

WHY YOU REALLY DO NEED A MOBILE POLICY

> You have a mobile device and, more than likely, most of your employees do, too. In fact, you may have even given them a device to help them efficiently complete a component of their job: checking email and text messages, using GPS on deliveries, taking pictures of recipients with flowers, and more. Smartphones have become powerful, almost essential business tools, but what happens when an employee loses or damages the device? Wants to use her own device and not the one you prefer? Or gets into an accident while using it for company business? If you don't have an ironclad mobile policy, the answers to these questions can be costly for your business. This month, we walk you through the essentials of a mobile policy so you can develop your own.

Define Your Terms

When you craft or revise a mobile policy, you need to clearly identify the devices it covers. Smartphones running on Google's Android, Apple's iOS or BlackBerry are obvious mobile devices, but the category also include tablets, cellular "hot-spot" cards or USB sticks, wireless-enabled laptops and GPS devices. Like smartphones, these devices are mobile and can be lost, damaged or abused.

Once you've defined what the policy covers, establish its purpose. For example, the purpose of SAF's mobile policy is to support employee's job duties, promote safety when using devices, improve management costs and enhance corporate data security — each of which contributes to the ultimate goal of limiting corporate liability. (That policy is available as a template to SAF members at safnow.org/mobilepolicy.)



Be Clear on Job Roles

Issuing mobile devices to staff members is like opening Pandora's box: employees who need them may not want them, and people who don't need devices will covet them. In deciding who should get a device, refer to your purpose, e.g. the device should "support employee's job duties." Proceed from there, but don't assume you know everything about a person's role. You may not be aware, for instance, that some folks regularly check email off-hours or take photos for social media while on a job site. Talk to your team and bring supervisors into the conversation. Revisit the topic at least every year, or when the job changes.

Your Smartphone. Your Rules.

With the growing diversity of mobile devices, managing two, even three types of smartphones can pose a challenge to any small shop. That's why I strongly recommend keeping your life simple with one platform, one device.

In SAF's case, we went with Apple's iPhone and AT&T (businesses that have higher turnover or need to be able to pass a phone between different employees may opt for the T-Mobile model, which requires a higher up front cost but lower monthly fees — and no contract.)

Qualified employees received the base model phone (iPhone 5s, 16Gig, \$199); those who want the biggest and the best (iPhone 5s, 64Gig, \$399) pony up the difference.

The iPhone's easy-to-use management software allows us to do two key things: help locate missing devices (with "Find My iPhone") and wipe the data of lost phones. This should be an absolute essential in any policy, in order to protect data. Remember to state explicitly that employees pay replacement costs; doing so ensures they care for the device like it's their own — even though they may not own it 100 percent.

Negotiating BYO Device

Employees who want to use their own device for work-related purposes pose another real challenge. Remember, more devices mean more overhead and headaches for you. But if an employee insists on an alternative to the device you've se-



lected, the final agreement must require the employee to submit the device as business inventory that can be managed, the same as a business-owned device: It must be password protected, trackable and remotely wiped. These capabilities depend on the management software — solutions to investigate include Apple Profile Manager, McAfee, Symantec, MobileIron or AirWatch.

Prevent Distracted Driving

Driving using a mobile device is downright dangerous; in some situations and places, it's illegal. Don't allow your employees to engage with their devices while driving. At the minimum, you should provide a hands-free kit and your mobile policy should require that employees use it. Of course texting, checking email, using apps or surfing the web is prohibited.

Although many aspects of a mobile device may seem draconian, recall that the ultimate purpose is to ensure the safety of the employee and protect your business from a liability and cost perspective. And remember, once your policy is set, make sure the employee signs it. 🐦

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Ready-to-Adapt Mobile Policy

Want to write your mobile policy? Use SAF's as a starting point, which you can tailor to your business's needs. SAF's mobile policy — which includes all of the issues mentioned here and more — can be found at safnow.org/mobilepolicy.