FAQ’s
ELECTRONIC DEVICE AND SERVICE POLICY
Purdue University Revised: 11/2016

Q: What is Purdue's Electronic Device and Service Policy?
A: The Electronic Device and Service Policy establishes technology allowance payments as the primary method to reimburse staff who use mobile devices and services used for business. Payments offset the cost of personally owned electronic devices and service for documented business needs.

Q: What communication devices are covered by the policy?
A: The policy and procedures apply to personally owned mobile devices that are used for both University and personal business.

Q: Does everyone get compensation for a personally owned electronic device?
A: No. Employees receive compensation only if their specific job duties require they carry a mobile device, and then only in an amount necessary to cover anticipated business use.

Q: Why do some non-exempt employees receive allowances and I am exempt do not?
A: Technology allowances are based on job duties and not by position. If you feel your duties warrant a technology allowance, you will need approval from your supervisor.

Q: Are Temp, Grad staff or Student employees eligible for technology allowances?
A: No, only permanent regular staff are eligible for allowances.

Q: What is a “Business Purpose?
A: University business purpose for having an electronic device is one where:
   • The employee is responsible in emergency matters where they must be available 100 percent of the identified business period.
   • The employee does not have access to a landline or other communication device when doing a substantial portion of his or her job (defined as 75 percent of the identified business period).
   • The use of other, less-expensive communication devices does not serve as a viable alternative to the business purpose.
   • The employee’s job effectiveness will show a significant increase through the use of a mobile device.
   • A group of employees has the need for group or shared devices for purposes such as rotating on-call contact.

Q: What are the employee and supervisor responsibilities for reporting business use of personal devices by non-exempt staff during non-working hours?
A: Employees may perform job duties using a variety of electronic communications depending on the nature of the work and responsibilities involved. Some of the required communication mediums might include smartphones, computers and tablets. As with other types of unauthorized work, all time spent by non-exempt employees using electronic communications for work purposes will be considered hours worked, is compensable and will count toward overtime eligibility as required by law. See University policy Wage Administration Policies for Clerical/Service Staff and Operations/Technical Assistants (VI.C.2). To avoid incurring unnecessary expenses, electronic communications should not be used outside of regularly scheduled work hours unless required by management. This includes all types of work-related communication.

Some key points to remember:
• Non-Exempt employees should not check for, read, send or respond to work-related emails outside of their normal work schedule, unless specifically authorized based on their job duties, or directed to do so by management.
• Non-Exempt employees using electronic communications for work-related correspondence during unauthorized times may be subject to discipline for violating this policy.

**Q: What are the security requirements for personally owned devices?**
**A:** When using a personal electronic device for Purdue University official business, users are reminded that they are subject to all University policies. In particular, users should be mindful of the Security Requirements for Handling Information as well as other policies and procedures regarding the secure use and transmission of University data. See the IT Policies and Best Practices & Mobile Devices Security.

**Q: How is the technology allowance amount determined?**
**A:** Departments are responsible for determining and approving the appropriate compensation amount for an employee based on the responsibilities of the employee’s position. Guidelines are given for allowance amounts as well as the option of exception rates with appropriate approval.

**Q: What if my actual business usage exceeds the amount of compensation that I receive?**
**A:** The monthly compensation amount is based on estimated average monthly usage. The amount may be adjusted with department approval (and comptroller approval when applicable) based on actual personal documentation submitted by the employee. Documentation must demonstrate increased usage over multiple months. Additional charges for business usage while traveling may be reimbursed as part of the existing University’s travel allowance process. See the Reimbursable Miscellaneous trip Expenses page of the Travel Office website for details.

**Q: I am planning to travel internationally, how can I be reimbursed for my usage while out of the country?**
**A:** Employees who travel internationally should be reimbursed for business usage upon their return and at the discretion of the department. Employees should be required to present proof of international business usage and cost for allowance. International plans vary by carrier and can be added to employee plans as needed for international travel. For staff who are frequently in international travel status or make frequent international calls from on-campus, monthly international plans may be more cost effective and may be considered for a monthly allowance at the discretion of the department. These plans should be evaluated as business need deems necessary.

**Q: How will I receive compensation for my electronic device and service?**
**A:** Employees approved by their department for a technology allowance will receive payment as a post-tax fringe benefit to their pay. Allowance will begin after an Electronic Device and Services Technology Allowance Agreement is submitted, approved and processed.

**Q: When are the allowances reviewed?**
**A:** A list of employees receiving technology allowances will be sent to departments at least annually for review. No action will be needed unless an allowance needs to be discontinued or changed. Once approved, allowances will continue to be paid until a request to discontinue is received by the department; a request to transfer is received by the transferring department, or the employee is no longer employed by Purdue.

**Q: Is the compensation I receive for my technology allowance taxable?**
**A:** No. The allowance is not considered taxable compensation.
Q: Do I get retirement contributions or other benefits on my technology allowance?
A: No. The compensation is not part of the employee’s base salary.

Q: Can electronic devices and services be charged to sponsored research accounts?
A: General purpose computing devices are an allowable direct cost if the acquisition cost is less than $5,000 if it is:
  • Essential for the purpose of carrying out a specific aim of the funded project
  • It is above and beyond what is normally provided by the department for academic use, and
  • It is charged to the grant in some reasonable projection related to how much it is used for the funded project.

Please refer to the Quick Reference Sheet when purchasing computing devices.

Costs for providing the general computing environment (such as data networking costs of the Purdue Data Network) are not identifiable with a particular project and are therefore allowable indirect costs.

With the implementation of 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance), effective 12/26/14, the guidance on computing devices was clarified. This guidance is summarized on the SPS website at the following link: http://www.purdue.edu/business/sps/UG/changes/comp_device.html.


Q: Will I be reimbursed if I need a new electronic device?
A: If the employee’s job duties require an electronic device, the employee’s department may allow reimbursement of $120. Reimbursements for new equipment is given once every 24 months.

Q: May employees purchase personal phones or accessories from IT Telecommunications?
A: No. IT Telecommunications does not provide personal sales. University employees are eligible for discounts from service providers through the Purdue Employee Discount Program.

Q: Will IT Telecommunications offer a service to assist in equipment repairs or billing questions under the allowance method?
A: No. The vendor and employee are responsible for handling repairs and billing questions. However, IT staff will continue to provide technical support with same level of service as employees have today to provide functionality for their business need.

Q: What happens to technology allowance payments if the employee is put on unpaid leave?
A: Payments while employees are on leave are at the discretion of the department.

Q: Will the University publish my personal cell phone number?
A: Departments may communicate personal cell phone numbers consistent with employees’ required business use for their specific job duties; for example, to perform on call responsibilities.

Q: What is Purdue’s policy on the use of mobile devices while driving?
A: Use of mobile devices while driving any vehicle is strongly discouraged. Drivers should pull off the road to a safe location while using.

Q: Do I need to submit a Technology Allowance Agreement Form when someone transfers, or is separated?
A: Yes, when an employee transfers to a new position, a termination will need to be submitted to terminate the agreement with the previous position and a new request will need to be submitted by the new department and authorized with the appropriate changes including cost distribution. (If the employee is transferring to a position within the same department and there is no change in amount or cost distribution, no new form is needed.)

Q: What do I need to do if the Account Distribution information is incorrect?
A: Complete a Cost Override with necessary changes and send to Payroll & Tax Services/FREH.