

## **DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 14-10**

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE

DATE: July 25, 2014

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### **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

#### **I. PURPOSE.**

To establish guidelines governing individually owned personal communication devices used while on-duty.

#### **II. DEFINITIONS.**

Because of technical advances and varying manufacturer nomenclature, this policy will generically refer to all devices capable of cellular two-way communication and/or portable Internet access.

#### **III. PROCEDURES**

Employees may carry their own PCD while on duty, subject to the following conditions:

Carrying an individually-owned PCD is optional.

The PCD shall be purchased, used and maintained at the employee's expense.

The PCD should be placed on vibrate or silent mode during working hours.

Hands-free devices (ex. -- "Bluetooth") will not be worn.

Excessive use for personal business during working hours is prohibited.

Use of personal devices that is not business-related and/or that cause an employee to be unproductive, or to utilize their work time in an inefficient manner is strictly prohibited.

The department shall not be liable for damages to the employee's PCD while in the course of their duties.

Employees may not use their PCD to take photographs at crime scenes, traffic crash scenes or of any evidence unless there is an immediate danger that the scene or evidence may be destroyed. If photographs are taken they will be promptly uploaded into the department's digital asset management system. Under no circumstances will it be permissible to email or text photographs for unofficial purposes.

The use of a PCD while driving can cause unnecessary distractions and presents a negative image to the public. Officers operating emergency vehicles should restrict the use of these devices while driving to matters of an urgent nature and should, where practical, stop the vehicle at an appropriate location to complete their call.

Except in the case of an emergency, employees who are operating non-emergency vehicles shall not use cellular phones or other personal communication devices while driving unless the device is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking. Such use should be restricted to business related calls or calls of an urgent nature.

Under no circumstances should an employee text message, surf the Internet, receive or respond to email, or check devices for messages while they are driving.

BY ORDER OF:

KEVIN R. MURPHY  
Chief of Police

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