

Cell Phone Allowance Policy FAQ

Q. Why is the University making this change?

A. This was recommended by the President's Operating Budget Task Force as a means to reduce expenses. In addition, for those employees who are carrying both a personal and university-issued cell phone, this change enables them to choose a plan that fits both their professional and personal needs.

Q. Who will decide which employees are eligible for an allowance?

A. Your supervisor will make a recommendation based on the working conditions of your position. The criteria are outlined in the policy.

Q. I already have a personal cell phone and don't want to keep my university-issued number. Can I still receive the allowance?

A. Yes, there is no requirement to keep your university-issued number in order to be considered eligible for the allowance.

Q. If the university is not paying for any portion of my cell phone plan, am I still required to answer the phone if my supervisor calls me?

A. It depends. You will need to discuss expectations with your supervisor.

Q. How much allowance will I receive?

A. The allowance is \$45 per month. This equals \$45 per pay for exempt employees (monthly payroll) and \$20.77 for non-exempt employees (bi-weekly payroll).

Q. How was the allowance amount determined?

A. The allowance was calculated as 50% of the monthly cost to subscribe to a basic unlimited plan for one device, plus the cost of a new smartphone amortized over 36 months.

Q. What if I need to purchase a new phone? Will the University pay for it?

A. No, the allowance is meant to cover a portion of the monthly subscription cost. The purchase of any related equipment or accessories is the responsibility of the employee.

Q. Will the university assist me with setting up my personal account?

A. No, setting up a personal account will be the responsibility of the employee.

Q. How will I receive the allowance?

A. The taxable allowance will be included in your paycheck.

Q. Will the allowance be considered taxable income?

A. Yes, the allowance is considered taxable income. The amount of the allowance will not be considered part of the employee's base salary or be used in the calculation of retirement benefits.

Q. If I am eligible for an allowance, am I guaranteed to receive this as long as I am employed in my current position?

A. No, the allowance is neither permanent nor guaranteed. The university reserves the right to change the allowance amount or add/remove participants at any point in the future.

Q. Will I be required to provide a copy of my personal cell phone bill?

A. No. Supervisors are expected to keep track of who is eligible to receive the allowance based on job responsibilities and working conditions.

Q. Will I be able to keep my current phone number?

A. Yes. All vendors support 'local number portability' rules allowing you to keep your existing cell phone number regardless of the vendor or plan. A member of the ITS department will be contacting you to schedule a time convenient to you to port your number over.

Q. Can I keep my current phone?

A. Yes, however if you do not want it you can also turn it in.

Q. I would like to join a family plan and the carrier charges a fee to add a device to the plan. Will Trinity pay that fee?

A. No, any fees associated with adding a device or number to an existing plan will be paid for by the employee.

Q. Will a credit check be run if I open a new personal cell phone account?

A. Most cell phone vendors run a credit check to open a new account; please make sure and check with the specific vendor.

Q. Do any wireless vendors offer discounts to Trinity University employees?

A. Yes. Verizon, AT&T, and Sprint offer discounts.

Q. I am not eligible for an allowance, but business use of my phone causes me to incur additional expense. Will I be reimbursed?

A. Yes, if using your personal phone for business use creates an out-of-pocket expense you may submit a record of these expenses to Accounts Payable for reimbursement. Please include your detailed phone bill, business purpose of the calls, and your supervisor's approval.

Q. When does the new policy begin?

A. All employees should complete the move to a personal plan no later than September 1, 2020.

Q. If I am not eligible for the allowance, am I required to use my phone for university related business?

A. In general, most employees are expected to use their personal cell phone for university business. Please discuss specific expectations with your supervisor.

Q. My carrier requires approval from Trinity to transfer my cell phone number to my personal plan. Who should I contact?

A. ITS will be working with each department individually to transfer your phone to the provider of your choice.

Q. My department has a restricted (or donor supported) account with available funds. Can I use that to pay for my cell phone service?

A. No, the policy applies to all employees, regardless of the source of funding.

Q. What if I have been paying my cell phone bill with a Trinity University p-card?

A. The monthly cost of a cell phone may no longer be billed to a p-card. In addition, cell phones may no longer be purchased using a p-card. Any such expenses posting to your p-card after September 1, 2020 will require reimbursement to the university.

Q. My office has been working remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Are we eligible to receive the allowance?

A. No, only positions that are designated as permanently remote are eligible.

Q. My family already has a plan with Verizon, am I able to keep my phone and number and transfer this to my family plan?

A. Yes, however depending on what phone you have, a new one may need to be purchased.