

Category: 400 Facilities/Equipment

Number: 421

Subject: TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT/SERVICES POLICY

1. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish administrative regulations which standardize the procedures utilized by employees in the acquisition and use of County owned, rented or leased technology and communication equipment/services in the conduct of official County business.
2. **AUTHORITY:** St. Clair County Board of Commissioners. Administrative policies shall be subject to revision or termination by the Board of Commissioners at its discretion and enforcement by the Administrator/Controller, or designee.
3. **APPLICATION:** The regulations and procedures outlined in this policy statement are to apply to all County owned, rented and leased technology and communication equipment/services.
4. **RESPONSIBILITY:** The authority to assign equipment and establish service, authorize use of on County business and the administration of this policy is the responsibility of the Administrator/Controller or designee. Assignment shall be made only upon the approval of the appropriate department head and Administrator/Controller or designee, in accordance with this policy.
5. **DEFINITION(S):**

Technology and Communication Equipment and Devices include, but are not limited to, cellular telephones, pagers, pda, GPS units, blackberries, two-way radios, laptops, computers, printers, cameras, modem cards and any associated accessories.

Technology and Communication Services include, but are not limited to, internet services, ISDN, T-1, Fractional T-1, T-3, 64K lines, wireless, satellite, modem cards, etc.

6. POLICY:

6.1 General Statement

- 6.1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with efficient, cost-effective communication equipment and services within the budgetary parameters established by the County Board of Commissioners.
- 6.1.2 The acquisition of technology and communication equipment/service shall be limited to those instances in which there is a demonstrated need for such equipment to perform essential County business or to improve safety,

increase productivity, increase service to the public or in situations in which necessary communications cannot be provided by any other means.

- 6.1.3 The use of a County owned, rented or leased technology and communication equipment/service by an employee will be for official County business only, and in compliance with the rules and regulations detailed in this and any other policies adopted by the County Board of Commissioners.
 - 6.1.4 The County will only acquire the minimal features necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the employees' position as determined by the Administrator/Controller or designee.
 - 6.1.5 The employee or department head is not authorized to make any acquisitions of new equipment or upgrades to existing technology and communication equipment or service without authorization from Administrator/Controller and/or the Board of Commissioners.
 - 6.1.6 An employee will be limited to one technology and communication device per type of equipment (i.e. one cell phone per employee, one laptop per employee, etc.).
 - 6.1.7 The department head will be responsible for reviewing and verifying the assignment status of technology and communication equipment to their staff at least once annually in accordance with this policy. The department head and/or Administrator/Controller shall have the authority to require an employee to periodically present equipment for inspection.
 - 6.1.8 All County supplied technology and communication equipment and/or services shall remain the property of the County. The Administrator/Controller may revoke the use of the equipment or service at any time for any reason.
 - 6.1.9 This policy is a supplement to the existing Purchasing Policy (242) and the Technology policy as outlined in the Employee Handbook.
 - 6.1.10 The County may activate a Location-Based Service on any and all county-owned communication device or equipment and is authorized to use any such service as determined appropriate by Administrator/Controller.
- 6.2 Acquisition of County-Owned, Rented or Leased Communication Equipment/Service
- 6.2.1 All cell phones, pagers, pda, two-way radios, blackberries or similar devices, and subscriber-based aircards shall be provided and/or coordinated through the Purchasing Department. All departments must

follow all procedures promulgated by the Administrator/Controller, Information Technology Department and/or the Purchasing Division in the acquisition of communication equipment and services.

6.2.2 Any other communication devices and/or service not outlined in 6.2.1 shall be provided and/or coordinated through the Information Technology Department. All departments must follow the procedures promulgated by the Administrator/Controller, Information Technology and/or Purchasing Divisions in the acquisition of communication equipment and services.

6.2.3 Equipment/Service Acquisition

6.2.3.1 Before purchasing, renting or leasing equipment and/or services, each department will:

6.2.3.1.1 Obtain budgetary approval for the proposed equipment expenditure.

6.2.3.1.2 Coordinate the acquisition of cell phones, pagers, pda, two-way radios, blackberries or similar devices, and subscriber-based aircards through the Purchasing Department.

6.2.3.1.3 Coordinate the acquisition of all other communication devices not outlined in section 6.2.3.1.2 through the Information Technology Department.

