

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE	NUMBER
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Telephone Usage and Release of Personal Information		



Cross Reference:..... 1.05, 1.28, 3.19, 3.63

I. Introduction

A telephone call is often the **first and possibly** only contact private citizens, other law enforcement agencies, and many others have with the Division of Police. **Because of this, it is important that Division personnel project a professional image while engaging in a telephone conversation.**

II. Policy Statements

A. Division personnel shall answer the telephone promptly, identify themselves by rank and name, offer assistance, and obtain information by speaking distinctly and in a helpful, professional manner.

Radio Room and Records Unit personnel shall follow the telephone provisions set forth in their respective S.O.P. Manuals.

B. Personnel answering calls **shall** try to assist the caller when possible and **shall** not transfer calls unnecessarily. When it is necessary to place a caller on hold, the caller **shall** be advised of the reason and **shall** not be left on hold for an extended period of time.

C. Calls requesting employment verification shall be referred to the Personnel Administration Section.

D. Outgoing voice mail messages shall be professional and shall identify the Division component and, if applicable, the employee to which it is assigned. When appropriate, the message should include a number to call when immediate assistance is needed.

E. Home addresses and telephone numbers of Division personnel, available through the Division's computer systems and computer generated printouts, are confidential. This information will be released only to **Division personnel for official business. Prosecutors and city attorneys requesting this information for preparation of court cases shall be referred to the Court Liaison Section or the Legal Advisor's Office.**

F. Computer generated printouts containing Division personnel's home addresses and telephone numbers **shall** be kept in a secure place, **shall** not be duplicated, and **shall** be rendered unreadable upon expiration.

G. Personnel should not use the police radio telephone link to discuss confidential information or to relay telephone numbers that are restricted to "law enforcement use only" distribution.

H. Directory assistance calls should be made only when reasonably necessary.

- I. Long distance calls **should be** restricted to official police business. **Personnel making a long distance call on a Division telephone may be required to provide justification. All calls placed on Division-issued cellular telephones are billed as local calls. Personnel with Division-issued cellular telephones should use them to make non-confidential calls to locations outside the local area.**
- J. **Division personnel shall not allow personal telephone calls to interfere with their duties or assignments. Personnel may be required to provide justification for questionable or excessive use.**
- K. **Division telephones may be monitored and/or recorded.**
- L. **Personnel with Division-assigned cellular telephones shall have them turned on and operating while on duty unless tactical or other operations dictate otherwise and shall check the voice mail/messaging system regularly.**
- M. **Unless otherwise prohibited, Division personnel may carry a personally-owned cellular telephone while on duty.**
- N. **Personnel using a personally-owned cellular telephone to conduct Division business will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred.**
- O. **Personnel carrying a cellular telephone shall mute the incoming call indicator and/or set it to vibrate or power the unit off when circumstances dictate.**
- P. **Division personnel shall not use unauthorized Bluetooth, other wireless technology, and/or wired accessories with any cellular telephone while on duty. This does not apply to specific operations or assignments when use is approved by the chain of command.**

III. Procedures

A. Releasing Home Addresses and Telephone Numbers

1. Verify the caller's identity by asking for their telephone number, SSN, or other identifying information.
2. For authorized callers, utilize the **Division's computer system**, when accessible, to obtain home telephone numbers/addresses.
3. Advise callers not authorized by **Division** policy that the employee's information will not be released.
4. Refer any inquiries to which you cannot respond and requests from persons other than Division personnel to the Patrol Administrative Office.

5. When the caller cannot be identified, transfer the call to the Patrol Administrative Sergeant for final disposition.

B. Telephone Calls for Division Personnel

1. Verify the requested personnel's assignment through the Division's computer system as necessary.
2. Connect the caller with the bureau to which the Division employee is assigned.
3. Connect the caller to the Patrol Administrative Office when the employee's assignment cannot be determined or the employee's bureau is closed.
4. If the employee is unavailable to receive the call, request to take a message and forward it to the employee using the Division message pad, form S-35.100, or ***email***.