



**Policy Chapter:** Chapter 14 Information Technology

**Policy Number and Title:** 14.006 Use of University Telecommunication and Personal Computing Devices

---

**I. Policy Statement**

The University establishes the following policy concerning: (1) the use of University-provided communication and personal computing devices, and (2) the use of employee-owned communication and personal computing devices for University Business.

**II. Application of Policy**

All Employees

**III. Policy Definitions**

**A. Cost Center**

A “Cost Center,” in this policy, is a division of financial responsibility. It can be bound to a unit, department, or division.

**B. Cost Center Owner**

The “Cost Center Owner,” in this policy, is the person accountable for the financial results and expenses of the cost center, and has authority to authorize, deny, or ask questions before deciding to authorize or deny an expense.

**C. Personal Computing Device**

A “Personal Computing Device,” in this policy, (PCD) is a communication device that lacks the full capabilities of standard desktop or laptop computers. Examples include, but are not limited to: cell phones, tablets, and smart watches. A PCD may include the device, the data plan which provides its connectivity, or both.

**D. University Business**

“University Business,” in this policy, means the accomplishment of a governmental function directly entrusted to the University, including the reasonably necessary means and methods to accomplish the function.

**IV. Policy Responsibilities**

**A. General**

It is the policy of the University that University telephones, telephone lines, fax machines, and telecommunication networks/ connections are available for faculty, staff, and student employees to use in carrying out University Business. Except as provided below, communications on University equipment and networks that are not related to University Business should be avoided. Special rules for PCDs are provided below.

**B. *Non-University Business Use***

The placing and receiving of phone calls from University-provided phones, PCDs, and faxes for reasons other than University Business should be infrequent. Such use of phones, PCDs, and faxes is considered a misapplication of State equipment if it results in additional costs being incurred, damage to the equipment, hinders day-to-day operations, or is otherwise deemed to be excessive or inappropriate. Employees should use their personally-owned PCDs for personal communications when possible.

**C. *No Expectations of Privacy***

Communications and usage on University equipment and networks are subject to public, legal, and administrative review without the expectation of privacy. University Business-related communications are subject to public and legal review regardless of equipment and voice/data plan owner.

**D. *Long-Distance Personal Calls by Employees***

Long-distance calls include any call that is not domestic or free of charge to the University, including calls made via voice-over-IP. Occasionally a personal long-distance call may occur by accident or may be necessary in the case of a personal emergency. When such a situation arises and results in an additive charge to the institution, the call(s) must be reimbursed promptly through the Purchasing Department. Routine and recurring long-distance personal calls are strictly prohibited and may subject the employee to disciplinary action under applicable University policies.

**E. *Auditing***

Telecommunications records are periodically reviewed by the UNT System Internal Audit Department for compliance with this policy and established accounting procedures.

**F. *Allowance for Use of Employee-owned PCD for University Business***

1. Qualification for Allowance

The University may provide an allowance to a retirement-eligible employee for the employee's use of an employee-owned PCD for University Business. Examples of reasons why an employee may be eligible for an allowance include, but are not limited to: the employee travels frequently, the employee is frequently out of the office, the employee uses the phone on job sites where wired phones are not available, or the employee is a member of key personnel who are needed in the event of an emergency. Note that some employees may also be eligible to receive an allowance if communicated via their offer letter/employment agreement.

2. Limits on Allowance

Employees are eligible for only one data plan allowance. Any exceptions to this rule should be approved by the Vice President responsible for the department.

Compelling factors for consideration regarding such an exception include grant funding or efforts to satisfy legislative-driven initiatives.

3. Approval of Allowance

The employee's department supervisor and the cost center owner must approve of the allowance via written documentation, such as an offer letter, and electronic payroll request.

4. Employee Responsibilities

The employee is responsible for: (i) contracting with a service provider for PCD data plans, (ii) paying any initial plan charges, and (iii) paying the plan's monthly bills. Any service contract the employee might enter into regarding the acquisition or operation of a PCD is personal to the employee. The University shall have no obligation or make any guarantees with respect to such contract to the employee or the service provider. The University will not reimburse employees for applications purchased for use on a PCD that is owned by the employee.

5. Tax

All monthly allowances paid to the employee are considered taxable compensation and accordingly are subject to required tax withholdings. Payment of such taxes incurred is the responsibility of the employee and shall not be reimbursed to the employee by the University.

**G. University-Provided PCDs**

1. Qualification for Use

The University may provide University-owned PCDs for employees who have a demonstrated need, in which case, the requestor is responsible for estimating the required monthly usage on the [University-Owned Cell Phone/PCD Request form](#). Examples of employees that might qualify for the issuance of a University-owned PCD are those responsible for infrastructure support (e.g., facilities, data communications, etc.), key on-call personnel, and public safety personnel. Employees are encouraged to utilize two-way radio-like PCDs, where possible, that do not have the capability to place or receive traditional phone calls.

2. Limits on Use

If University-owned PCDs are used for a purpose other than University Business, and such use results in excessive usage charges, the employee must reimburse the University for such charges.

3. Approval of Use

To receive a University-owned PCD, an employee must complete and sign the [University-Owned Cell Phone/Personal Computing Device Request form](#). The

department head and Dean/ or Vice President responsible for the department must both approve the request for the PCD and provide funding for the requested PCD. The department supervisor's signature on the form authorizes the transfer of funds to the Telecommunications Department to pay for the PCD. Purchases of University-owned PCDs are the responsibility of the department making the purchase. Any request for a University-provided PCD must be approved by the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

#### 4. Employee Responsibilities

The employee is required to exercise reasonable care for the University-owned PCD. This duty includes the requirements to:

- a. take reasonable and appropriate measures to secure and protect the University-owned PCD,
- b. inform the department supervisor of any changes in the employee's status or need for the use of a University-owned PCD, and
- c. return the device upon termination of employment or at the point where the employee no longer has need of the PCD.

#### 5. University Responsibilities

The requesting department will pay for University-owned PCDs. The employee's department supervisor should annually: (i) review the PCD usage to determine whether it is still needed for University Business and (ii) determine if the most cost-effective plan is in effect.

#### ***H. Exceptions***

Special circumstances of an employee's job responsibilities at the University may justify exceptions to the provisions above. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

#### **V. Resources/Forms/Tools**

[University-Owned Cellphone/PCD Request form](https://itss.untssystem.edu/sites/default/files/cellphone_request_form_policy_14.006.pdf)

[[https://itss.untssystem.edu/sites/default/files/cellphone\\_request\\_form\\_policy\\_14.006.pdf](https://itss.untssystem.edu/sites/default/files/cellphone_request_form_policy_14.006.pdf)]

#### **VI. References and Cross-References**

[UNT Policy 05.015, Ethics and Standards of Conduct](#)

[UNT Policy 14.003, Acceptable Use](#)

**VII. Revision History**

Policy Contact:	Associate Vice President for Budget and Analytics
Approved Date:	08/10/2010
Effective Date:	08/10/2010
Revisions:	02/28/2022