



COLUMBIA HEIGHTS POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY MANUAL

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| TITLE: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS | GENERAL ORDER NUMBER: 902 |
| REFERENCES: City of Columbia Heights IS Policy | EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/2016 |
| REVIEW DATE: 01/01/2019 | DISTRIBUTION: A |

The Columbia Heights Police Department shall ensure the proper use of electronic communication devices used by Department employees.

902:1 Definitions

Electronic Communications Equipment

Electronic communications equipment shall include, but not be limited to, telephones, cellular telephones, computers, hand held internet capable devices, e-mail, Internet access, fax machines, modems, mobile data terminals, and radios.

902:2 Authorization to Obtain

Authority is given to Department administrative staff to obtain appropriate electronic communications devices for the business functions provided in their specific division. Equipment shall be obtained through normal channels, and through appropriate budget requests and purchasing authority. Authority to use seized or forfeited items for normal business purposes may be granted by the Chief.

902:3 Procedures of Use

902:31 Use of Electronic Equipment

Use of electronic equipment shall be limited to official business. The Department absolutely prohibits offensive messages that could be considered harassment, including racial or sexual remarks, written or spoken. Electronic equipment shall not be used to solicit for personal purposes, charitable ventures,

religious, civic, or political causes. There is no assurance of privacy involving electronic communication. Such communication is subject to inspection at all times by supervisory staff. Use of electronic communications shall be consistent with the **City of Columbia Heights IS Policy**.

902:32 Courtesy

All employees shall be courteous and professional, and comply with all laws when using electronic equipment to carry out Department business.

902:33 Answering Telephones

All employees shall answer telephones in a clear and courteous manner.

902:34 Communications Discipline

All employees shall comply with divisional policies and procedures to ensure consistent communication discipline.

902:4 Radios

All employees of the Department operating public safety radios, either from a mobile, portable, or base station unit, shall strictly observe the regulations for such operations as set forth in departmental policies, and by the Federal Communications Commission. Throughout their shift, when their assignment requires radio contact, employees shall remain

in constant radio communication with Dispatch, and with other officers. Officers shall continuously monitor the radio, and respond to requests for assistance in their area or adjacent areas as needed.

902:5 Mobile Computer Display (MCD)

902:51 Training

Any employee using an MCD shall have successfully completed the appropriate training course. MCDs may be used for the following purposes:

- Log into service;
- Log out of service;
- Conduct informational checks specifically related to department duties;
- Send car-to-car messages of a business nature, or appropriate personal messages;
- Check the status of CAD events, or status of other units; and
- Other uses as approved by department administration.

902:52 Operational Safety

Employees are reminded that use of MCDs while driving requires extra care and attention to driving conduct.

902:6 Cellular Telephones/Personal Communication Device

902:61 Use of Cellular Telephones

Employees may use department-owned cellular phones for business calls as appropriate.

902:61-1

Employees are prohibited from programming the phones without authorization from police administration.

902:61-2

Limited personal calls are permitted on the cellular phone service. Calls shall be kept to a maximum length (5 minutes, or less).

902:62 Operational Safety

Employees are reminded that use of cellular phones while driving requires extra care and attention to driving conduct.

Except during exigent circumstances, employees assigned to patrol or driving marked police department vehicles shall not use cellular phones/PCD's while driving.

902:7 Internet Access

902:71 Internet Usage

Internet usage while on duty shall be for appropriate purposes only. Only Web sites that contain information appropriate for business research or purpose shall be accessed, unless on approved break.

902:8 Department E-mail and Documents

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Information in department emails, to include any attachments, is government data and therefore subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Said information may be subject to attorney-client or work product privilege, and may be confidential, privileged, proprietary, or otherwise protected. The unauthorized review, copying, retransmission, or other use of disclosure of the information is strictly prohibited. Any e-mails documents, copies of documents to include but not limited to reports, memorandums, letters and other correspondence shall not be routed to any outside source or storage server, or any person for other than official department business without written approval by a supervisor.

902:9 Personal Long-Distance Calls

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Employees making personal long-distance phone calls from department phones shall charge those calls directly to a personal credit card, phone card, or home phone number, and are personally responsible for the charges.

902:10 City-issued Cellular Phones

902:10-1 Issue of Cellular Phones

Cellular phones are issued to personnel whose job descriptions, duties, or responsibilities are determined by the department to require this enhanced level of communication.

902:10-2 Provision and Maintenance

The department shall provide and maintain cellular phones issued to personnel.

902:10-3 Use of Cellular Phones/Personal Communication Devices Policy

The Columbia Heights Police Department allows employees to utilize department issued cellular phones/PCD, and to possess personally owned cellular phones in the workplace subject to certain limitations.

