

Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure



APD.SOP.6011 Smartphone Procedures
Effective Date: June 4th, 2024



Chief Darin Schierbaum

Signature by: DS

Date Signed: June 4th, 2024

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD.SOP.6011

Smartphone Procedures

Policy revisions and highlights:

1. The use of ALL phones used for official business are subject to being subpoenaed.
2. Personal phones are not to be used to capture evidence.
3. Evidence taken on scene by the employee must be uploaded into evidence.com via Axon prior to end of shift.

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section has changed the Smartphone Procedures Policy.

Listed below are some of the notable changes—however, read the entire policy to remain knowledgeable about the department’s procedures.

4.2.4 Employees are responsible for answering all calls and text messages from a supervisor within 24 hours; not to exceed two business days unless the Employee is on scheduled time off.

4.2.9 All received Voicemails, text messages, and requests for information or action by telephone, should be responded to immediately but take no longer than two business days to respond.

4.2.13 Personal smartphones are NOT to be used for capturing audio and/or visual evidence. Any use of a personal smartphone in this way could result in disciplinary actions.

Thank you and stay informed!

**Policy and Standards Section
Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit**



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1. PURPOSE

The intent of this policy is to establish procedures for the use, accountability, and maintenance of Department issued smartphones.

2. POLICY

The Atlanta Police Department will provide employees with a city issued smartphone, which will allow employees to communicate and access applications that assist in performing their official job requirements.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Section Commanders, or their designee, will monitor personnel under their command to ensure that the proper smartphone procedures are being followed as written in this directive.
- 3.2 The Academy Director, or their designee, will coordinate with the Emergency 911 Communications Administrative Analyst Senior, or their designee, for the distribution of the Smartphones to the recruit officers enrolled in the Training Academy. In addition, the Academy Director will review, approve, and publish any training material regarding the use of the smartphone and work-related installed apps.
- 3.3 The Emergency 911 Communications Administrative Analyst Senior is responsible for maintaining accurate inventory of all smartphones and having sufficient replacement phones on hand.
- 3.4 Each employee is responsible for the maintenance and accountability of their assigned phone. Employees will follow the procedures set forth in this policy pertaining to the use, care, and reporting regarding their department issued smartphone.

4. ACTION

4.1 SMARTPHONE ACCESS

4.1.1 **WARNING** – Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy for any communication or data that is transmitted by, or stored within, their department issued Smartphone. This includes call logs, text messages, emails, browsing history, app usage, app contents, and any other data. At any time, such information may be searched, seized, and/or stored externally. All records are subject to release as part of an investigation or pursuant to Georgia Open Records law.

4.1.2 Smartphones will be issued to individual personnel, recruits and selected civilians by the E911 Communications Administrative Analyst Senior. The E911 Communications Administrative Analyst Senior will maintain records of those who receive phones along with the make, model, serial number, and smartphone number.

4.2 SMARTPHONE USE

4.2.1 Smartphones issued by the Department are intended for official APD business purposes. Employees will access work related applications for official business purposes only. The Department recognizes that it may be necessary to use a departmental smartphone for personal calls and/or text messages. Employees are reminded that they are creating public records when using their assigned device and therefore should not intentionally delete text messages; any communications on their issued smartphones may be subject to subpoena or release pursuant to the Georgia Open Records law.



- 4.2.2 Smartphones must be password protected and may require configuration with the necessary controls and security features before being used for official business.
- 4.2.3 Employees will ensure their smartphone is charged daily, and the device has at least an 80% battery charge upon arriving for duty/work.
- 4.2.4 Employees are responsible for answering all calls and text messages from a supervisor within 24 hours; not to exceed two business days unless the Employee is on scheduled time off.
- 4.2.5 Employees will not use smartphones to conduct Departmental business that should otherwise be broadcast over the radio.
- 4.2.6 Smartphones may be used to allow additional communication between employees but does not relieve the employee from using the radio for disseminating and documenting information.
- 4.2.7 Employees will not use their assigned smartphone for personal business while interacting with the general public.
- 4.2.8 In Compliance with SOP.2011, General Conduct, Employees will greet callers courteously.
- 4.2.9 All received voicemails, text messages, and requests for information or action by telephone, should be responded to immediately but take no longer than two business days to respond. (Re: APD.SOP.2011 General Conduct)
- 4.2.10 Employees will restart their smartphone once per week to refresh the applications and operating system.
- 4.2.11 The use of Departmental issued smartphones is recommended for, but not limited to, the purpose of capturing high-quality images and audio for the following:
 - a. Location of found evidence
 - b. Details too small to be accurately captured by BWC's such as serial and/or model numbers
 - c. Victim testimony
 - d. Victim injuries

