use of State Telephones" and this Policy.
- c. The ODA Weights & Measures Chief and ITO are responsible for processing Telephone Service Requests (TSR).
- d. The ODA Weights & Measures Chief is responsible for coordinating tagging of all devices received with support from the ITO.
- e. ODA Division Chiefs desiring telecommunications services and/or devices for themselves or their staff should contact the Weights & Measures Chief for wireless devices and the ITO for VoIP technology either through e-mail; or the respective service catalog (upon deployment).
- f. The Weights & Measures Chief shall maintain a record of all devices issued or stocked using the OAKS Asset Management module. ITO shall inform the Weights & Measures Chief whenever a device is issued, retired, or returned to stock.
- g. The Weights & Measures Chief will maintain all wireless devices and may recall the devices for replacement, program changes, adjustments, and evaluation – including information contained in the device.
- h. Only the Weights & Measures Chief may make program changes, additions or deletions of applications to ODA-issued wireless telephones and smart-phones.

### **Record-keeping and Information**

Section administrators, supervisors and employees may obtain call and usage records for wired and wireless telephone services from the Fiscal Office. VoIP system call and usage records may be obtained from the ITO. Such requests should be via e-mail or the respective service catalog (upon deployment).

### **Loss or Theft of Asset**

- a. All lost or stolen telecommunications systems must be reported immediately to supervision, the Weights & Measures Chief, and the ITO. The custodian shall complete a written incident report that includes pertinent facts, location and circumstances.
- b. In the case of theft or possible theft, the ODA Chief Legal Counsel shall be notified. The Chief Legal Counsel shall report the theft to the State Highway Patrol. Upon request, the custodian of the telecommunications system shall provide a statement to and cooperate fully with the State Highway Patrol.
- c. In the case of a telecommunications system that provides connectivity to any state electronic folders or files (i.e. Outlook) the ITO shall immediately have the device wiped and deactivated.

### **Contacts**

| The Human Resources Director is available for consultation regarding this policy.



## Revision History

Date	Description of Change
8/2012	Initial Policy Issued
5/2013	Update to Policy regarding voicemail and forwarding of calls.
7/2015	Policy Revisions Issued

