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|  | Department of Public Safety | |
| | Standard Operating Guidelines | |
| | Subject: | Cell Phone Usage |
| | Section: | Administration |
| | Guideline Number: | 218 |
| | Effective Date: | January 26, 2009 |
| | Revised Date: | October 1, 2024 |
| Signature of Approval: | Charles R. Pruitt Director of Public Safety  | |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOG is to outline the standards for use of cellular phones to ensure the safety of the EMS/Fire personnel and the citizens traveling the roadways, and to keep a professional demeanor while on duty.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the Department.

CONTENT

- On duty personnel shall have their personal cell phone on vibrate or the classic telephone ringtone during work hours.
- Cell phone use including text messaging will not be permitted while operating an emergency vehicle and/or any county owned vehicles in emergency mode (code 1).
 - Personnel driving in the non-emergency mode (code 2) and with no patient on board may answer the phone to tell the caller they are unavailable and will return their call at a later time.
- Personnel shall not engage themselves in personal cell phone conversation or text messaging while engaged in patient care, patient transport, and/or on the scene of any emergency call unless engaging in official departmental business such as contacting a supervisor or the hospital for advice.
 - While returning from the hospital, the passenger will be permitted to use their personal cell phones.
 - Should any personnel choose to use their personal cell phone to contact the receiving facility with patient information; this will be a permitted time to use the cell phone in the presence of a patient.
- No Bluetooth or wired/wireless headset shall be worn during work hours.
- Bluetooth or wireless equipment permanently installed in a vehicle for hands free operation of a cell phone may be used.
- Department issued cell phones may be set to a classic telephone ringtone during working hours for those positions which are required to carry such phone as a part of their assigned duties.
- Should any volunteer agency have in writing a more restrictive operating apparatus policy and/or cell phone use policy, personnel assigned to that station shall honor the volunteer policy(s).

- Employees are forbidden to use any device to record or capture sound, images or video while in the performance of official duty unless specifically directed to do so by the Director or his designee.
- Employees shall limit personal business while on duty.

Department Issued Cell Phones

- Certain positions are issued department cell phones for use in administrative and supervisory duties. The following rules pertain to those positions that are assigned cell phones:
 - Department cell phones are required to remain on and in the possession of the person assigned for the entire shift.
 - Department issued cell phones should be set to a classic telephone ringer.
 - The issued phone shall be answered promptly unless unable to do so due to emergency response duties (patient care, firefighting, etc.). If unable to answer due to response duties, you shall return the call as soon as practically possible.
 - If at any time the position is vacant, the phone shall be transferred to another department issued cell phone.
 - When transferring a department issued cell phone, you shall notify the person to whom the phone will be transferred.