



FALL RIVER RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

GENERAL POLICY No. 613 SUBJECT: GUIDELINE FOR USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

I. **PURPOSE:**

To establish guidelines for the safe, responsible, and acceptable use of electronic devices and equipment, including cellular phones, computers, radios, and testing equipment, in support of employee safety and operational effectiveness.

To specify individual employee accountability of assigned company-owned electronic equipment.

II. **POLICY:**

It shall be the policy of the Cooperative to establish and enforce guidelines for the safe and appropriate use of electronic devices and equipment, consistent with accepted personnel practices and applicable federal and state laws.

III. **RESPONSIBILITY:**

The CEO/General Manager is responsible for the administration and enforcement of this policy.

IV. **PROVISIONS:**

The following procedures and conditions shall apply to the provisions of this policy: Employees who are provided with electronic equipment are expected to use such equipment properly and at all times exercise safety.

A. Cellular phones and other communication devices

1. Personal cellular phones

- a. While at work, employees shall exercise discretion in the use of personal electronic devices so as not to interfere with

productivity, safety, or workplace professionalism. Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, shall neither interfere with employee productivity nor be distracting to others. Employees are expected to make personal calls on non-work time and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the Cooperative's policy. Flexibility will be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention.

- b. The Cooperative will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

2. Company Provided Cellular Phones

- a. Where job or business needs require immediate or reliable access, the Cooperative may issue a cellular phone or other communication device for business purposes.
- b. The Cooperative will provide a cellular phone plan appropriate for normal work-related communications. The data is intended to be used for company business.
- c. However, the Cooperative recognizes that employees will occasionally use their cell phone for personal use. Employees have two options pertaining to personal use:
 - i. The employee agrees to reimburse the company for any minutes, roaming, long distance, or other charges that exceed the approved plan. There will be no cost to the employee, if monthly charges do not exceed the plan.
 - ii. If employees wish to purchase plans providing additional airtime, they may do so by paying the difference between the two plans.

3. Safety issues for cellular phone usage

Employees shall not use handheld electronic devices while operating a vehicle for Cooperative business. Hands-free use is permitted only where lawful and when it does not compromise safety. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees must pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call or reading or sending text messages. Incoming calls can only be answered if a hands-free option is available in the vehicle. Employees shall keep calls short and refrain from discussion of complicated or emotional issues and keep their eyes on the road. Special care must be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area. In no circumstance should an employee be texting while in operation of a vehicle.

B. Portable Electronic Equipment

1. Portable electronic equipment (but not limited to cell phones, portable computers, handheld devices and testing equipment, etc.) shall be stowed or secured properly in the driver's compartments.
2. Vehicles with portable computers shall be locked when the vehicle is unattended.

C. Other Electronic Equipment

Employees should exercise due care with all company-owned electronic equipment and use them responsibly to carry out their job functions.

D. Lost or Damaged Equipment

An employee may be held responsible for the replacement or repair cost of company-owned electronic equipment lost or damaged due to misuse, negligence, or abuse, as determined by management.

E. Meeting Etiquette

All electronic devices should be turned off or placed in vibrate or silent mode during meetings to decrease interruptions.

F. Misuse

Violations of this policy will subject employees to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

V. **PRIMACY OF POLICY:**

This policy supersedes any existing policy or policies that may be in conflict with the provisions of this policy. This policy does not represent a contract between the employer and the employee, and the policies herein may be changed by the employer alone and without notice.

APPROVED BY THE CEO/GENERAL MANAGER



Bryan Case, CEO/GM

DATE APPROVED: December 28, 2009

DATE REVISED: July 24, 2017

November 18, 2019

October 31, 2023

January 27, 2026