



**TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY**

<b>Policy Number:</b>	<b>Approved Date:</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>Review Date:</b>

**1. Definitions**

For the purpose of this policy unless the context otherwise indicates –

- 1.1 **“Council”** means the Council of the municipality, any committee or person to which or to whom an instruction has been given or any power has been delegated or sub-delegated in terms of, or as contemplated in, section 59 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 or a service provider in respect of any power, function or duty of the Council.
- 1.2 **“Councillor”** shall mean a member of the municipal Council of the Breede Valley Municipality.
- 1.3 **“Municipal Manager”** means the person appointed by the Municipal Council as the Municipal Manager for the Breede Valley Municipality in terms of section 82 of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) and includes any person to whom the Municipal Manager has delegated a power, function or duty in respect of such a delegated power, function or duty.
- 1.4 **“Official”** shall mean all persons in the employment of the Breede Valley Municipality.
- 1.5 **“Official Calls”** shall mean all calls made during office hours and after hours for the purpose of conducting official Council Business and includes after-hour calls to family members or housemates, calls on arrivals to national and international destinations and in emergencies.
- 1.6 **“HOD’s”** shall mean all Section 57 appointees and Directors of the Breede Valley Municipality

**2. Scope of the Policy**

- The Policy includes the following
  - Land Lines
  - Use of Fax machines
  - Cellular Phones

### 3. **Application of the Policy**

This Policy shall apply to all Councillors and officials of the Breede Valley Municipality, regardless of their designation.

### 4. **Policy Objectives**

- 4.1 To provide guidelines on the management and use of cellular phones;
- 4.2 To implement a uniform Telecommunications Policy for officials and Councillors respectively;
- 4.3 To provide fair criteria for the allocation of cellular phone reimbursements;
- 4.4 To ensure the effective and efficient use of municipal telephones;
- 4.5 To ensure the recovery of all costs for the unofficial (private) use of cell phones, land lines and fax machines;
- 4.6 To implement the necessary control measures and reduce costs;
- 4.7 To ensure that only authorised persons use Council's telephones and facsimile machines in the performance of their duties;
- 4.8 To prevent the misuse of the above-mentioned facilities by Councillors and officials of the Breede Valley Municipality.

### 5. **The Right to use to use Telephones, Fax Machines and Cellular Phone Facilities**

- 5.1 Council provides its employees with the above-mentioned facilities primarily for official purposes only.
- 5.2 No Councillor or official of the Breede Valley Municipality has the right to use the above-mentioned facilities for private purposes without approval by the speaker or Municipal Manager or delegatee.

### 6. **Delegated Powers**

- **The Municipal Manager or delegatee inter alia has the following powers:**
  - To authorise the installation of telephones and other similar equipment on Council premises.
  - To authorise the allocation of cellular phones
- **Powers of the Chief Financial Officer:**

- The CFO inter alia has the power to make all payments and deductions in accordance with the policies of Council and appropriate legislation.

## **7. Telephone Policy**

- It shall be the responsibility of the Council to provide municipal offices or a combination of municipal offices with reliable telephone and facsimile service.

### **7.1 Restrictions**

- 7.1.1 It is the policy of the Breede Valley Municipality that telephones and facsimiles are to be used primarily for official purposes.
- 7.1.2 The Speaker shall determine which Councillors may have access to telephones in their offices for use in the performance of their official duties.
- 7.1.3 The Municipal Manager (or his/her delegatee) shall determine which officials may have access to telephones in their offices for use in the performance of their official duties.
- 7.1.4 Provision is made for the allocation of a PIN-code to all Councillors and officials within the Breede Valley Municipality. This is to ensure that only Council employees and Councillors utilize official instruments appropriately and to manage the usage of telephones.
- 7.1.5 Councillors and officials are expected to exercise reasonable discretion in using telephones for personal use. Excessive incoming or outgoing personal calls during the workday can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others.
- 7.1.6 Personal calls should be kept to a minimum in terms of the number of calls made as well as the duration of calls.
- 7.1.7 Councillors as well as officials are expected to reimburse the Breede Valley Municipality for any personal calls made in accordance with the control measures as set out below.
- 7.1.8 The Speaker shall have the discretion to determine which Councilors shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and cell phone calls only and telephone lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.
- 7.1.9 The Municipal Manager or his delegatee shall have the discretion to determine which officials shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and cell phone calls only and telephone lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.
- 7.1.10 The Breede Valley Municipality has the right to monitor telephone bills and the usage to determine if misuse or abuse exists.
- 7.1.11 Subject thereto that telephone records be regarded as confidential information and not disclosed to third parties to alleviate liability as regard to the violation of the privacy of individual employees.
- 7.1.12 Councillors and officials should use their land lines as far as possible, to minimise the use of Cellular Phones. This applies also to Councillors and officials within the main centres who should be contacted via the dialled extensions (refer to telephone list) in order to reduce costs.
- 7.1.13 Councilors and officials shall only be entitled to make international calls with the specific approval of the Speaker and Executive Management.
- 7.1.14 The Municipal Manager, his or her delegatee, after considerations of all *bona fide* operational requirements, may deviate from the provisions of this policy.

