

## University Communications Procedure

### Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines around allowances provided for telework or remote work communication expenses for devices and services. For the purposes of this procedure, the term communication expenses include costs for service plans for cell phones, smart phones, two-way communication devices, internet data services for a variety of devices etc., or any other future means of communication.

### Eligibility

For the purposes of this procedure, eligibility is limited to PSU faculty and staff. The department dean, director, supervisor or chair is responsible for determining the business need based on the position requirements for any communication allowance. Examples of business need include:

- A requirement to travel **frequently** to do business, across a geographic area away from the home office, and great amounts of time are spent in transit.
- A **regular** need for employees to communicate with others verbally and or in written form about University business when the employee is away from his/her office or other PSU worksite.
- The employee supports or is responsible for programs, services or systems that necessitate **frequent** and immediate communications throughout the day or after hours.

### Responsibility

**Employees** are responsible for ensuring there is a clear business purpose for receiving a monthly allowance. Employees are also responsible for making certain they are not putting themselves in any risk by using personal provided device. Employees whose job responsibilities include driving and who must use a communication device for business use should refrain from using it while driving.

**Deans, Directors, Department Supervisors and Department Chairs** are ultimately responsible for determining if an employee is eligible to receive a monthly allowance for communication devices/internet. If it is determined that it is appropriate for the employee to receive a monthly communication allowance, there is a responsibility to determine which allowance level the employee qualifies for. These individuals should have primary responsibility to oversee the communication equipment/services, including:

- Authorizing the employee to receive a monthly communication allowance
- Monitoring business need based on the position description
- Notifying Human Resources if an employee is no longer eligible to receive monthly allowance

**Human Resources** is responsible for ensuring the allowance is recorded in Banner for the amount reflected on the Communication Authorization Form. In addition, HR is responsible for notifying supervisors annually with a list of employees receiving a monthly communication allowance and the amounts of the allowance.

### Allowance Program

Portland State University may provide a taxable allowance included in employee's monthly pay. This allowance is given to the employee with the understanding that he/she will be available outside of working hours/location. The employee provides the communication device and or service and therefore, there can be unlimited personal use of this equipment/service. Employees wanting to enhance the equipment or the rate plan for personal use may do so at their own expense. The allowance is taxable because this option provides for unlimited personal use and the equipment belongs to the employee, not to the University. The allowance is not intended to cover the total cost of the service plan or device

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because it is understood that there will be personal use. In the event that the employee no longer works for PSU, the equipment/service remains the property of the employee and the allowance is discontinued.

**Allowance authorization is position specific;** therefore,

- Allowances are charged to the same job labor distribution as in effect for the period paid;
- If an employee changes positions or transfers to a new position or department the communication allowance ends;
- If it is appropriate for the employee to receive a monthly communication allowance in their new position a new request form must be sent to HR authorizing the allowance.

Allowances are provided in two different levels:

- **Level 1:** This user is one that needs to be contacted or needs to contact individuals for business use *intermittently*. Allowance is provided to employee at the rate of **\$45/month**.
- **Level 2:** This user is one that needs to be contacted or needs to contact individuals for business use *frequently*. Allowance is provided to employee at the rate of **\$85/month**.

The level selected for the employee communication allowance is up to the discretion of the department dean, director, supervisor and or department chair depending on the position.

## Procedures

1. Employee completes the University Communication Authorization form
2. University Communications Authorization Form is signed by authorized department personnel
3. Department sends Authorization Form to Human Resources and HR will apply monthly allowance to employee's monthly pay.
4. Department notifies Human Resources in the event employee is no longer eligible to receive monthly allowance.
5. HR will send out annually to department supervisors a list of employees receiving a monthly communication allowance and the amount of the allowance.

## Resources

University Communication Authorization Form [www.pdx.edu/financial-services](http://www.pdx.edu/financial-services)