6.2.3.1.4 Be advised that vendor selection and equipment purchases shall be made in accordance with the County Purchasing Policy and procedures manual.

6.2.3.2 The cost incurred for the operation of communication equipment and/or services shall be charged to the appropriate department as determined by the Administrator/Controller. No purchases shall be made unless there are available funds within the subjects department's budget or unless budgetary approval is obtained.

6.3 Assignment of County-Owned, Rented or Leased Communication Equipment or Service

6.3.1 All employees who have access to County owned, rented or leased communication equipment or service shall be so identified as meeting the criteria established for equipment assignment as determined by the Administrator/Controller. The authority to assign equipment rests with the

Administrator/Controller or designee, in compliance with this policy. Any employee that meets the requirement of having a communication device shall be assigned the standard equipment/service as determined by the established County contract. If the County so chooses to allow devices other than the standard, it shall be at the employees' expense. Should a change in the demands of a particular position or department necessitate a change in assignment status, a request shall be considered, and if warranted, be approved by the department head and the Administrator/Controller. Equipment will be assigned on the basis of functional requirements of the employee's position and should not be construed as being a substitute for other compensation or as a fringe benefit. Communication equipment is assigned and certain privileges in their use are granted only as a means of providing effective management of County functions. County communication equipment or service shall be used for County business only. The Administrator/Controller, or designee, shall be responsible for the monitoring and auditing for any misuse or abuse. Assignment criteria are established as follows:

6.3.1.1 Assignment With Take Home Privileges

6.3.1.1.1 Equipment will be assigned under this classification in order to provide an employee with access to a County owned, rented or leased communication equipment for those employees whose duties and responsibilities require cellular telephones and/or other communication equipment be assigned which includes permanent take home privileges.

6.3.1.1.2 Criteria for assignment and use. Communication equipment will be assigned to a position on this basis when:

6.3.1.1.2.1 The responsibilities of that position require the routine and regular conduct of County business before or after normal working hours.

6.3.1.1.2.2 Emergency use, on a routine or regular basis will be required before or after normal working hours.

6.3.1.1.2.3 The responsibilities of the position are such that it is more cost effective for the County to assign communication equipment than to

have the employee respond in person.

- 6.3.1.1.2.4 A demonstrated security risk warrants such assignment to protect County employees and/or property.

6.3.1.2 Limited Use Assignment

6.3.1.2.1 Equipment assigned under this classification shall be assigned to departments to provide direct access to County owned, rented or leased equipment to those employees whose positions require routine utilization of a cellular telephone and/or other equipment during normal working hours. Take home privileges are not permitted under normal circumstances under limited use assignment.

6.3.1.2.2 Criteria for assignment and use. Under this classification, equipment will be assigned to a department when:

- 6.3.1.2.2.1 The nature of the communication equipment use is routine, predetermined and predictable.

6.3.1.3 On Call/Emergency Assignment

6.3.1.3.1 Equipment may be assigned under this classification to those employees who are assigned "on call" duty beyond normal working hours in order to ensure a quick response to emergency or after-hour calls for service.

6.3.1.3.2 Criteria for assignment and use. Under this classification, equipment will be provided through the department to those employees who periodically are assigned "on call" duty by their Department Head when:

- 6.3.1.3.2.1 A demonstrated need for a communication equipment to ensure a quick response to an emergency or after-hour call has been verified and

approved by the Department Head and Administrator/Controller.

6.3.1.3.2.2 Employee is designated to be "on call" for a specific function or purpose.

6.3.1.3.3 Employees meeting this criteria of "on-call" will be allowed to take the communication equipment to and from work for the duration of the time that they are "on-call".

6.3.1.3.4 Each County department will maintain only one communication device for on-call purposes. If the department requires more than one "on-call" communication device, prior approval is required of the Administrator/Controller.

6.4 Service and Maintenance of County-Owned, Rented or Leased Communication Equipment

6.4.1 Repairs

6.4.1.1 All communication equipment purchased, rented or leased by the County will be repaired according to the Information Technology Procedures.

6.4.2 Replacement

6.4.2.1 Replacement of any communication equipment and/or service resulting from damage, loss or theft shall be coordinated through the Purchasing Division or Information Technology Department, as outlined in sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2, respectively.

