



Cell Phones at Work

As school support staff, we should be modelling good behaviour with cell phone use at work. Administrators provide the direction in a building on their expectations for staff about the use of cell phones and personal devices.

Our personal cell phones are our personal property. You may or may not have your district email on your device, that is your choice. You may or may not use the school Wi-Fi with your device. If you use the district Wi-Fi – the digital footprint used while accessing the Wi-Fi can be monitored.

There should be no obligation to use your personal device for work related use. This could include texting, phone calls as well as functions of apps such as - calculator, music, camera, internet searches and email for a few examples. If you need any digital support for a specific learner then talk to your Admin, Case Manager, Resource teacher or Teacher for solutions.

Cell Phone Do Not's

- Use your cell phone for personal use during work time – such as social media, games, online shopping, personal calls, text etc.
- Use your cell phone to contact parents. Support staff do not contact parents at any time -this is teacher/Admin duties.

If you are expecting an important call or there is an emergency, then talk to your Administrator in advance, if possible, to let them know, so they would know why you are accessing your cell phone. This would be for a rare occurrence – not a regular practice.

Cell Phone Do's

- Have your phone ringer off/set to vibrate during your work hours
- Store your phone in a secure location – staff room locker, cupboard in classroom, desk drawer, etc.
- If you have your phone on your person, keep out of sight, in pocket or bag during work time
- Use your phone to check texts/make calls etc. during your break times

The abuse of cell phone use by co-workers can cause contention in the workplace – when some staff follow the rules and others choose not to. This can lead to a divide in the school team, affecting the culture and morale in the workplace. Our role is to model good behaviour and always support our learners.

Consequences of personal cell phone use during work time

Administrators should make the expectations clear for their building. Failure to follow these expectations can lead towards progressive discipline and involve an investigation with Human Resources. This can be determined by actions already taken at a site – staff meetings, all staff emails specifying expectations, verbal, written warnings/email from Administration.

The outcomes of an investigation meeting are confidential and can be- non-disciplinary: no action, letter of expectation.

Progressive discipline depending on severity of conduct: letter of direction, letter of reprimand, letter of suspension, termination. These letters stay on file for 18 months and need if received, need to be taken seriously, as the discipline can lead up to loss of pay if suspended and up to and loss of employment.

To summarize: Disconnect with your cell phone during your work schedule and support your learners