1. GENERAL

1.1 Texas A&M International University recognizes that the performance of certain job responsibilities may be enhanced by the use of personal communication devices. Departments may elect to obtain and provide such devices to an employee whose job duties necessitate the use of such equipment. Alternately, the department may elect to monetarily contribute to the employee’s purchase and monthly use of personal communication devices under the provisions of this Rule. The Communication Allowance Program will be comprised of a monthly allowance, which provides salary supplements for service plans.

1.2 A personal communication device acquired in accordance with the provisions of this Rule is the employee’s property and may be used in any way the employee deems appropriate. The monthly communication allowances are considered taxable compensation subject to required tax withholdings. A communication allowance is not an entitlement and is not part of an employee’s base salary. The monthly communication allowance will be paid in equal installments as a salary supplement from departmental funds as authorized by the department head.

2. APPROVAL

2.1 Department heads are responsible for determining which positions require the use of personal communications devices and, therefore, qualify for the Communication Allowance Program. Granting a communication allowance to an employee must be directly linked to the employee's job duties and responsibilities.

2.2 Copies of the approval form used to process the communication allowance will be retained in the employee's official personnel file.
3. ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION ALLOWANCE AMOUNTS

3.1 Annually, the TAMIU Director of Purchasing and Support Services will calculate and publish the monthly Communication Allowance Program rates for cellular telephone and PDA service plans (including provisions for the payment of related taxes and selected calling features). This calculation will be based upon a composite of the Texas Building and Procurement Commission list of cellular telephone service providers that have been approved to provide cellular telephone service for state institutions and agencies.

3.2 Each department head is responsible for determining the appropriate monthly Plan Access Limit for an employee’s Communication Allowance Program based on the responsibilities of the employee’s position. Plan Access Limits should include a determination of an appropriate number of plan minutes, long distance calling options, and other plan features.

4. EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Reimbursement for Equipment and Activation Fees

4.1.1 An employee who acquires communication equipment and services after acceptance into the Communication Allowance Program will receive a reimbursement in an amount up to the established allowances to offset related expenses.

4.2 Monthly Salary Supplements

4.2.1 A contribution toward monthly expenses incurred under a communication service plan (calling plan, calling features, wireless e-mail services, paging services, and taxes) will be provided in the form of a monthly salary supplement paid to the employee. The employee will be provided an amount consistent with the established communication allowance.

4.2.2 The department will process the monthly salary supplement in accordance with the Communication Allowance Program enrollment provisions established by the TAMIU Director of Purchasing and Support Services. (Click here to obtain the Communication Allowance Program Enrollment Form).

4.2.3 An employee may elect to enroll in a service plan that exceeds the approved plan limits selected by the department. Regardless of the cost of the plan chosen by the employee, the communication allowance will not exceed the amount
established by the Communication Allowance Program. The employee is responsible for payment of all charges to the provider, including any amount that exceeds the established communication allowance.

4.3 Annual Review Process

4.3.1 During the budget planning cycle, the budgetary head must evaluate the appropriateness of the communication allowance and make necessary adjustments. The monthly communication allowance may be established at any time during a fiscal year.

5. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

5.1 The employee is responsible for the selection of and enrollment in a communication service plan.

5.2 An employee receiving a communication allowance must provide his or her department with the phone and/or PDA number of the communication device within five working days of activation.

5.3 The employee is personally responsible for complying with any contract entered into with a communication service provider including payment of all expenses incurred (including long distance, roaming fees, and taxes). In the event that an employee leaves the position that qualified for a communication allowance, he or she continues to be responsible for the contractual obligations of the communication service plan.

5.4 An employee receiving a communication allowance must notify his or her department head within five working days of the inactivation of communication service even if it is due to the loss or theft of the communication equipment.

5.5 An employee receiving a communication allowance from TAMIU may not receive reimbursement from TAMIU or any other A&M System member for use of other communication equipment or services. This exclusion does not preclude the use and subsequent payment of charges made on calling cards issued to TAMIU departments.

Office of Responsibility:
Vice President for Finance & Administration