

**San Diego County Sheriff's Department Detention Services Bureau – Manual of Policies and Procedures**

<b>DATE:</b>	MAY 8, 2023
<b>NUMBER:</b>	I.62
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	FACILITY SECURITY- USE OF MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICES
<b>RELATED SECTIONS:</b>	<a href="#">I.61</a> , <a href="#">I.63</a> , <a href="#">P.9</a> , <a href="#">P.15</a> , Dept. P&P 2.27, Dept. P&P 7.4

**PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the possession and use of personally owned and department issued mobile communication devices within secured areas of a detention facility. These devices, whether owned by individuals or provided by the department, pose a risk to facility security if lost or stolen, and can also distract staff members during the performance of their duties.

All department issued electronic devices shall be utilized by department personnel in accordance with all allowances and restrictions set forth within Sheriff's Department Policy & Procedure Section 7.4 CELLULAR PHONE/OTHER WIRELESS ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

**POLICY**

The possession and use of personally owned mobile communication devices (i.e., cell phones, smart phones, tablets, etc.) within a secured area of a detention facility is conditionally permitted. Usage will be of a reasonable length of time, shall not distract others or interfere with operations, compromise safety, or cause the employee to neglect or be inattentive to their duties.

In contrast, department-issued mobile communication devices are to be utilized exclusively for authorized official department purposes. These devices are intended to facilitate operational needs and efficient communication while maintaining facility security and staff attentiveness. Employees using department-issued devices must adhere to the same usage guidelines as for personally owned devices, ensuring their use of the device does not distract from or interfere with their duties and responsibilities.

Sheriff's policies regarding personal mobile communication use during social and professional visits are discussed in Detention Services Bureau Policies and Procedures sections P.9 and P.15, respectively.

**PROCEDURE**

**I. DEFINITION**

Mobile communication devices – Cellular phones, smart phones, tablets, paging devices, or other devices allowing for two-way (or more) communication. These items may be the personally owned property of a department employee or issued to an employee exclusively for authorized use within the scope of their official duties.

**II. EMERGENCY EXCEPTIONS AND NOTIFICATION**

A. The on-duty watch commander may authorize exceptions to this policy during emergency situations.

B. Employees shall immediately notify their supervisor upon discovery of a lost or stolen

I.62 FACILITY SECURITY- USE OF MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICES

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mobile communication device and/or equipment (i.e., charging cables, blue tooth, etc.).

### III. RESTRICTIONS

- A. The use of department issued mobile communication devices, is subject to certain restrictions. Text messaging for communications that are associated with an established notification procedure, official system of record, or otherwise more appropriate method is prohibited. Examples of more appropriate methods include radio communications, secure messaging systems, department email, facility telephone systems, or direct in-person conversations. Department-issued devices shall utilize text messaging only when other means of communication are not reasonably available or justifiably suitable. This guideline ensures the integrity and accuracy of information shared within the facility and helps maintain proper communication channels for official department operations.
- B. Employees shall not use *personally owned* mobile communication or electronic devices while escorting/moving incarcerated persons, conducting safety checks, walking through housing areas of the incarcerated population, speaking with incarcerated persons, conducting sick call or any other situation that could potentially create an unsafe work environment. The use of a department issued device within these scenarios shall be limited to the functions of the device which are specifically designated to assist employees with completing these types of tasks.
- C. Electronic charging devices shall not be in any area accessible to incarcerated persons.
- D. *Personally owned* mobile communication devices shall not be utilized to photograph or video incarcerated persons or department activities/operations. The use of any department issued mobile device to capture photos, videos, or audio recordings of incarcerated persons shall be limited to instances where such media is required for evidentiary purposes. Any other use is strictly and unequivocally prohibited. Even in such cases, evidentiary photos, videos, or audio recordings must never be transmitted via SMS/text message or any other unapproved means. Any violation will be considered a severe breach of department policy. It is incumbent on all staff members to always maintain the privacy and dignity of incarcerated persons and the integrity of the detention facility.

### IV. VISITORS

Vendors, contractors, tour participants and all other non-Sheriff's department employees are prohibited from having personal electronic devices in their possession. All devices must be secured prior to their entry into the facility. Scheduled media tours are an exception to this policy.