## **7.2 Telephone Usage Control Measures**

- 7.2.1 The main centres are linked via dialled extensions (refer to telephone list). Telephone calls made between these centres are regarded as internal.
- 7.2.2 At the end of each month, the Switchboard Operator in the main centre shall provide the CFO with a complete list of Councilors and officials who have made telephone calls during the month in question, the destination of such call, the cost incurred and its duration.
- 7.2.3 A detailed statement (printout) of all calls made and the total cost thereof would be provided to all Councillors and officials by the Department Financial Services within seven (7) days after the end of the month.
- 7.2.4 All Councillors and officials must identify private calls made and calculate the respective amounts due, including VAT. The Councillor or official concerned shall be obliged to certify (sign) the printout. The printouts must also be signed and noted by the CFO or a person authorized to do so.
- 7.2.5 Signed printouts should be handed to the Creditors and Salaries before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. The costs in respect of private calls will be deducted monthly from staff members' salaries.
- 7.2.6 The CFO (or his/her delegatee) must approve all late submissions.
- 7.2.7 Where no signed printout or approval for late submission has been received, it will be investigated and if necessary disciplinary action will be instituted.
- 7.2.8 The Breede Valley Municipality, in compliance with the BCEA, shall deduct any amount due, from an employee in question.
- 7.2.9 All queries regarding landline telephones must be directed to the Municipal Manager or his/her delegatee.

## **7.3 Facsimile Access**

- 7.3.1 The nature of fax transmissions makes information sent particularly vulnerable to unintended and unauthorized users. As with other communications related to safeguarding confidential information, the Breede Valley Municipality must reasonably safeguard information sent by fax.
- 7.3.2 All official faxes must contain an official cover sheet.
- 7.3.3 All facsimile facilities are provided in all buildings for the purpose of conducting Council business only.
- 7.3.4 Facsimile machines may have the ability to dial national numbers. Only those facilities in secure locations may have international access as determined by the Municipal Manager or his assignee.

## **8.1 Procedure**

- 8.1.1 All Councillors and officials should take reasonable safeguards to protect facsimile communications by:

- 8.1.1.1 Ensuring that facsimile machines are located in an area that is not high in personnel or public traffic and is not within view or accessible to visitors.
- 8.1.1.2 Ensuring that access for certain officials is limited to preserve the protection of confidential information.
- 8.1.2 Take reasonable steps to ensure that the fax transmissions/communications are sent to the intended contacts and destinations by:
  - 8.1.2.1 Refraining from sending highly confidential information via fax.
  - 8.1.2.2 Double-checking fax numbers before sending.
  - 8.1.2.3 Ensuring that copies of all faxes must be sent to registry for filing.

## **9. Cellular Phone Policy for Municipal Councillors**

### **9.1 Cellular Phone Allowance**

- 9.1.1 Cellular phone allowances, for Municipal Councillors are as determined by the Minister of Provincial and Local Government in terms of the official Government Notice as published annually and of the *Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act (Act no. 20 of 1998)*.

## **10. Cellular Phone Policy for Municipal Officials**

### **10.1 Employees Qualifying for Cellular Phones**

- 10.1.1 The Municipal Manager will authorise the allocation of cellular phones to officials, according to the operational requirements and the approved policy.
- 10.1.2 The cellphone allowances are determined within this policy will be applicable to newly appointed employees.
- 10.1.3 The employees already in the employment of Breede Valley Municipality will retain the current cellphone allowances. However, this will phase out as employees terminate their services with Breede Valley Municipality.
- 10.1.4 All employees currently receiving a cellphone allowance, if promoted to a different position as a result of the normal recruitment and selection processes will have to accept the position with the new cellphone allowance applicable to the position as determined by this policy.
- 10.1.5 Terms and conditions
  - The allocation of cellular phone allowances are linked to a position and job content based on operational requirements, taking into account the following factors, amongst others on the:
    - (a) Need for immediate contact with councillors and the public;
    - (b) Need for constant and immediate contact with the employee;

- (c) Job content, including roles, responsibilities and KPA's;
- (d) Time spent outside of the office by the employee;
- (e) Improvement of the operational efficiency of the employee; and
- (f) Employee must be contactable at all times during work and after official working hours, including during leave periods.

10.1.6 Various cellphone allowances applicable:

Categories of employees	Cellphone allowance per month
(a) Senior Management reporting directly to a Director	R850.00
(b) Managerial levels reporting directly to a Director and/or Senior Manager	R750.00
(c) Any other official who due to operational requirements must be contactable after working hours	R600.00

10.1.7 Any increases of the abovementioned allowances will be considered by the Municipal Manager and/or Director upon motivation provided by the official why the applicable cellphone allowance is not sufficient.

10.1.8 Cellphone allowance does not preclude an employee to buy cellphones for better packages.

**10.2 Executive Mayor's Driver:**

- A limit of R250 per month is imposed on this account. The Executive Mayor's Driver must indicate and pay for all private calls.

**11. Use of Own / Private Cellular Phones**

The Municipal Manager or his assignee may consent to an official using his/her own private cellular phone for Council purposes. Only official calls will be paid for. No petty cash payments will be made. Approved accounts must reach the Finance Division before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Payment will be made together with payment of the monthly salary on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**12. General**

The purchase of cellular phones will be done by the Procurement Officer.

A register for cellular phone must be kept and all details with regard to issuing must be recorded therein. As soon as a cell phone is issued the old cell phone must be handed in.

Before a cell phone is issued to an Agency Services employee, the written permission of the Principal must be obtained. The Principal is responsible for payment of the account.

Old cellular phones are the property of the Breede Valley Municipality and may under no circumstances be utilised for private use.

Any person who at present is in possession of a Council cell phone and who does not qualify to do so in terms of this policy, must return it immediately.

**13. Availability of this Policy**

Every Councilor upon being elected to serve on the Council and staff member that has access to a Council phone, facsimile or Cellular Phone, upon assuming appointment in the service of the Breede Valley Municipality, shall be supplied with a copy of this policy and must sign the attached conditions.

**14. Consequence of non-compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression of the Code of Conduct of the Employees.

**15. Amendments**

The Municipal Manager may from time to time amend this policy.

**(THE POLICY FOR COUNCILLORS AND EMPLOYEES MUST BE SEPERATED)**