

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Transitional Center Resident Cell Phones

Policy Number: 215.23

Effective Date: 07/14/2022

Page Number: 1 of 3

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Facilities Division
(Transitional Center)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will govern the use of Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) approved cellular phones by Work Release Residents at GDC Transitional Centers. This SOP also explains the rules and sanctions that can be imposed if a cellular phone is misused. Use of GDC-approved cellular phones is a privilege and not a right. Loss of this privilege is non-grievable. All communications sent or received via a GDC-approved cellular device are subject to inspection and review for security reasons, and neither the sender nor receiver has an expectation of privacy from this communication.

II. Authority:

- A. O.C.G.A. § 42-5-18(b); and
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 215.12, Resident Personal Property, 215.04, Transitional Center Security Procedures, and Responsibilities, and 227.05, Visitation of Offenders.

III. Definitions: None.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. Policy: The purpose of providing Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) approved cellular phones to Work Release Residents at GDC Transitional Centers (TCs or centers) is to aid in the reentry, employment, and family reunification process for residents.
- B. Resident use of the GDC-approved cellular device:
 - 1. All approved cellular phones will be provided by the GDC to authorized Work Release Residents **only**.

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2. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the court records and Judge's orders of sex offenders to ensure there are no restrictions regarding possession of a cell phone or an internet-capable device.
 3. Upon arrival to the TC residents shall complete Attachment 1, Resident Request for Authorization to Maintain a Cellular Phone, and Residents will be allowed to update their visitation list by utilizing Attachment 5, Facility/Center Visitation List of SOP 227.05, Visitation of Offenders in accordance with the policy. Only those individuals approved for visitation with the offender will be allowed to correspond with the offender via the GDC-approved cellular device.
- C. Rules for use of the GDC-approved cellular device:
1. Phone usage shall be prohibited in the common areas of the center, such as classrooms and the dining hall. The only authorized locations for cell phone use shall be the resident rooms and on the recreation yard.
 2. Phones shall not be used during count.
 3. Phones **MUST** be set to vibrate or silent while in the center.
 4. Residents are prohibited from lending, selling, or borrowing cell phones.
 5. Residents shall not utilize any type of lock code on their cell phone.
 6. Residents are expected to follow all workplace rules regarding cell phones.
 7. Cell phones must be returned to the TC when residents are discharged from the center or transferred to another center.
 8. Residents must inform their counselor or shift OIC immediately if their cell phone is lost, stolen, damaged, or tampered with.

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9. If a GDC provided cellular device is lost, stolen, damaged, or tampered with it may result in the loss of device privileges and an obligation will be placed on the offender's trust account equal to the cost to GDC for the device.
10. GDC staff has the authority to confiscate, search, track, and/or obtain any information concerning resident cell phones. Information may be provided to other law enforcement agencies as requested.
11. Cell phone privileges may be revoked at the discretion of the Superintendent or for any disciplinary reason.

V. Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Resident Request for Authorization to Maintain a Cellular Phone
- Attachment 2: Resident Agreement for Cellular Telephone Privileges
- Attachment 3: Resident Cell Phone Upgrade/Exchange Request
- Attachment 4: Transitional Center Resident Cell Phone Log

VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:

Attachments 1, 2, and 3 to this policy shall be placed in the resident's institutional file and retained according to the retention schedule for that file. Attachment 4 shall be maintained by the Chief of Security for one (1) year and then destroyed.