

Department of Finance and Administration – Policy 17
Telecommunication Services
(Revised March, 2013)

Introduction and Background

1. This Policy Statement has been issued to ensure long distance calls from state phones, cellular service airtime, and other telecommunication services are used responsibly by State employees, and that unnecessary expenses are avoided whenever possible. This Policy Statement is issued under the general accounting authority granted by State law in T.C.A. 4-3-1007 (6).
2. This policy is applicable to all state departments, agencies, boards and commissions, with the exception of colleges and universities, and is effective when issued. State departments and agencies shall develop revised procedures to ensure compliance with this policy within 60 days of issuance.

Acceptable and Responsible Use

3. State agencies and departments shall encourage the responsible use of all telecommunications services, including limiting services to those necessary to achieve the agency's mission, limiting personal use of telecommunication services (to that which would be considered *de minimis* by the Internal Revenue Service), and conducting regular reviews, possibly by internal audit units or fiscal office staff, as to whether telecommunication charges are appropriate. It is also the responsibility of a State department or agency to change any accounting information in the billing, including the assignment of services, by contacting the Department of Finance and Administration, Billing Services.
4. State departments and agencies may consider a risk-based approach to their assessment of telecommunication services, focusing on the situations which present significant opportunities for fraud, waste or abuse of state resources. The annual agency risk assessment and review of internal control required by the Financial Integrity Act (T.C.A. Section 9-18-102) provides a useful framework to conduct such reviews.
5. State departments and agencies may make use of reports for all telecommunication charges available from the Department of Finance & Administration Billing Services, to identify unusual and inappropriate charges. If State departments and agencies detect fraud, waste or abuse with significant

financial implications, they should notify the Comptroller of the Treasury immediately.

Guidelines for Monitoring Telecommunication Bills

6. Generally program supervisors are more aware of the types of phone calls that employees should be making, appropriate locations to which calls are placed, and the appropriate length of calls. In identifying unusual and inappropriate calls, management may consider exception reports including:
 - a. Calls made before and after working hours, including weekends and holidays
 - b. Frequent calls to an unrecognized business number
 - c. Calls which cost more than a specified amount
 - d. Calls which are more than a specified length
 - e. Calls to foreign countries, resort areas, or other unusual areas of the country
 - f. Collect calls
 - g. Directory Assistance calls

Collect Calls

8. It is the general practice of the state not to accept collect calls. However in the event of an emergency or other unusual situation, it may be necessary for an agency to accept a collect call. If a collect call must be accepted, the employee should obtain the caller's name and phone number and return the call using State telephone lines.

Approval of the Commissioner of Finance and Administration

I, Mark A. Emkes, hereby approve the revisions to Policy Statement 17 of the Department of Finance and Administration and authorize actions to effect its implementation.

Signed Mark A. Emkes Date 3/18/13
Mark A. Emkes, Commissioner
Department of Finance & Administration

Approval of the Comptroller of the Treasury

I, Justin P. Wilson, hereby approve the revisions to Policy Statement 17 of the Department of Finance and Administration and authorize actions to effect its implementation.

Signed Justin P. Wilson Date 4/1/13
Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller
Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury