
MOBILE PHONES & DEVICES AT WORK POLICY

This policy defines the Company's rules for all employees concerning the use of mobile devices (both Company and personal equipment). **Mobile devices are defined here as including, but not limited to basic mobile phones (non-smartphones); feature phones (non-smartphones); smartphones; smartwatches; tablets.** The policy is intended to safeguard the Company and its employees, in terms of IT and information security and to limit the negative effects of inappropriate, unnecessary and potentially dangerous distraction. This policy is reviewed annually.

Mobile Device Use – General

The Company recognises that mobile devices are now an integral part of everyday life and are a great asset if used carefully and productively. However, the technology can be detrimental to focus and efficiency if used unwisely and excessively during working hours. **Acceptable business use** of Company mobile devices is defined as authorised activities which support, enhance or contribute to the business of Forkers Ltd. **Acceptable personal use** of mobile devices (Company and personal) is defined as authorised, reasonable and limited personal communication or recreation, undertaken (excluding emergencies and pre-authorised events) at employee's breaktimes only.

Devices provided by the Company are principally for business use: phone calls, email, texts, records, photos, among other communications. Personal use of Company devices is permitted; however, it is restricted by rules governing personal use below. The mobile number of a Company device is now most often the principal point of contact for colleagues, managers, clients and suppliers and is indispensable for out-of-hours contacts. Employees with Company mobile devices must therefore ensure that the device is always available, fully charged with ringer and alerts turned on when appropriate (silent mode is required for meetings and other such contexts) and that phone calls, texts and other messages are answered. Users are expected to avoid exceptional charges incurred by excessive data use (streaming, video and audio), overseas call charges and traffic, weather and Directory enquiries.

Social Media may be used during working hours, providing its use has been authorised by a Director as legitimate business use. However, Company-sensitive information must not be shared on any social media platform nor must any personal data (including photographs) of any employee be shared on any platform without the prior consent of the Company and of that individual. Unauthorised sharing of information about work on current or completed contracts/tenders is also prohibited as client approval would be required for such activity. Employees may not post news or other information on any of the Company's social media accounts (LinkedIn, Twitter) without prior authorisation from a Director. Social media apps (such as WhatsApp, for example) may be authorised for the establishment of legitimate business 'groups' among whom Company messaging may take place (the setting up of a WhatsApp group by/for the group of employees involved in the delivery of a contract, for example).

The use of the internet over a mobile device (Wi-Fi or network provider) during work time for any other purpose than for that which supports, enhances or contributes to the business of Forkers Ltd is strictly prohibited. The viewing or dissemination of illegal, offensive or unauthorised material (including photographs) on mobile devices is strictly prohibited and will be regarded as gross misconduct resulting in disciplinary action. Storage of such material on Company mobile devices is similarly prohibited.

Mobile device etiquette:

1. Devices are to be switched off or kept on silent mode during meetings. Staff should refrain from continually checking their devices during meetings as this suggests a lack of engagement and can be distracting and annoying for colleagues.
2. If expecting necessary calls, staff should ask the chairman or other meeting attendees if they may leave their device ringer/alerts on (non-silent mode).
3. If it is necessary to take a call during a meeting, staff should apologise and leave the room before answering the call.
4. Employees should refrain from checking their mobile device, texting or other activities whilst in conversation with colleagues and/or managers.
5. Employees should keep device and call speaking volumes at a minimum and use headphones for business videos/audio/training and, in break times only, streaming audio/video.
6. The use of Bluetooth earpieces in communal work areas should be kept to a minimum and the same consideration for colleagues applied as for 1 to 4, above.
7. Bullying or harassment of employees using any app, messaging or social media platform will not be tolerated and, where proven, will result in disciplinary action.

Rules for Personal Use – Office Buildings, including Site Offices and all Site Accommodation

Mobile devices and particularly the continuous checking of phones, 'chatting', texting, messaging, viewing videos (YouTube etc.) can be a disruptive presence in the workplace, representing not only a distraction for the user but causing stress, anger and unrest amongst manager and colleagues as well as having a negative impact on productivity and performance. There is a distinction between Company devices and personal devices as Company devices are the single professional contact for colleagues, managers, clients, supplier and others. These devices must therefore always be to hand, charged and in active (non-silent) mode. The rules regarding personal use of a Company device, however, are the same as rules 2 to 5 below.

Rules for personal use:

1. Personal mobile devices may be kept on employees' desks but must be kept on silent and with vibration turned off.
2. Personal calls and messages may be answered/responded to in the case of emergency or with the prior agreement of employees' line manager in the case of pre-arranged calls/messages.
3. Other than for emergencies or for pre-arranged calls/messages, personal calls, personal texts and personal messages over other platforms (including but not limited to WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Messenger) must be performed in break times and preferably away from working areas.
4. The personal use of the internet over any personal mobile device during work time is strictly prohibited.
5. The use of mobile devices to play games during working hours is strictly prohibited.

Mobile Device Use – Sites and Plant Yards (Health and Safety)

Mobile devices (Company or personal) **may not be used during work activities on any of our sites at any time.** The use of mobile devices during working activities creates a high Health & Safety risk and will not be tolerated. The following exceptions on mobile device use **may** be agreed with your supervisor. Mobile device use is permitted:

1. If it is agreed that it is the preferred and safe method of communication on site between supervisors and operatives due to distance or remoteness of the work site from the site office. This will relate to site calls only. Again, calls, texts and other messaging **must not** be performed whilst working; in this situation the operative using the mobile device must cease work activity and move to a safe area before engaging the mobile device.
2. If it forms part of the agreed emergency procedures on site.
3. For other specific or emergency personal call/text/messaging requirements which must be pre-agreed with site managers/foremen and undertaken in identified safe areas, such as the site office, canteen.
4. For authorised use at break times when in a safe place, such as in the canteen.
5. Plant operators **must never** use mobile devices whilst operating plant or machinery of any type. If a call/text/message is to be made or received by a plant operator based on an approval given in a), b), c) or d) above, the plant operator must ensure the plant or equipment is made safe, switched off and is stationary before engaging the mobile device.

Mobile Device Use – Vehicles

For full details of the Company's policy on the use of mobile devices in vehicles, please refer to the Driving Handbook (GP115016), 3.0 Mobile Phones in Vehicles & In-Vehicle Technology. In summary, here, the use of handheld mobile devices whilst driving is illegal and is strictly prohibited. The use of hands-free calling is permitted in vehicles with this facility. However, calls should be kept to a minimum duration.

Failure to comply with this policy may be a disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action being taken including, where appropriate, dismissal for gross misconduct.



D Cartwright, Construction Director

1st January 2024