

RISD Cell Phone and Mobile Device Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

On a case-by-case basis, and with the approval of their supervisor and appropriate Cabinet member, an employee whose job duties include the frequent need for a cell phone or other device* as determined by the criteria in Section A may receive an allowance for using their personally owned cell phone or device for RISD business purposes.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that RISD is using its resources in an equitable and consistent manner, to provide support to those employees who need regular access to a cell phone or device to perform their normal job responsibilities, and, if approved for an allowance, to allow employees the flexibility to choose devices and plans that best fit their personal preferences.

* Devices include but are not limited to cell phones, tablets, and pagers

Transition Period

As of October 1, 2019, RISD will no longer manage cell phone or mobile device plans or provide cell phones or devices to individual employees.

During the transition to the new policy, RISD will be terminating all existing RISD voice and data plans except for those that are shared by a department. Individual employees approved for an allowance per the procedures below will have the opportunity to transport their RISD mobile phone and phone number to a private plan of their choice.

Any applicable fees associated with terminating RISD accounts will be paid by RISD upon submission of a receipt showing the fees paid. RISD will not reimburse employees for early termination fees if employees decide, for whatever reason, to cancel any existing personal accounts.

Employees will be allowed to keep the phone or device associated with their terminated RISD account, regardless of whether they qualify for an allowance.

Procedures

A. Allowance Criteria and Approval Process

If a RISD employee's job duties include the frequent need for a cell phone or device, an allowance for using their personal cell phone or device may be approved if at least one of the following criteria is met:

- Required to be on-call (24/7) to respond to urgent matters such as addressing student or campus safety issues; emergency campus, facilities, or IT related issues; crisis management; or answering media or public relations calls
- Frequent travel for RISD recruiting, admission, or development meetings or events (defined as 30 or more days per year)
- Roaming or mobile employees whose job requires routine field work away from a desk or office for a considerable period each work day and who need to respond to real-time communications and requests or to give directions or technical support
- Role requires employee to respond to RISD matters on a regular basis outside of normal work hours (employee and supervisor must explain business necessity)

Final determination of eligibility for an allowance will be recommended by the department and will be made at the sole discretion of the SVP for Finance and Administration or Provost.

To request such an allowance, the supervisors must complete and submit the [Cell phone and mobile device request form](#). After approval by the supervisor and appropriate Cabinet member, the SVP for Finance and Administration or Provost will review. If approved, the completed Cell Phone Allowance Request form should be submitted to the Controller's Office for processing. Employees receiving an allowance will be asked to sign a form that states they agree to terms and conditions of their responsibilities in exchange for receiving the allowance.

B. Choosing a Plan and Phone or Other Device

If approved for an allowance, employees will be responsible for choosing their own voice or data plan as well as their carrier. Because the employee is now personally responsible for the account, the employee may use the account for both business and personal purposes. The employee may also, at his or her own expense, add extra services or equipment features, as desired. **Recipients of this allowance must notify RISD of the cell phone number and must continue to maintain cell phone or device operability while receiving an allowance.**

Employees will also be responsible for choosing their own phone or device if they do not already have a RISD-purchased cell phone. Employees approved for an allowance who do not have a current RISD-owned phone will receive a one-time reimbursement for the purchase of a phone or device as described in section (C). Employees who already have a RISD-purchased cell phone are not eligible for an equipment allowance. Because the employee is now personally responsible for the equipment, any replacement for loss or damage will be at the expense of the employee.

Use of the phone or device in any manner contrary to local, state, or federal laws or in violation of RISD Policies will constitute misuse and will result in immediate termination of the allowance and could result in disciplinary action.

After the transition period, RISD will not accept any responsibility for handling or any liability for claims, charges, or disputes between the service or equipment provider and employee.

C. Allowance Amount

The allowance provided is intended to subsidize the employee's cost of using their personal phone for business-related reasons. The allowance amount is:

Cell Phones or Data Service with Voice

Monthly Payment	One-Time Allowance Towards Phone or Device*
Up to \$60	Up to \$300

**The one-time phone or device allowance is based on a two-year term contract and is provided at time of new contract (documentation required). Lost or broken phones or devices will be the responsibility of the employee after initial purchase.*

D. Payment of Monthly Allowance

RISD will pay only the approved allowance amount even if actual monthly costs exceed the allowance, recognizing that some use may be personal.

Allowances will be paid as part of an eligible employee's paycheck and this monthly cost will be charged against the employee's respective department operating budget. The monthly allowance is not deemed to be taxable income; therefore, RISD will not withhold taxes.

This allowance does not constitute an increase to base pay and will not be included in the calculation of percentage increases to base pay due to annual raises or job upgrades, or in the calculation of any RISD benefits.

Charges to the RISD Purchasing Card or departmental accounts will no longer be allowed for monthly cell phone or device fees or for related equipment purchases.

E. Annual Review

Supervisors are responsible for an annual review of employee business-related cell-phone and device use, to determine if existing allowances should be continued, changed, or discontinued.

In addition, if an employee transfers, resigns, is terminated, or is otherwise no longer eligible for the allowance, the employee's supervisor must notify Human Resources to terminate the allowance upon the relevant date.

F. Support for Cell Phones or Devices

Support for cell phones and devices will be provided by the carrier. ITS may provide consultation on the type of equipment to purchase, especially as it relates to devices that enable e-mail and calendar support.

G. Fees for Contract Changes or Cancellations

If a RISD or departmental decision results in the need to end or change the cell phone or device contract, RISD will bear the cost of any reasonable fees associated with that change or cancellation — for example, the employee's supervisor has changed the employee's duties and the cell phone is no longer needed for business purposes. If the employee does not want to retain the current contract by converting it to a personal account, change or cancellation fees will be reimbursed by the department.

If prior to the end of the cell phone contract, a personal decision by the employee or employee misconduct or misuse of the phone results in the need to end or change the cell phone or device contract, the employee will bear the cost of any fees associated with that change or cancellation.

H. Reimbursement for International Travel

There may be occasions for RISD employees to travel internationally while maintaining cell service for RISD business purposes. In such cases, it is the employee's responsibility to obtain a reasonable, appropriate international plan through their carrier. Employees may submit a request for reimbursement with a receipt showing international charges to the Controller's Office.

I. Department Phones/Mobile Devices

Certain departments may have special needs that justify departmental ownership of cell phones/mobile devices. The services for these devices are paid directly by the department when the department and responsible cabinet member as well as the SVP for Finance and Administration or Provost determines there is a bona fide business purpose for the cell phone or mobile device.

J. Cell Phone Usage while Driving

Use of a cell phone while operating a vehicle is illegal in Rhode Island as well as many other states and should be avoided as a general practice even if features such as headsets or voice activation are in use. If the driver must use a cell phone while driving on RISD business, or while driving a RISD-owned vehicle, he or she should stop safely and then make or take the call. There is increasing evidence that the dangers associated with cell phone use outweigh those of other distractions. Safety experts also acknowledge that the hazard posed by cell phone conversations is not eliminated, and may even be increased, by the use of hands-free sets.

K. Security and Access to Business Data

RISD may require users of cell phones and other personal devices who wish to connect to RISD systems to implement certain security tools and measures to protect RISD's systems and data, and RISD may need to access RISD data and related metadata on such personal devices in certain circumstances for legal or business reasons. Users will be expected to cooperate with these requirements.