

**ST. MICHAELS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
(SMPD)**

**General Order 17-001 Cellular Phone Use**

**DATE ISSUED:** 11/07/17

**I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the SMPD use of cellular telephones or other wireless communications devices assigned to Department employees.

**II. POLICY:**

It is the responsibility of all members to ensure that all cellular telephones and wireless communications devices are used responsibly, properly, and in adherence with the procedures set forth herein.

**III. OBJECTIVE**

The primary objective of this policy is to increase the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of direct services provided to the public. Issued cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices are intended for official SMPD business and should only be used by Department members.

**IV. Issuance/Appropriate Use**

A. An employee issued a cell phone or other wireless communications device for their use shall:

1. Ensure the proper use, care and maintenance of all devices issued for their use.
2. Review appropriate User Guide materials and/or Instructions for the proper operation and care of the

equipment.

3. Notify the a supervisor and or assistant chief, as soon as practical, regarding any damaged or missing devices in order to deactivate service if appropriate and/or arrange appropriate disposition.

B. Department issued cellular phones may be used while on or off duty, however, personal use will be kept to a minimum.

C. Under no circumstances shall cell phones be utilized for personal matters such that the employee's attention is distracted or their duties compromised. Employees shall not use a department-issued or personal cell phone to by-pass official means of communication.

D. Cell phones shall not be used to call directory assistance except when exigent circumstances make other alternatives unsuitable. The member must be able to justify the expense.

E. Use of call forwarding shall be discouraged due to excessive charges except where the functionality is necessary to the duties being discharged.

F. Long distance cellular calls should be avoided, unless land line calling is not an option, and delay would interfere with the furtherance of official duties.

G. No member shall modify their authorized use plan and/or equipment without prior approval.

H. Installation of games and entertainment applications on to department-issued devices is strictly

prohibited. Any applications enhancing a wireless device in support of agency goals and operations shall be permitted upon prior approval.

I. All Department cell phone records are subject to public disclosure in accordance with provision of the Maryland and Federal Freedom of Information Act requests.

**V. Use of Personal Cell Phones for Official Business**

A. The Department discourages, though does not prohibit, the use of personally owned communications devices, however, personally owned devices must not be a distraction from, or interfere with, the performance of the employee's duties, such as answering a personal call while on a call or performing an assignment.

B. the Department assumes no liability for the loss, damage or charges by an employee utilizing a personal cellular telephone or other wireless communications device while on duty. It's important to remember that personal cellular phone and records may be subject to subpoena if used in the performance of official business.

C. Evidentiary and/or incident related photographs will not be obtained via personal cell phone nor should such items be transmitted either internally or externally.

Anthony T. Smith  
Chief of Police