

Texas A&M University-San Antonio

25.99.09.00.01 Communication Allowance for Cellular Communication Devices

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Revised: April, 2012

Revised: May, 2014

Revised: April, 2015

Next Scheduled Review: April, 2020

Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University-San Antonio (A&M-San Antonio) recognizes that the performance of certain job responsibilities may be enhanced by the provision of cellular communication devices. Because of Internal Revenue Service tax rules related to personal use of listed property, including cell phones, and the administrative burden of documenting this use, A&M-San Antonio elects to extend a monthly allowance to offset expenses related to monthly communications plans under the provisions of this Procedure.

Reason for Procedure

This Procedure will provide structure and guidance for Texas A&M University-San Antonio's monthly communication plan allowance. This Procedure is required by Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) Regulation [25.99.09 Cellular Communication Devices and Services](#).

Official Procedure

1. GENERAL

Communication allowances for employee-owned devices will be based on a monthly communication plan allowance. This plan provides monthly allowances for employees' use of personal communication devices in the performance of A&M-San Antonio business under provisions of this procedure.

- 1.1 Payments made to the employee by A&M-San Antonio in the form of a monthly communication plan allowance are considered taxable compensation 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. A communication allowance is not an entitlement and is not part of an employee's base salary. The monthly communication plan allowance shall be paid in equal installments from departmental funds as a salary supplement and is provided to the

employee only for as long as the employee qualifies for the allowance under these provisions as determined by the applicable approval authority.

- 1.2 Communication allowances should be limited to employees whose duties routinely require them to use their personal communication device in the performance of their regularly scheduled work and are expected to be available by way of their personal communication device outside of normal work hours.
- 1.3 A&M-San Antonio does not reimburse employees for business calls on their personal cellular phones. If an exempt employee is regularly using their personal cellular phone for business purposes, (s)he needs to report this use to their supervisor who can determine if a request for a communication allowance should be submitted to the division head.

2. UNIVERSITY-OWNED DEVICES

A&M-San Antonio has a small number of cellular communications devices that may be provided to employees to conduct University business. These devices are A&M-San Antonio property and will remain so when entrusted to employees. When a separation of employment occurs, these devices must be turned back in to the responsible department.

3. APPROVAL

- 3.1 The A&M-San Antonio President and division heads are responsible for determining which positions/individuals will receive a communication allowance and for approving the appropriate monthly cellular communication allowance for the employee within the limits of System Regulation [25.99.09 Cellular Communication Devices and Services](#). Granting a communication allowance to an employee must be directly linked to the employee's A&M-San Antonio duties and responsibilities. The individuals who approve communication allowances shall annually review job duties of those individuals that are receiving communication allowances to ensure that those communication allowances are still appropriate.
- 3.2 The original approval form used to process the monthly communication plan allowance shall be retained on file in the Payroll Services Department. Copies of the approval forms used to process the monthly communication plan allowances shall be retained in the recipient's department.
- 3.3 Communication allowances shall be limited to positions that meet exempt status as determined by Federal Labor Standards Act.
- 3.4 Exceptions to this procedure shall be reviewed by the Vice President of Finance & Administration and approved by the President of A&M-San Antonio.

4. ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION ALLOWANCE AMOUNTS

4.1 Communication Service Plans:

4.1.1 The Division of Finance & Administration will annually review communication allowance rates to ensure they are in compliance with System Policy/Regulation and this Procedure.

4.1.2 The communication allowance is not intended to cover the total cost of an employee's personal communications service plan.

4.2 The Communication Allowance Enrollment/Change form is used to establish the monthly allowance. This amount is not intended to fully reimburse the employee for the total out-of-pocket costs, given that the device is expected to be owned by the employee and used for both personal and business use.

4.2.1 The division shall process the monthly salary supplement in accordance with the communication allowance enrollment procedures and forms established by Payroll Services.

4.2.2 The employee is responsible for the entire payment of their monthly service charge regardless of the allowance provided by A&M-San Antonio.

4.2.3 During the budget planning cycle, the approval authorities shall evaluate the communication allowances established for his/her employees and make any necessary adjustments by completing a new Communication Allowance Enrollment/Change form. Monthly communications allowance payments may be established at any time in a fiscal year.

4.2.4 The division shall process adjustments made to the monthly communication allowance by submitting a new Communication Allowance Enrollment/Change form reflecting the new contribution rate.

5. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 To meet A&M-San Antonio needs, employees receiving a communication allowance are expected to routinely use their personal communication device in the performance of their assigned duties during their scheduled work hours and are expected to be available by way of their personal communication device outside of their normal work hours.

5.2 An employee receiving a communication allowance must provide to his/her supervisor their current phone number to the personal communication device within five business days of approval of the communication allowance.

- 5.3 The employee is personally liable for contract stipulations including payment of all expenses incurred (including but not limited to long distance, roaming fees, and taxes). In the event that an employee leaves the position that qualified for a communication allowance, he/she continues to be responsible for the contractual obligations of the communication service plan.
- 5.4 An employee receiving a communication allowance must notify his/her approval authority within five (5) business days of the deactivation of communication service so management can evaluate whether the allowance needs to be eliminated.
- 5.5 An employee receiving a communication allowance from A&M-San Antonio may not receive payment from another member of The Texas A&M University System for use of a personal communication device nor use a A&M-San Antonio-owned cellular communication device. Any employee traveling outside of the US is encouraged to see if their provider will give them international service temporarily at a reduced rate.
- 5.6 A&M-San Antonio does not currently reimburse employees for the use of personal communications devices used to conduct A&M-San Antonio business outside of a communication allowance; therefore, any employee who will need to use a personal communication device for A&M-San Antonio business should request a communications allowance from their division head.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

TAMUS Policy [33.04 Use of System Resources](#)

TAMUS Regulation [25.99.09 Cellular Communication Devices and Services](#)

Forms

[Communication Allowance Enrollment/Change form](#)

Definitions

Personal communication device — a device that is property of the employee that allows the employee to send and receive telephone calls and/or data

Contact Office

Finance and Administration, Department of Payroll Services (210) 784-2070
