



RISD Cell Phone and Mobile Device Policy Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is RISD changing its practice in this area?

In an effort to keep cost increases to students and their families at a minimum level, maintain strong financial results, continue to be competitive in our compensation goals, and invest in RISD's future as described in the strategic plan, RISD is introducing new revenue generation and expense reduction strategies beginning in FY20. The mobile device policy is one of 17 strategies being implemented in FY20, following extensive review and recommendation by a cross-campus Budget Advisory Group. (Please see <https://info.risd.edu/budget-office/> for more information.) It also is consistent with the current trend at other higher education institutions.

2. What is the process for receiving a stipend?

Employees should work with their supervisor to review the criteria for receiving a stipend, and, if the supervisor agrees, a form will be submitted by the supervisor to the appropriate cabinet member for approval. Final approval will then be determined by the SVP for Finance and Administration and the Provost; the SVP for Finance and Administration will review for administrative areas and the Provost will review for academic areas. In most cases, employees and supervisors will be notified of the decision within two weeks of submission of the form.

3. Will I be able to keep my cell phone number whether I receive a stipend or not?

Yes. All employees with RISD plans and devices will be required to purchase their own cell phone plan by October 1, 2019. Information Technology Services (ITS) will assist employees and "release" phone numbers to the chosen cell phone providers to enable employees to maintain their existing numbers if desired.

4. Will I be able to keep the device issued to me by RISD if I am not eligible for the stipend?

As part of the transition, employees will be allowed to keep their RISD-purchased devices.

5. Is the stipend subject to tax?

Stipends are defined by the IRS as a fixed sum of money paid periodically for services or to defray expenses. The stipend is not considered as wages, so RISD will not withhold income tax on any stipends paid to employees. However, stipends are generally considered taxable income so RISD employees will have to calculate and pay taxes on stipends received. An employee may be able to claim business use of their devices as a deduction when filing their taxes.

6. What happens if my device is lost or stolen and I am receiving the RISD stipend?

Employees must notify their supervisor as soon as possible about the lost or stolen device and make every attempt to replace the device within a reasonable timeframe. If an employee chooses not to replace the device, the stipend will end.

7. What happens if I am traveling internationally for RISD purposes and incur mobile device expenses associated with that travel?

For approved international travel for RISD purposes, employees can submit documented business expenses for reasonable service plan adjustments for that travel through the business expense reimbursement process in Workday. Employees are also responsible for calling cell provider to add international service.

8. If I am eligible to receive a stipend, what are the minimum device or service requirements to maintain eligibility?

The employee and supervisor should review what is required to perform the employee's duties and purchase a device that meets those requirements.

9. In what circumstances will the stipend be taken away?

If an employee's job responsibilities change such that the employee no longer requires a device, supervisors should notify Human Resources to stop stipend payments. An annual inventory of stipends will be conducted by RISD to confirm eligibility. Other situations involving misuse, fraud, or failure to follow policy may result in removal of the stipend and could result in disciplinary action.

10. What are the options if I do not want to use my personal number for RISD business?

Eligible employees can purchase a separate device for RISD purposes if that is their preference.

11. What are the security standards required for data devices used for RISD purposes?

At a minimum, all devices must have their locking features enabled. Depending on the device, this could be a passcode, password, or biometric such as fingerprint or facial recognition. Depending on the employee role and level of system and information access required, additional security mechanisms will be required.

12. Will I receive support from ITS for issues with my device?

RISD ITS will not service devices but will assist with security and connectivity issues as well as answer general questions about minimum device standards.

13. What support will RISD provide to employees during the transition?

RISD ITS will work individually with employees to port their existing numbers if requested and work with the carriers and employees to transition their devices to personal plans.

14. Will RISD be monitoring my use of the device?

RISD will not routinely be monitoring use of the device; however, RISD may need to access usage and other data related to RISD business, such as when the information is relevant to a pending lawsuit or internal process or in cases of suspected or actual data/security breaches, fraud, or other employee misconduct. Employees will be expected to cooperate with any such requests for RISD-related data, regardless of whether they are receiving a stipend.

15. The \$60 monthly stipend does not cover the full cost of my plan; can the stipend exceed \$60?

The stipend is not intended to cover the full cost of plans. It is intended to support the business use of the device.