



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Administrative Instruction  
Section III  
No. 9

**Cell Phone Restrictions While Driving On City Business**

Supersedes: None

Effective Date: July 1, 2008

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Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Instruction is to provide information to employees about procedures they need to follow when driving on city business and using a cell phone. Police and Fire Emergency personnel shall be governed by their own departmental policy. The following policy shall apply to all other city employees. Note that for Parks or Public Works employees, this includes when driving off road, such as on city park trails, but will not apply to public works employees while they are in a direct response to a police or fire emergency (911) situation in progress.

Policy

This Instruction is designed to help insure the safety of our employees, passengers, and the nearby public. Employees must adhere to the established policy guidelines for safe cell phone use when driving on City business.

Employees are urged not to use cell phones while driving on City business, and in no cases shall an employee make a personal cell phone call while driving on City business. Driving is intended to be a mode of transportation between places; a vehicle is not intended to be a mobile office. It is strongly recommended that employees turn their cell phones off while driving and allow voice mail to handle calls, pulling off the road and out of traffic before making cell phone calls or listening to voice mail.

If an employee is driving on behalf of the City, driving must be the employee's top priority. Employees must drive in a responsible manner that ensures the safety of other drivers, pedestrians, passengers and the employee. Employees must obey all traffic signs, signals, and rules, drive within the speed limit, and should avoid unnecessary distractions while driving such as: eating or drinking, looking up information, making notes, reading maps or GPS devices, or changing music disks or tapes.

### Procedures

1. While cell phone use while driving on City business is strongly discouraged, if an employee believes it is necessary to use a cell phone while driving, the employee must do so only under the following circumstances:
  - a. Only when traffic is not congested or dangerous, when visibility is good, and use of the phone would not cause a distraction that would impair the employee's judgment, ability to drive safely, and ability to react to changing traffic conditions quickly.
  - b. In all cases, employees using a cell phone while driving on City business shall use a hands-free device, and shall not hold their cell phone while driving.
  - c. Placing an outgoing call may only be done using voice activation, not by dialing with one's hands.
  - d. Text messaging may not be initiated or read at any time while driving.
2. Employees must suspend cell phone usage altogether when driving during hazardous situations, including high pedestrian traffic, congested traffic or poor weather conditions.
3. Employees must minimize other unnecessary distractions while driving.
4. Employees must keep any necessary phone conversations brief while driving.
5. If there is any doubt about the safety of using a cell phone while driving on City business, it should not be used.

  
Barry M. Nagel  
City Manager

Dated: May 12, 2008

## **Suggestions for Implementing Cell Phone Policy:**

### **Who does the policy cover?**

All employees driving on city business, except Police and Fire safety employees, who have their own rules. Note that in practical terms, this applies to virtually all employees, since virtually all drive on city business at one point or the other. Therefore make sure your supervisors understand the policy, and make sure all employees are briefed on this policy.

### **What constitutes “City business”?**

Besides the obvious (building inspectors, Public Works Crews, engineers in the field), this includes trips to the store to get supplies for work, trips from work to a workshop or training conference, including on weekends or after hours. If an employee would consider the trip part of his or her workday (that is, not breaktime), it is city business. If the employee could ask for mileage reimbursement or use of a City vehicle, it is city business. This does not include commuting to and from the workplace from home.

### **When does it take effect?**

July 1

### **Will the City buy hands free devices for employees?**

Because “employees are urged not to use cell phones while driving on City business”, department heads and department managers should not encourage the use of hands free devices by purchasing them with City funds. The message should be “do not use cell phones while driving”.