The use of the Body Worn Camera is still required in accordance with APD.SOP.3133 even when using the smartphone and Axon Capture app.
- 4.2.12 Audio and visual evidence recorded by the departmental smartphones must be uploaded and categorized in the Axon Capture app prior to the end of the employees shift. This is to ensure the images are saved to Evidence.com and not stored permanently on the device in the event the phone is lost, damaged or stolen.
- 4.2.13 Personal smartphones are NOT to be used for capturing audio and/or visual evidence. Any use of a personal smartphone in this way could result in disciplinary actions.
- 4.2.14 Internet usage and browsing on departmental smartphones should be related to the employee's professional duties. Use of the smartphone to browse restricted internet sites is prohibited and will result in disciplinary actions.
- 4.2.15 The usage of Social Media on department smartphones is authorized only for official department business.



- 4.2.16 Employees are prohibited from using department issued smartphones to make harassing or threatening phone calls, text messages, or other forms of electronic communication that are in strict violation of State law, City Ordinance, or the policies and procedures of the Atlanta Police Department.
- 4.2.17 The use of a department issued smartphone for calls outside of the continental United States is prohibited. Employees who are traveling outside of the continental United States on Department business will notify the E911 Communications Administrative Analysts Senior, or their designee, in advance, so international calling arrangements can be made. This will only be done with the approval of the Chief of Police, or their designee.

4.3 SMARTPHONE REPLACEMENT

- 4.3.1 In the event that the issued smartphone is lost, stolen, damaged, or in need of repair, the employee will do the following as soon as possible:
1. Notify your immediate Supervisor of the situation.
 2. Contact the E911 Communications Supervisor at 404-614-6525 and provide your name and smartphone number, the E911 supervisor will notify the E911 Communications Administrative Analyst Senior, so the phone can be turned off or wiped.
 3. Complete an Incident Report.
 4. Go to the E911 Communications Administrative Analysts Senior office with a printed copy of the incident report to be issued a replacement Smartphone.
- 4.3.2 In the event the Smartphone is damaged or in need of repair follow steps 1, 3 & 4 above.
- 4.3.3 If the Smartphone is lost, stolen, or damaged due to negligence, the employee may be financially responsible.

4.4 CARRYING THE SMARTPHONE

- 4.4.1 Sworn employees issued a department Smartphone are to have their device on their person while on duty. The phone is not to be placed where it may obstruct the nametag.
- 4.4.2 All other personnel issued a department Smartphone, with the exception of recruits, are to have their Smartphone readily assessable during their workday.

4.5 SMARTPHONE EXAMINATION

If an employee is notified to deliver their city issued smartphone for examination, the employee will transport their device in the most expeditious manner to their supervisor or the Office of Professional Standards. Personnel will make no modifications or deletions to the device and will make every effort to avoid damage or loss of the device prior to turning it over for examination.

4.6 SMARTPHONE TRAINING

All training on the operations of the Smartphone or any of its work-related applications will be approved and conducted at the discretion the Training Academy Director, or their designee.



5. DEFINITIONS

Smartphone: A mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer, typically having a touchscreen interface, internet access, and an operating system capable of running downloaded applications.

Wiping: To render all data on a hard drive unreadable. The term is often used in reference to making data stored on a computer, smartphone, or tablet inaccessible before disposing of the device.

6. CANCELLATIONS

7. REFERENCES

Metro Louisville Police Department, SOP 4.30, Smartphones
Freedom of Information Act – 5 USC § 552
Official Code of Georgia Annotated TITLE 50. STATE GOVERNMENT, CHAPTER 18. STATE PRINTING AND DOCUMENTS, ARTICLE 4. INSPECTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS
APD.SOP.2011 General Conduct, Section 4.13, 4.1.4 & 4.3