

Installation in residences of telecommunications equipment - Medical

Policy Number: D7 (QH-POL-156)

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Purpose: To outline the installation in residences of telecommunications equipment (including telephones) provisions for medical employees.

Application: This policy applies to medical officer employees working in Queensland Health.

Delegation: The 'delegate' is as listed in the relevant Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:

- *Human Rights Act 2019*
- Medical Officers (Queensland Health) Award – State 2015
- Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 5) 2018

Related policy or documents:

- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service
- Queensland Government: Use of ICT Facilities and Devices Policy (IS38)
- Use of ICT Services Policy (QH-POL-032)
- Use of ICT Services Standard (QH-IMP-032-1)
- Use and purchase of mobile phones Standard (QH-IMP-032-4)

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1 Installation of telecommunications equipment in residences

The arrangements in this policy apply in all cases in which a Hospital and Health Service (HHS) or the Department of Health (department) requires the installation of a telephone in a medical employee's private residence for official purposes.

Telephone services are provided by Queensland Health in residences to facilitate the business of the employer by enabling key employees in HHSs and the department to be quickly and easily contacted. The residence may be owned, leased, or rented by the employer or employee.

Refer to Use of ICT Services Policy (QH-POL-032) or local Information and Communication Technology services policy.

1.1 Costs of private telephone calls

The cost of private calls (including local, national, international and mobile calls) is the responsibility of the employee (refer section 1.3 for reimbursements applicable in certain circumstances).

1.2 Connection

The following applies for the connection of a telephone:

- The employee is to arrange connection directly with the telecommunications carrier and submit the paid account for reimbursement by the HHS/department.
- The HHS/department is to meet the cost of the installation and the rental charges.
- The new connection is to be billed in the name of the employee at the address where the service is to be established.
- The HHS/department may facilitate arrangements with the carrier to minimise delays in installation of the service.

1.3 Reimbursement

The HHS/department is to reimburse the cost of official national and international calls, and official calls to mobile phones. All other charges are at the employee's cost.

An allowance not exceeding the cost of 280 metered local calls per annum is allowed for medical superintendents. For all other employees (with prior approval) the allowance is not to exceed the cost of 166 metered local calls per annum.

Reimbursement of installation and rental charges for employees' private telephone services is not to exceed the standard rates for a telephone line and single handset equipment. If the employee has a package arrangement with a telecommunications carrier, reimbursement is made only for the costs directly attributable to the provision of a telephone line and associated handset and equipment (and not the entire package). It may be necessary for the employee to supply details of the particular carrier's standard telephone line and handset installation and rental charges when submitting claims. Specialty handsets or devices will be reimbursed if they are required to improve the ability of an employee with a vision or hearing impairment.

Claims for reimbursement of telecommunications charges are only to be considered for payment if the claim is submitted within 12 months from the billing date.

The number of metered local calls appears on the billing statement issued by the telecommunications carrier.

The HHS/department is to accept responsibility only for call charges in the above outlined circumstances and only when the above procedures are followed.

1.4 Telephone usage

All official national calls made from the telephone in the residence are to be dialled direct to ensure that the minimum cost is incurred. The calls are to be recorded in a register and reconciled with the billing statement received from the telecommunications carrier.

1.5 Hospital switchboard and health facility extensions

When an employee is provided with a telephone service as an extension from the hospital or health facility switchboard or other approved telecommunications feature or product, the HHS/department is to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that a register is kept of all official national calls.

Employees are to make their own arrangements for outgoing private calls. Options may include pre-paid telephone cards or reverse charge calling.

1.6 Short term employees

A HHS/department may arrange the connection of the telephone service for local access only (and meet the cost of installation, rental charges, and official local calls) when:

- it is impractical for employees to connect the service in their own name, e.g. short-term temporary employment, short-term relieving, etc.
- the initial engagement is for less than three months.

Employees are to make their own arrangements if national call access is required for private calls. Options may include pre-paid telephone cards or reverse charge calling.

1.7 Mobile phones

A mobile phone may be substituted for a fixed installation. Refer to Use of ICT Services Policy (QH-POL-032) or local Information and Communication Technology services policy.

1.8 Connection of personal computers and facsimiles to external telephone exchange lines

Telephone lines and services, including mobile phones, for which the HHS/department is the rental account payer, are not to be used for connecting privately owned personal computers/modems to the internet, or operating privately owned facsimile machines.

1.9 Taxation issues

The Australian Taxation Office requires substantiation of monies paid to employees for reimbursement of costs for telephones. It is the responsibility of the employee to justify the proportion claimed for business calls.

1.10 Accounting system

HHSs/department are to ensure that an appropriate accounting system is in place for reimbursement to employees for any costs associated with official telephones installed in residences.

1.11 Review

Periodic reviews of staffing, residential, and telecommunication arrangements are to be undertaken by the HHS/department. Any arrangements and associated payments not justified on the basis of official need are to be discontinued.

History:

June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy application amended as a result of changes outlined in the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019.
December 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> formatted as part of the HR Policy review amended to update references and naming conventions amended to provide clarity regarding reimbursement for specialty handsets or devices.
May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed as a result of the HR policy consolidation project.
Previous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IRM 2.2-3 Installation in Residences of Telecommunications Equipment, Including Telephones