

**TOWN OF BLOOMFIED
POLICY MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Mobile Phone/ Air Card Policy

NO: 0510.01

DATE: 11/20/13

AMENDED: 9/24/13

DISTRIBUTION: All Departments/ Town Council

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APPROVED: 12-9-13 TC

I. PURPOSE

In order to promote a more efficient municipal staff, the Town of Bloomfield has provided certain employees with Mobile Phone/Aircard devices provided and paid for by the town. These devices are for use by the employees in their official capacity as municipal employees. This policy defines and clarifies town regulations on the acquisition and use of such Mobile Phone/Aircard devices.

II. DEFINITION

Aircard - An Aircard is a high speed wireless broadband card that gives users mobile Internet access on their laptops and/or tablets, using cellular data service.

Mobile Phone - A mobile phone (also known as a cellular phone, cell phone, and a hand phone) is a device that can make and receive telephone calls over a radio link while moving around a wide geographic area. It does so by connecting to a cellular network provided by a mobile phone operator, allowing access to the public telephone network. In addition to telephony, modern mobile phones also support a wide variety of other services such as text messaging, MMS, email, Internet access, short-range wireless communications (infrared, Bluetooth), business applications, gaming and photography. Mobile phones that offer these and more general computing capabilities are referred to as smartphones.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

Any Town department, employee, or the Town Council shall use the following procedures when acquiring a Mobile Phone/Aircard device(s).

IV. FORMS

None

V. POLICY / PROCEDURE

A. Mobile Phone/Aircard Device Need

It is the policy of the Town of Bloomfield to acquire Mobile Phone/Aircard devices for employees only when there is a reasonable need for the employee to have such a Mobile Phone/Aircard device in order to facilitate communication with that employee, where such communication is frequently hampered by an absence of other suitable telecommunications devices. Town Department Heads shall be responsible for evaluating the potential use of Mobile Phone/Aircard devices by town employees, and for determining which employees require Mobile Phone/Aircard devices to be provided by the Town of Bloomfield, with the consent and final approval of the Town Manager.

B. Mobile Phone/Aircard Device Purchasing

All Mobile Phone/Aircard devices provided by the Town of Bloomfield shall be purchased by the Town of Bloomfield utilizing standard purchasing policies and procedures.

C. Mobile Phone/Aircard Device / Accessories

The Town Manager or his/her designee shall evaluate the needs and requests of those personnel who will be utilizing the Mobile Phone/Aircard devices in selecting appropriate Mobile Phone/Aircard devices and peripheral devices or accessories. Employees shall be free to purchase and provide their own accessories at their own cost, without reimbursement, should the Town of Bloomfield not provide a desired accessory. Devices that the town will provide to employees include chargers, both in-car and traditional outlet units, and holsters or clips for ease of carrying phones.

D. Town Mobile Phone/Aircard Device Usage

Mobile Phone/Aircard devices should not be considered as a replacement for traditional telephones (landline) when such traditional phones are secure, convenient and available. The Town of Bloomfield believes in employing 'reasonable' restrictions on the personal usage of Mobile Phone/Aircard devices provided by the Town of Bloomfield. The bills of any employee, including any and all usage logs of telephone calls made and received, may be reviewed and audited by the Town of Bloomfield at any time, for any reason. Employees must realize that although personal calls made within the local calling region and under the usage limits provided by the employer's plan do not result in additional charges, they do count towards the overall time limits established under the service agreement. The town reserves the right to discontinue service at any time for any reason.

E. Restricted Communications

Employees should use discretion in relaying confidential information via cellular phones. Employees are prohibited from using their Mobile Phone/Aircard devices in any illegal, illicit, or offensive manner.

F. Loss or Damage of Town Mobile Phone/Aircard Device

In the event any device or other related equipment is damaged in the course of business; the item must be brought to the employee's supervisor for direction as to contacting the vendor for repair or replacement. Lost or stolen equipment shall be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor so the service may be cancelled; a timely police report should also be filed.

The Town Manager or his/her designee must authorize the replacement request and provide an account to which the replacement will be charged. Employees may be financially responsible for the replacement if:

1. Equipment is lost or damaged while in the care of an employee as a result of the employee's gross negligence.
2. Equipment is not returned by an employee within the specified period of time or is damaged upon its return.
3. Equipment is damaged due to failure to adhere to maintenance or operational policies or schedules.

G. Personal Owned Mobile Phone/Aircard

Employees are permitted to carry Mobile Phone/Aircard devices while at work for the Town of Bloomfield. Usage of Mobile Phone/Aircard devices for non-business purposes is prohibited during working hours unless due to an emergency, or while an employee is on a break.

Should an employee use a Mobile Phone/Aircard device for business use, the employee shall be eligible for reimbursement for such use from the Town of Bloomfield only if the employee has been previously approved, in writing, for such reimbursement by their Department Head, direct Supervisor or the Town Manager, and is able to document the business use and appropriate charges.

H. Safety

The Town of Bloomfield requires all employees who utilize either personal or Town Mobile Phone/Aircard devices to engage in safe usage practices as may be recommended by the phones manufacturer or service provider. In particular, precautionary measures should be used if it is necessary to use a Mobile Phone/Aircard device while driving. It is required that all employees adhere to hands free use in accordance with state law.

Each employee will have an allotted amount of minutes per month for business usage. This allotment will be established by contract with an authorized cellular provider and may change from time to time as new plans or promotions are offered to the Town of Bloomfield. It is the responsibility of each user of a town Mobile Phone/Aircard device to be responsible for the usage of their device and to ensure that minute limits are not exceeded. Each employee will be responsible for any over usage of minutes and will be expected to reimburse the town. Abuse of the town provided Mobile Phone/Aircard device, excessive or inappropriate use of the device and negligence or damage to the device will, in the discretion of the Town Manager or his/her designee, disqualify an employee from being provided a device.