

MANAGEMENT MEMO

NUMBER:

MM 06-10

SUBJECT:

MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES (PCDs)

DATE ISSUED:

JULY 20, 2006

EXPIRES:

ONE YEAR FROM ISSUED DATE

REFERENCES:

[Governor's Reorganization Plan 2, Sections 11531\(f\) and 11541\(d\).](#)
Supersedes Management Memo 04-10.

ISSUING AGENCY:

DEPARTMENT OF
TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

It is good business practice to require the efficient and cost-effective deployment and use of Personal Communication Devices (PCDs). This Management Memorandum provides the governing policy for appropriate management of PCDs. PCDs include but are not limited to: cellular phones, pagers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and related items or configurations that permit remote communication and/or messaging.

For purposes of this Management Memorandum, "agency" means agencies, departments, boards, commissions, and other state entities that report to the Executive Branch of government. Non-Executive Branch agencies are encouraged to follow these same practices.

BACKGROUND

Rapidly changing communications requirements coupled with staff turnover calls for regular evaluation of services to help ensure the most efficient and cost effective management of PCDs. Also, vendors update rate plans regularly in this competitive marketplace and agency needs may change.

POLICY

Agencies shall:

- Provide oversight to ensure that PCDs are acquired, assigned, used, and managed in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Develop and implement agency specific policies, procedures and controls related to PCDs.
- Evaluate the assignment and usage of PCDs on a regular basis, and take appropriate actions.
- Review rate plan analyses provided by PCD contractors and make needed plan adjustments.

The following information is important to include when developing agency specific policies.

Acquiring PCDs and Service Plans

Centralized contracts for PCD services allow the State to spread costs for lease and operation of the services over a large base of users, and result in the lowest overall cost to the State.

- Follow the Department of General Services-Procurement Division (DGS-PD) rules and regulations regarding the acquisition of PCDs. If not already done, consider centralizing the management of PCDs in your agency to help maintain standards and policies and adherence to DGS procurement rules and regulations.
- Review the terms and conditions of PCD service plans, and select plans that correspond to actual usage levels.
- Regularly review rates and services to help assure the best choice for the particular requirements of your agency, and for specific programs and employees.

Issuing PCDs

PCDs should be issued only when required for the specific functions performed by the employee, and after thoroughly considering the various communications requirements and alternatives (such as using a pager instead of a cellular phone). Consider having a “general use” pool for PCDs that can be “checked-out” by employees only when needed for specific purposes.

The following justification criteria are recommended situations for the issue (or temporary use) of PCDs.

- **Public Safety** – Immediate direct communication is required with local police, fire and/or emergency medical units (9-1-1) or immediate communication is required with the agency, where absence of communication would be clearly detrimental to the state or the public.
- **Emergencies or Disasters** – Immediate communication is required to notify or provide status updates in a natural disaster (e.g., earthquake, floods, etc.).
- **Personal Safety** - Employee is traveling a significant amount of time, travels to rural or remote areas, or is working in a dangerous or hazardous work environment where no other viable communication is available.

- **Operational Efficiency** – Direct communication or notifications are required to conduct necessary state business, and access to a conventional telephone system, payphone, or computer with e-mail is not practical or not easily available the majority of the time.

Using PCDs

- As with conventional telephones, PCDs are for state business related activities.
- Set standards for the use and care of the PCDs, including what to do in the event they are lost, stolen or damaged.
- Discourage excessive connection times that may generate additional charges or prematurely deplete plan minutes.
- Limit or ban out-of-state or overseas usage, as applicable.
- Establish safety criteria. **For example:** Making phone calls or utilizing PCDs while driving can be a safety hazard due to the distraction and the difficulty to maintain a high level of attention to traffic. Emphasize that drivers should use PCDs while parked or out of the vehicle.

Managing PCDs

- Regularly evaluate the assignment and use of PCDs; review and analyze the associated service plans with the vendor. A rate plan analysis can help identify plans that better align with actual usage.
- When evaluating the results of a rate plan analysis, look for cost related or usage factors for each PCD. **For example:** Check whether few or no airtime minutes are being used, or if service plans do not coincide closely with actual usage. Also, consider ways to avoid costly roaming charges – if an employee regularly travels to the same specific area of the state, a PCD with a second phone number (or sole phone number) from that area could be of benefit.
- Establish a practice for managers and supervisors to regularly review PCD bills for adherence to usage guidelines established by the agency, and to help detect fraud and abuse. **For example:** Excessive usage and a wide variety of area codes on the bills may indicate that a PCD has been misused or “cloned.” Cloning occurs

when the service number is replicated on an unauthorized PCD, which may lead to unauthorized usage and charges.

- Regularly identify and eliminate all inactive PCD accounts. A surprising number of unused devices continue to remain active when employees leave or transfer. Establish procedures that will help ensure timely retrieval of PCD equipment and deactivation of inactive PCD accounts.

**DGS WIRELESS
CONTRACTS**

On October 3, 2005, the DGS-PD as a California Strategic Sourcing Initiative, awarded the California Wireless Contract for wireless phone equipment and services. For more information on the awarded contractors, the types of wireless equipment and services, and the requirements for acquiring PCDs from the DGS Contract, contact Bonnie Bahnsen at DGS-PD at (916) 375-4352.

**DTS INFORMATION
AND CONTACTS**

For more information on the Department of Technology Services (DTS), see the DTS homepage at www.dts.ca.gov or call 916-657-9974. For more information on the utilization and management of PCDs, or for other telecommunications related questions, contact the DTS Statewide Telecommunications and Network Division (STND) at (916) 657-9974 or 1-800-807-6755, and ask to speak to a STND Consultant.



P.K. AGARWAL, Director
Department of Technology Services