


PBP FORM 290  PITTSBURGH BUREAU OF POLICE <i>"...honor, integrity, courage, respect, and compassion."</i>		SUBJECT: "CELLULAR PHONES"		ORDER NUMBER: 33-04	
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ISSUE DATE: 9/05/2023	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/01/2014	ANNUAL REVIEW DATE: JULY	RESCINDS: ALL PREVIOUS	AMENDS: ALL PREVIOUS	

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines for properly using PBP-issued and personally-owned cellular phones.

2.0 POLICY

2.1 It is the policy of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police that the use of cellular phones is approved in the course of police operations to enhance departmental communication. Officers may use cellular phones to conduct official business when radio or landline phones are inappropriate, unavailable, or inadequate to meet communication needs and when the cellular phone is used per this policy.

2.2 Personal communication devices or other non-PBP devices shall not be utilized to record or disclose any Bureau information, including photographs, video, audio, or the recording or transmittal of any information or material obtained or made accessible as a result of employment or appointment with the Bureau, without the expressed authorization of the Chief of Police or their authorized designee.

2.3 Members shall not surreptitiously record another Bureau member through any means without a court order unless lawfully authorized by the Chief of Police or their authorized designee.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 **Disruptive activity:** Any time that cellular phone operations would be considered disruptive, such as in meetings, training sessions, court, or public places when their use would reasonably be deemed inappropriate and intrusive.

3.2 **Distraction:** Any time the use of a cellular phone would unnecessarily or unreasonably divert the attention of an officer from official duties and/or cause a potentially hazardous situation.

3.3 **Cellular phone:** Any interactive wireless communication device that sends and receives voice, text, or internet data/electronic mail messages. Where applicable, this policy applies to both City-owned and personally-owned cellular phones.

4.0 PROCEDURES – CITY OF PITTSBURGH OWNED OR PERSONALLY OWNED CELLULAR PHONES

4.1 PBP-issued cellular phones are authorized on-duty for official police business or may be used in off-duty capacities to conduct police-related business. Exceptions may be made for family situations or personal matters that require attention and where alternative forms of communication are not suitable or readily available.

4.2 Any financial charges incurred while using a PBP-issued cellular phone shall be limited and linked to the necessity to use cellular phones when other alternatives are not available or inappropriate.

4.3 Random and periodic audits of PBP-issued cellular phones may be made at the discretion of the Chief of Police or their designee.

4.4 PBP-issued cellular phones should not be used for car-to-car communication when other means are available and appropriate.

4.5 Cellular phones are an augmentation to the Bureau's communication system, not a substitute for radio communication designated for transmission through the department's Emergency Operation Center (EOC). Approved cellular telephone usage includes but is not limited to the following types of communications:

- Conveyance of sensitive or restricted information
- Undercover operations
- Lengthy communication with supervisors or headquarters personnel
- Communication beyond normal radio range
- Incidents in which direct contact with an officer and the public is critical
- Incidents in which the use of a landline telephone would be appropriate but where one is not available
- The use of applications designated for use by the Bureau of Police (e.g., InTime, Axon View, or RollKal, etc.)

4.5.1 Members are prohibited from accessing JNET using any personally owned device.

4.6 PBP vehicles should not be operated while using cellular phones unless emergency circumstances exist and other means of communication are not available or suitable. When possible, members should pull off the highway in a safe location when using cellular phones unless hands-free operational devices are authorized and available.

4.6.1 Members may use the cellular phone's GPS function to assist in responding to calls for service and other Bureau-related activity, provided the police vehicle is not in motion while the member is manipulating the phone.

4.7 Use of personal cellular phones, either in voice or data transmission while on duty, should be restricted to essential communications and limited in length. Engagement in multiple or extended conversations unrelated to police business or similar use that interferes with the performance of duty is prohibited.

4.8 In accordance with the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, Title 75 § 3316(a), cellular phones may not be used to read, write, or send text messages, instant messages, electronic mail, or other written communication composed or received on the cellular phones while driving a motor vehicle.

4.9 The use of personal cellular phones is governed by the same safety restrictions as PBP-issued cellular telephones.

4.10 Personal or PBP-issued cellular phones should not be used if they may be disruptive to others. Photo messaging capabilities are prohibited unless they can be clearly linked to the conduct of official police business.

4.11 Cellular phone numbers should not normally be provided to members of the public. Exceptions may be made when immediate future contact between an officer and a victim, witness, or other person may be critical.

4.12 Personnel may only provide the cellular phone number of members of the Bureau of Police to a member of the public with the cell phone user's authorization.

5.0 PROCEDURES: PBP-ISSUED CELLULAR PHONES AND LETHALITY ASSESSMENT

5.1 All Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Zones will be issued a PBP-owned cellular telephone and shall comply with *General Order # 40.12.2 - "MARYLAND LETHALITY ASSESSMENT,"* specifically Section 11, which pertains to the use of PBP-issued cellular phones.

5.2 All telephone calls to the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, required as dictated by *General Order # 40.12.2 - "MARYLAND LETHALITY ASSESSMENT,"* shall only be made from a PBP-owned telephone, either landline or cellular. Officers shall not use the victim's landline or cellular phone, nor shall the officer use their personal cellular telephone.

5.3 If the Domestic Violence Lethality Screen indicates that the victim is in a high-danger situation (i.e., they "screens in"), an officer will provide the victim with a PBP-issued cellular phone.

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5.4 Officers can also take the victim to a duty location to use a landline telephone owned and operated by the City of Pittsburgh.

6.0 PROCEDURES – PBP-ISSUED CELLULAR PHONE USAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

6.1 In order to use a PBP-issued cell phone while traveling on official business, members will notify both the Chief of Police, their designee, and the Department of Innovation and Performance.

6.6 If the City-owned cellular phone is lost or stolen, the officer will notify the Department of Innovation and Performance immediately.

Approved By:



Larry Sciroto
Chief of Police