902:10-4 Privacy

Employees shall have no expectation of privacy with regard to any communication made with or stored in or through PCD's issued by the police department, and shall have no expectation of privacy in their location should the device be equipped with location detection capabilities.

The use of any department issued, or department cellular phone, PCD, computer, internet service, telephone service, or other wireless service while on duty is without any expectation of privacy that the employee might otherwise have in any communication, including the content of any such communication.

902:11 Personally-Owned Cellular Phones/PCD

902:11-1 Conditions and Limitations

Employees may carry a personally owned cellular phone while on duty, subject to the following conditions and limitations:

- Carrying a personally owned cellular phone/PCD is a privilege.

- The police department is not responsible or liable for loss of or damage to a personally owned cell phone/PCD.
- Employees shall promptly notify their supervisor in the event the cellular phone/PCD is lost or stolen.
- The cellular phone/PCD and any associated services shall be purchased, used and maintained solely at the employee's expense.
- The device should not be used for work-related purposes except in exigent circumstances (i.e. unavailable communications). Employees have a reduced expectation of privacy when using a personally owned cell phone/PCD in the workplace and have no expectation of privacy with regard to any police department business related communication.
- The device shall not be utilized to record or disclose any business related data; including photographs, video, or the recording or transmittal of any data or material obtained or made accessible as a result of employment with the department, without the authorization of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- Work related information including data created, received, recorded, or stored on a personally owned PCD in the course of official duties is considered government data, and is subject to the requirements of the Minnesota Data Practices Act and discovery obligations under MN Stat. 13.01 et seq.
- All cellular phones/PCD's, personal, or department issued, in the workplace be set to silent or vibrate mode.
- Employees may use a cellular phone/PCD to communicate with other personnel in situations where the use of the radio is impracticable. Cellular phones/PCD should not be used as a substitute for, as a way to avoid, or in lieu of regular radio communications.
- Employees will not access social networking sites while on duty for any purpose that is not official Police Department Business, unless checked out

on break. Posting onto social networking sites is not allowed while on duty.

902:11-2 Personal Business

On-duty personnel shall not routinely use their cellular phones to conduct personal business but should use the phones according to the guidelines in 902.61-2.

902:11-3 Responsibility for Appropriate Care

Personnel that are issued cellular phones shall be responsible for appropriate care to avoid loss or damage. Lost or damaged cellular phones shall be reported promptly in writing to the supervisor.

902:11-4 Notification of Need for Repair

Personnel with department issued cellular phones/PCD's not operating correctly or in need of repair shall notify their supervisor or designee, who will arrange for repair or maintenance.

902:11-5 Batteries

Batteries necessary to operate department issued cellular phones/PCD's shall be provided by the Department.

902:11-6 On-Duty Personnel

With the exception of special assignments where the use of cellular phones may endanger the employee, employees that are issued cellular phones shall keep them turned on and on their person at all times while on duty.

902:12 Social Networking Internet Sites

902:12-1 Social Networking Internet Sites and Social Media

Social media primarily are Internet and mobile based tools for sharing and discussing information to include but not limited to comments, photos videos and links to other information to create content on any imaginable topic.

Social media tools include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Myspace
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- Vine
- Tumblr
- Vimeo
- Photo Bucket
- Blogs
- Microblogs such as Twitter
- Video sharing sites such as YouTube and iReport
- Photo sharing sites such as TwitPic and Flickr
- Wikis, or shared encyclopedias such as Wikipedia
- RSS feeds
- Mobile phone content uploaded to the Internet, and ever emerging technological tools.

902:12-2 Social Media Access on City-owned Computers

Employees shall not use city computers, or city owned equipment to access their personal social networking/social media Internet sites, either while on duty or off duty.

902:12-3 Personal Computers or Hand-held Internet-capable Devices

- Employees shall not post pictures of department owned equipment to include but not limited to badges, uniforms, weapons, or vehicles to a social networking/social media website.
- Employees shall not post onto any social networking/social media site, any public or confidential information to include but not limited to information related to coworkers, personnel data, medical information, claims or lawsuits against the city.
- Employees shall not use any personal social networking/social media account names that in any way are tied to the City of Columbia Heights.
- Employees shall not post photographs to a social networking/social media site of fellow employees taken while on duty.

- Employees shall not post photographs to a social networking/social media site of incidents taken while on duty.
- Employees shall not post commentary or descriptions of any incidents they witness while on duty in their position as an employee of the Police Department to a social networking/social media site.

BY ORDER OF:

Scott Nadeau, Chief of Police

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