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**PURPOSE**:

The purpose of this policy is to document the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN) procedures regarding the management and utilization of stationary telephones, cellular telephones, and State telephone credit cards. This policy also follows the regulations established by the Budget and Control Board for local and long distance calls. Employees who violate the provisions of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the department's progressive discipline policy and may be required to reimburse the department actual charges.

## SECTION I: STATIONARY TELEPHONES

The Budget and Control Board has issued statewide regulations establishing the proper use of South Carolina state government telephone systems. These guidelines permit South Carolina state government employees to make reasonable use of state telephones while simultaneously guarding against abuse.

A. The use of state government telephone services is limited to official business. It is a violation of S.C. Code Ann. §16-13-400 (Supp. 2011), to abuse state telecommunication services. In addition to official business calls, the following non-business telephone calls

may be made using state telephone services, including, if necessary, long distance services paid for by the state.

1. Calls to notify the family, physician, etc., when an employee is injured on the job.

2. Calls to notify family of a schedule change when an employee (traveling on state government business) is delayed due to official business or a transportation delay.

3. An employee, traveling in the United States for more than one night on state government business, makes a brief call to his or her residence (averaging no more than one call per day).

4. An employee is required to work overtime without advance notice and calls within the local commuting area (the area from which the employee regularly commutes) to advise his or her family of the change in schedule or to make alternate transportation or childcare arrangements.

B. Permissible Calls

The following calls are considered permissible calls under this policy and when necessary, employees may make such brief calls. However, an employee may be prohibited from placing such calls if, in the discretion of the supervisor, the employee's telephone usage is interfering with the employee's job performance or if the usage otherwise impacts upon the division's operations. If the listed calls generate or activate a long distance change, the employee must charge the call to a personal credit card, to the employee's home telephone number, or place the call collect. Under no circumstances shall an employee charge a personal, long distance call to a government or DDSN telephone number.

The following calls, if of a short duration, may be placed by an employee while on duty:

1. An employee makes brief daily calls to locations within the local commuting area to speak to a spouse or minor children (or those responsible for them, i.e., a school or day care center) to make certain of their well-being and/or safety.

2. The employee makes brief calls to locations within the local commuting area that can be reached only during normal working hours, such as a local government agency or a physician.

3. An employee makes brief calls to locations within the local commuting area to arrange for emergency repairs to his or her residence or automobile.

4. A call that reasonably could not be made at another time if it is of moderate duration and it does not adversely affect the performance of the state telephone system (e.g., unauthorized calls made in rapid succession to call-in contest on radio stations are considered detrimental to telephone system service levels).

C. Collect calls

Collect calls may be accepted if the person calling identifies the call as an emergency or the call is from a DDSN employee, commission member, client, or client family member. While the use of collect calls is not favored, if an employee anticipates or expects to make a collect call to DDSN, the switchboard should be informed in advance. Employees are encouraged to secure a state telephone credit card prior to travel for use in making official business calls while in travel status. If a collect call is accepted, the name of the calling party and purpose of the call should be recorded and forwarded to the Facility Administrator, if at a Regional Center, or the Associate State Director-Administration otherwise.

D. Visitors may be given use of telephones as needed, but under no circumstances may a visitor charge a long distance call to the state telephone system. The DDSN employee responsible for the visitor may allow the visitor to use a state telephone to place a long distance call if the call will not disrupt official business and if the call is charged to a personal or business credit card, to the caller's home telephone number, or if the call is placed collect.

## SECTION II: CELLULAR TELEPHONES

Officials and employees who have been assigned a cellular telephone by DDSN must adhere to the following guidelines.

A. To the extent possible, mobile communication device usage should be limited to official state government business. The employee will reimburse DDSN for any personal or unauthorized calls. Employees should use stationary phones when available and practical.

B. No wireless device will be issued to any employee without the approval of the Associate State Director-Administration. Justification for the mobile device must be submitted by the requesting employee's supervisor detailing the need and usage.

C. The Division of Information Technology will maintain a current inventory of all mobile communication devices. At a minimum the inventory shall include device description, employee who was issued the device and cellular vendor.

D. The Division of Information technology will monitor the use of mobile communication devices. All unauthorized use will be reported to the Director of the Division of Information Technology and the employees supervisor.

## SECTION III: STATE TELEPHONE CREDIT CARDS

Telephone calls charged to state telephone credit cards should be limited to official state government business. In addition to official business calls, DDSN considers the non-business calls listed in Section I-A & B to be permissible under this policy. The use of a state telephone credit card for purposes other than those established by this policy, in addition to progressive disciplinary action, may result in the revocation of the state telephone credit card.

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