

WATERBERG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



on the Go for Growth

FINAL

TELEPHONE USAGE (LANDLINE POLICY)

FEBRUARY 2009

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1. **DEFINITIONS**

Policy – means Telephone Usage Policy

Land Line Calls – means calls dialed from a fixed telephone line.

Private Calls – means calls not related to business operations to Council.

Low Productivity – means low working rate over period of time.

Unauthorized Persons – means people who are not employees of WDM.

Private Lines – means telephone lines not linked to the Telephone System (Switchboard)

Direct Dialing Facility – means telephone lines not routed through the telephone System (Switchboard)

International Calls – means telephone calls destined to outside the geographic boundaries of South Africa.

Accumulative - means not carried over the next month.

2. **INTRODUCTION**

Monthly reports of telephones have revealed that landline calls are the major expense of Waterberg District Municipality. This is mainly due to higher number of calls made, be they “private” or “official”. This is notwithstanding the fact that Council is re-establishing itself and as such populating its organogram with new appointments. Council will at all times strive to keep telephone expenditure within limits, as well as to reduce low productivity resulting from excessive use of telephones.

3. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the policy is as follows:

- 3.1. To ensure the effective and efficient use of municipal telephones;
- 3.2. To curb the abuse of telephones by employees of Council;
- 3.3. To reduce telephone costs;
- 3.4. To introduce corrective measures for Officials who fail to observe the guidelines stipulated in the policy;
- 3.5. To standardize what may be allowed as being reasonable amount for calls that may be for private purposes;
- 3.6. To prevent the use of municipal telephones by un-authorized persons;
- 3.7. To introduce salary deductions from employees who exceed their monthly allowance for private calls on landline telephones.

4. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The Executive Mayor will determine the conditions relating to the usage of landline telephones by Councilors and full time Councilors will therefore not be covered by this policy.

This Policy shall apply to officials only.

5. PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICE

- 5.1. It shall be the responsibility of council to provide all municipal offices or a combination of municipal offices with a satisfactory and reliable telephone service;
- 5.2. The Council may centralize its telephone operating system and install one or more switchboards through which all outgoing and incoming calls shall be routed;
- 5.3. The municipal switchboard(s) shall be housed in a safe and secure environment and the switchboard instrument as well as the office in which the switchboard is housed shall be provided with a lockable device or devices, the keys of which shall be in the possession of the Switchboard Operator(s) appointed by Council;
- 5.4. It shall be the responsibility of the Switchboard Operator(s) to ensure that no unauthorized person obtains access to the switchboard(s) of the Council.

6. TELEPHONE USAGE CONTROL MEASURES

Departmental Heads are to ensure compliance and control of telephones assigned to their Departments by adhering to the following:

- 6.1. The Municipal Manager shall determine which Officials may have private lines to their offices for use in connection with the performance of their official duties;
- 6.2. Except in the case of employees provided with private telephone lines, all outgoing telephone calls shall be directed through the switchboard(s) of the Council;
- 6.3. It shall be the duty of the person making the call, before dialing the number required to keep records a record whether the call is official or private in the nature;
- 6.4. All official not receiving a cellphone or a cellphone allowance will be liable for all private calls exceeding R30-00 per month Officials receiving cellphone allowances will be responsible for all private calls.
- 6.5. The Council must provide an electronic device for the monitoring of all outgoing telephone calls;
- 6.6. At the end of each month, and within three (3) working days the Switchboard Operator shall provide all Departmental Heads with a complete list of Officials who have made both private and official telephone calls, cost thereof during the month in question, the destination of such call and its duration;
- 6.7. All Departmental Heads shall supply the Budget and Treasury Department with the list of deductions required for the month in question in respect of private calls made by the Officials.
- 6.8. If the Record for private calls are not submitted within 5 working days 50% of private calls will be deducted from the officials salary.
- 6.9. Officials shall only be entitled to make international calls with the specific approval of the Municipal Manager;
- 6.10. No Official shall make a call on behalf of or allow any unauthorized person to make a private telephone call from either a private telephone line or from the switchboard of the Council;
- 6.11. Departmental Heads will remain accountable officials for the proper management and usage of telephones allocated to their departments.

7. BARRING OF TELEPHONES

The Municipal Manager shall have discretion to determine which officials with direct dialing facilities shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and local calls and telephones lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.

8. AVAILABILITY OF THIS POLICY

Every official upon being appointed in the service of the Council shall be supplied with a copy of this policy and shall acknowledge receipt thereof by signing a duplicate copy thereof. The said duplicate copy shall be filed on the personal file of the Official

9. CONSEQUENCE OF NON COMPLIANCE

A failure to comply with the Policy by Officials will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression and appropriate disciplinary action will result.

10. CONTROL PROCEDURES

Every Line Manager must personally examine telecommunication accounts relating to lines or extensions allocated to employees under his/her supervision. He or she shall make such relevant comments for attention or information of the relevant person, his or her supervisor, or any other official in the department, which shall where necessary be used as evidence should a disciplinary hearing or such appropriate actions be necessary to be taken due to persistent by an employee.

11. TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS

11.1. On a monthly basis Heads of Departments must ensure that all records of private calls are forwarded to BTO for processing. (even if it is below R 30-00)

11.2. The BTO will make payroll deductions from employees' salaries in respect of private calls made if the maximum monthly limit of R 30,00 is exceeded. Each staff member shall sign an understanding that if they make private calls that exceed the R 30,00 limit (for officials not receiving cellphone allowance), the cost thereof shall be deducted from salaries.

11.3. The maximum limit will be reviewed by the Municipal Manager annually.

The monthly limit shall not be accumulative.

12. PROTECTIVE MEASURES

12.1. Employees will be provided with Personal Identification Numbers;

12.2. These numbers will provide security to telephone users, especially those who are working in an open plan office arrangement/work stations as this will help in avoiding the use of telephone by employees at the expense of fellow employees.

13. PRIVATE LINES

13.1. The Executive Mayor and/or the Municipal Manager shall be provided with private line s over and above extension lines.

13.2. All other employees are prohibited from the benefit of having private lines, except those referred to in clause 13.1 of this Policy.