6.4.2.2 County will replace communication equipment, resulting from damage, loss or theft during the normal course of the job duties. If the damage, loss or theft of the equipment is caused by any misuse or negligence of the employee, the employee may be responsible for repair or replace of said equipment. The Administrator/Controller shall have the responsibility for determining misuse or neglect.

6.4.2.3 An employee that does not report any theft or loss of equipment within 72 hours will be responsible for any costs incurred as a result of the theft or loss unless extenuating

circumstances are demonstrated as determined by the Administrator/Controller.

6.4.2.4 Theft of any communication equipment shall be reported as soon as possible to the Risk Management Coordinator in the Administrator/Controller's Office.

6.4.3 Return/Transfer of Equipment

6.4.3.1 When an employee is on extended leave of absence, placed on disciplinary leave, terminates employment, transfers to another department, or no longer requires use of such equipment, it is the responsibility of the department head to retrieve communication equipment assigned to that employee. The department head shall return all equipment to the Purchasing Division or Information Technology Department, as outlined in sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 respectively, and advise of any disconnections for communication services.

6.4.3.2 When an employee exits County employment, the Human Resources department will verify during the formal exit interview process that all communication equipment has been collected from the former employee prior to distribution of his/her final payroll check.

6.4.4 Theft, Loss, or Damage

6.4.4.1 Departments are required to report any theft or loss of communication equipment to the Purchasing Division or Information Technology Department, as outlined in sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 respectively, immediately (or no later than 72 hours after receipt of the information or evidence) so that service can be deactivated.

6.4.4.2 An employee may be required to file a police report. The employee shall contact the Risk Management Coordinator in the Administrator/Controller's Office as soon as possible to make that determination.

6.4.4.3 In the event lost or stolen equipment is due to the employee's negligence, the employee may be required to reimburse the County for the market value of the equipment and/or the employee shall be subject to discipline, up to and including employment termination.

- 6.5 General Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Communication Equipment/Services Use by County Employees
 - 6.5.1 The following rules and regulations are established as a supplement to all rules and regulations contained in this and other administrative and personnel policies. The rules and regulations contained herein apply to all County employees who are authorized to use a County owned, rented or leased communication equipment/service.
 - 6.5.2 Personal Use of County Equipment/Services
 - 6.5.2.1 County communication equipment or service shall be used for County business only. The Administrator/Controller, or designee, shall be responsible for the monitoring for any misuse or abuse.
 - 6.5.2.2 Any employee using equipment for personal business may be required to reimburse the County for the cost of using the equipment and/or service. An employee shall be subject to discipline, up to and including employment termination.
 - 6.5.3 County Communication Equipment or Service Use - The Employee Must:
 - 6.5.3.1 Ensure that the County communication equipment is in proper operating condition at all times. Any malfunctions should be reported immediately to the department head and the Information Technology Department.
 - 6.5.3.2 Obey all applicable laws and ordinances while operating County owned equipment.
 - 6.5.3.3 Communication equipment shall be used responsibly while operating a motorized vehicle.
 - 6.5.4 Specific Practices Prohibited
 - 6.5.4.1 The operation of equipment for any illegal act.
 - 6.5.4.2 The operation of equipment that results in the violation of any applicable federal, state or local law, rules or ordinances.
 - 6.5.4.3 The operation of any equipment in such a manner that could result in property or bodily damage either to the County or the public due to careless or negligent operation on the part of the employee.

6.5.4.4 Downloading of ring tones, screen savers, wallpaper, software or any other special feature outside the scope of the basic County contract.

6.6 Monitoring Responsibilities

6.6.1 The responsibility for monitoring the compliance of this Administrative Policy has been assigned to the Administrator/Controller, or designee.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

7.1 Exceptions: Any exceptions or unusual circumstances not provided for in this policy must have specific prior approval from the Administrator/Controller or, if necessary, the Board of Commissioners.

8. ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER & CORPORATION COUNSEL REVIEW: The Administrator/Controller has determined that this policy, as submitted to the Board of Commissioners, contains the necessary substance in order to carry out the purpose of the policy. Legal Counsel has determined that this policy, as submitted, contains content that appears to be legal activities of the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners.

Approved as to Substance:
Shaun S. Groden
Administrator/Controller

Approved as to Legal Content:
Gary A. Fletcher
Corporation Counsel

ADOPTED: May 17, 2006
AMENDMENT DATED: March 21, 2007
AMENDMENT DATED: August 19, 2009