

WEST RAND DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



TELEPHONE USAGE POLICY

<u>COUNCIL APPROVAL</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SIGNATURE</u>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Monthly reports of telephones have revealed that landline calls are the major expense of the WRDM. This is mainly due to high number of calls made, be they “private” or “official”. Council will at all times strive to keep telephone expenditure within limits, as well as to reduce low productivity resulting from private calls to a minimum

1.1 DEFINITIONS

The definitions are described in the table below

TERM	DEFINITION
WRDM	Shall mean West Rand District Municipality
ICT	Shall mean Information and communication
ED	Shall mean Executive Director
HR	Shall mean Human Resources
MM	Shall mean Municipal Manager
Policy	Shall mean the telephone usage policy
Land line calls	Shall mean calls dialed from the fixed telephone lines
Private Calls	Shall mean calls not related to business operations of council
International Calls	Shall mean telephone calls destined to outside the
Official	Shall mean any person who has been appointed by the WRDM to a position or employment, either in a permanent or temporary capacity
PIN	Shall mean a Personal Identification Number or code, which is used to gain access to the municipality’s telephone system
CFO	Chief Financial Officer

2. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure the effective and efficient use of municipal telephones; curbing the abuse of telephones by employees of Council; reduction in telephone costs; prevention of utilization of official telephones by unauthorized persons; to standardize reasonable calls that may be made for private purposes; and to introduce salary deduction from employees.

3. PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICE

- 3.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Council to provide all municipal offices or a combination of municipal offices with a satisfactory and reliable telephone service;
- 3.2 The Council may centralize its telephone operating system and install one or more switchboards through which all outgoing and incoming calls shall be routed;
- 3.3 The municipal switchboard(s) shall be housed in a safe and secure environment.
- 3.4 It shall be the responsibility of the Switchboard Operator to ensure that no unauthorized person obtains access to the switchboard(s) of the Council.
- 3.5 No official shall make a call on behalf of, or allow any unauthorized person to make a private telephone call.
- 3.6 Employees must ensure that telephone lines and instruments allocated to them, are properly looked after and any noticeable fault must be reported to the Department: ICT.
- 3.7 All employees are expected to re-direct incoming calls incorrectly put through to the relevant person or cluster.
- 3.8 Managers shall be responsible for the implementation and management of this policy.
- 3.9 The MM may request the respective EDs to account for telephone over-expenditure.
- 3.10 Some provision of the policy are dependent on the availability of a telephone management system, in case of unavailability of such a system, all users are still expected to exercise responsible use and conduct when operating the telephones.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The WRDM recognizes that there may be some occasions normally due to unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, where it is necessary for officials to make private telephone calls. Officials should be aware, however, that the making or receiving of private telephone calls is by local arrangements only and is therefore a privilege and not an automatic right. This privilege can be temporarily suspended or completely withdrawn on an individual or collective basis if circumstances indicate that this is appropriate.
- 4.2 When making or receiving private telephone calls, fulltime councilors and officials should take account of the following.
 - a) The making or receiving of private telephone calls should be kept to a minimum and be of a short duration;

- b) Private phone calls should be timed wherever possible to ensure minimum disruption both to the work of the individual and to the workload of colleagues;
- c) Fulltime councilors and officials should ensure that the nature and content of any private telephone calls is appropriate to the work environment in which they are received;
- d) It must be noted that it is not acceptable for fulltime councilors and officials to conduct regular, private, business or administrative work of a private nature using the WRDM telephone network. Any abuse of the telephone system could result in the instances being considered to be of a fraudulent nature or constitute misconduct, which may lead to disciplinary or criminal action taken against the individual.

5. TELEPHONE USAGE CONTROL MEASURES

Executive Directors are allowed to come up with other control measures which are in line with the Policy

- 5.1 The Municipal Manager shall determine which Officials may have access to international, national, provincial, local and cell phone calls, and the lines shall be barred on the basis of this classification.
- 5.2 The WRDM shall provide an electronic device for the monitoring of all outgoing telephone calls.
- 5.3 Officials shall only be entitled to make international calls with the specific approval of the Municipal Manager.

6. PRIVATE CALLS

- 6.1 Employees must use telephones with discretion and restrict private telephone calls to the minimum time.
- 6.2 The cost of all private telephone calls made shall be recoverable from the salary of the employee should there be a trend of abuse.

7. TELEPHONE STATEMENTS

- 7.1 Employees may request a statement of their call records.

8. MONTHLY LIMITS

All councilors and officials of the WRDM who have been allocated a WRDM office phone pin code, shall have a set monthly expenditure limit, herein after referred to as the bill limit.

Category	Monthly Limit
Full Time Councilors	Unlimited
Management	Unlimited
Personal Assistants/Executive Secretaries/ Secretaries	R500-00
Personal Assistants to Full Time Councilors	R400-00
General staff	R100-00
Public Safety Officials	R100-00
Supply Chain Management Officials	R100-00

9. PROTECTIVE MEASURES

- 9.1 Employees will be provided with Personal Identification Numbers, which is required in order to unlock the telephone and gain access to the use of the municipality's telephone system.
- 9.2 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 telephones by employees at the expense of the fellow employees.
- 9.3 It is the sole responsibility of the employee to ensure that his/her PIN number is not abused and kept safe.
- 9.4 Employees are not to disclose their PIN numbers to other employees or to avail their PIN numbers to other employees for use.

10. FUNCTIONS

Officials are able to utilized the "divert call" function when an employee's desk is left unattended. The attendee to the diverted call must be informed where the employee has gone and when he/she is expected back.

11. TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

- 11.1 All officials must observe generally accepted telephone etiquette and must refrain from using obscene language.
- 11.2 Incoming calls must be handled with courtesy and should be directed to relevant people or departments.

12. NON COMPLIANCE TO POLICY

- 12.1 This policy shall apply to all users of the WRDM telephone system, regardless of their designation.
- 12.2 Failure to comply with the policy will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression, and appropriate disciplinary action could result from such action.

13. AVAILABILITY OF THIS POLICY

This policy shall be available for every official, upon being appointed in the service of the WRDM.

14. INTERPRETATION OF THIS POLICY

- 14.1 All words contained in this policy shall have an ordinary meaning attached thereto, unless the definition or context indicates otherwise.
- 14.2 The dispute on interpretation of this policy shall be declared in writing by a party concerned.
- 14.3 The office of the MM shall give a final interpretation of this policy in case of written dispute.
- 14.4 If the party concerned is not satisfied with the interpretation, a dispute may then be pursued with the South African Local Government Bargaining Council

15. POLICY REVISION

The policy will be reviewed biennial.