

# General Order

## Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

September 25, 2020

NO.

200-14

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 200-14, dated March 24, 2015

**SUBJECT: TELEPHONE REGULATIONS**

### POLICY

The City of Houston's long-distance telephone service and cellular telephones are only for official use to assist employees in performing their assigned duties.

This General Order applies to all employees.

#### **1 NETWORK BASED LONG-DISTANCE CALLS**

Employees shall use City of Houston long-distance service only to conduct official City business. The misuse of the City of Houston's long-distance telephone service shall be reported and investigated in accordance with General Order 400-18, **Responsibility for City Property**.

#### **2 NON-NETWORK LONG-DISTANCE CALLS**

Employees may seek reimbursement for long-distance charges, but only when the communication was necessary to conduct official City business and one of the following circumstances existed:

- a. The employee was outside the City network local access zone.
- b. The officer was on an undercover police investigation and use of the City provided long distance service would have compromised the investigation.

#### **3 COLLECT CALLS**

With the exception of the Command Center, no employee shall accept collect calls. If a person attempts to place a collect call to any department telephone, the employee receiving the call shall do one of the following in the order listed:

- a. Ask the operator to have the caller use a department toll free number.
- b. Ask the operator to obtain a telephone number from the caller so the call may be returned.
- c. Ask the operator to have the caller place the collect call to the Command Center.

#### 4 DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

Directory assistance calls from office telephones are not allowed unless such calls pertain to City business. All other normal means of obtaining a number shall be used before using directory assistance.

#### 5 CELLULAR TELEPHONES

When using City-issued cellular telephones, employees shall be governed by the following:

- a. Standard or conventional telephones are to be used when possible.
- b. All calls (made or received) shall be as brief as possible.
- c. Usage shall be for conducting City business only.
- d. Cellular telephones shall not be “jail-broken”, “rooted”, or modified in any way without prior written approval from the Office of Technology Services.
- e. Criminal Justice Information (CJI) and Police Department operational data shall not be stored in “cloud” based storage resources accessed by cellular telephones (e.g., DropBox, Apple iCloud, Amazon Cloud Drive, Google Drive) without prior written approval from the Office of Technology Services. Additionally, when storing any Police Department data, such use shall be limited to an immediate need only.
- f. Employees shall not install or attempt to install software applications (“apps”) on their cellular telephone from any source other than application stores approved by the Office of Technology Services.
- g. Employees shall be aware that any data, media, text messages, call logs, or applications stored on cellular telephones may be subject to public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act.

#### Acquisition of Cellular Telephones

Any request to acquire a City-issued cellular telephone shall include, but is not limited to, the type of device requested and a justification for the requested device. The request shall be sent via email through the employee’s chain of command: divisional technology coordinator, division commander, assistant chief, and executive assistant chief. If approved, the executive assistant chief’s office shall forward the email request to the Office of Technology Services utilizing [TSC.Technologyservicesrequest@houstonpolice.org](mailto:TSC.Technologyservicesrequest@houstonpolice.org).

Authorized purchases or leases of such devices shall be handled the same as any other acquisition.

#### Inventory

Division commanders shall maintain a complete record of department owned or leased cellular telephones under their commands. Executive Staff members shall maintain a complete record of

department owned or leased cellular telephones under their immediate commands. This record shall include each cellular telephone's:

- a. Serial number
- b. Departmental inventory control number (if it is owned by the City)
- c. Telephone number

Inventoried cellular telephones that are no longer repairable or needed shall be returned to the Office of Technology Services for handling. Cellular telephones that are issued directly to an individual by the Office of Technology Services and that are no longer needed shall be returned to the Office of Technology Services.

### **Loss**

Incidents involving the loss, damage, destruction, misuse, or compromise of any cellular telephone shall be reported and investigated as indicated in General Order 400-18, **Responsibility for City Property**.

## **6 TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

The Command Center shall maintain a current list of the most commonly used department telephone numbers, fax numbers, and toll free numbers.

It is the responsibility of each division commander and each Executive Staff member to inform the Command Center of any telephone number updates.



**Art Acevedo**  
**Chief of Police**