

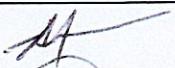
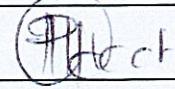
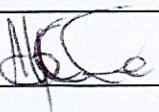
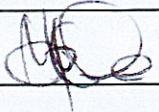
ICT DEPARTMENT	Doc Nr	
TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY	Version	0.1
	Issue Date	30 June 2025
	Next Review Date	30 June 2028



TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY

Signatories

The signatories hereof, confirm acceptance of the contents, recommendation, and adoption hereof.

TITLE		TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY	
APPROVED DATE		PAGES	19
EFFECTIVE DATE		REVIEW DATE	
ROLE	DESIGNATION	OFFICIAL/MEMBER	SIGNATURES
INITIATED BY	Manager: ICT	K DAVHULA	
RECOMMENDED BY	Senior Manager: Corporate Services		
APPROVED BY	Council:		
CUSTODIAN OF THE POLICY	Municipal Manager:		

DOCUMENT CONTROL PAGE				
Document title	TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY			
Creation date	MAY 2025			
Effective date				
Status	Draft		Final	
Version	01			
Author & Owner title, name and contact details	Manager: ICT – Kennedy Davhula Email - DavhulaK@thulamela.gov.za Telephone -			
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council • Accounting Authority and Committees • Municipal Officials • Relevant Stakeholders 			
Classification	Restricted	N/A	Confidential	N/A
Revision	Version Number	Revision Date	Revision Details	Revised by
Review History				

INDEX

1.	DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS	4
2	PREAMBLE.....	5
3.	PURPOSE.....	5
4.	OBJECTIVES.....	6
5.	SCOPE/ APPLICABILITY	6
6.	PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICE.....	7
7.	GUIDING PRINCIPLES	7
8.	CELL PHONE CONTRACTS - PROCEDURES.....	7
9.	SPECIFIED MONTHLY AIRTIME ALLOWANCE.....	9
12.	MAINTENANCE OF CELLPHONES AND EQUIPMENT.....	11
13.	3Gs CONTRACTS – PROCEDURES.....	11
14.	EMPLOYEE SUPPORT BENEFIT	12
15.	SMART PADS/TABLETS CONTRACTS – PROCEDURES.....	12
16.	DESK PHONE - PROCEDURES.....	13
17.	ROAMING	13
18.	RESIGNATIONS OR TRANSFER OF OFFICIALS.....	13
19.	SAFEGUARDING AND INSURANCE.....	14
20.	LOSS/THEFT/DAMAGE	14
21.	DISPOSAL	14
22.	PRIVATE CALLS	16
23.	TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE.....	17
24.	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	17
25.	LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK.....	18
26.	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (if applicable)	18
27.	IMPLEMENTATION.....	18
28.	MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	18
29.	CONCLUSION	18
30.	REVISION DATE	18
31.	ANNEXURES.....	19

1. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Statutory and Regulatory

This Procedure applies to the following meanings and interpretations:

#	TERM	DESCRIPTION
1.1	Desk Phones	This are telephone handsets found on the officials' desks.
1.2	Mobile phones	Standard cellular telephone supplied by registered service provider
1.3	Smart Pads	Mini notebook used mostly for data access and transfers
1.4	3Gs	Mobile internet access card via laptops and notebooks
1.5	International	Phone access Open to all worldwide form of communication, including conference related, international and all cellular lines and special lines
1.6	National	Phone access only open to national lines without cellular lines
1.7	Provincial	Phone access only open to provincial landlines
1.8	Negligence	Failure to take proper care of cell phones, 3Gs and Smart Pads.

ACRONYMS

#	TERM	DESCRIPTION
2.1	AFS	Annual Financial Statements

2 PREAMBLE

- 2.1 Whereas the cognisance should be taken of the fact that there are strategic posts within the municipality and there are members of the council whose responsibilities are of such a nature that they need cellular phones and necessary gadgets to communicate.
- 2.2 This policy places the onus on each End-User within the Municipality to take responsibility for the effective, efficient, economical and transparent use of all gadgets used by the Municipality as they have financial implications; In particular, the employee must take effective and appropriate steps to prevent, within that employee's area of responsibility, any unauthorized, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure and damage to gadgets.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of thus policy is:

- 3.1 To ensure the effective and efficient use of municipal telephone equipment;
- 3.2 To curb the abuse of Municipal telephones by officials of the council;
- 3.3 To minimise telephone costs;
- 3.4 To prevent the use of Municipal telephones by unauthorized persons;
- 3.5 To regulate what is permissible when using council resources
- 3.6 To outline expected recourse for misuse of telephone;
- 3.7 To ensure that relevant users bear the cost of using municipal telephone services for private use.
- 3.8 To minimise lost time due to employees devoting council time in pursuit of personal or private interests;
- 3.9 To provide qualifying officials and Councillor with the use of cellular phones for effective communication and timely response to matters of service delivery and attending to customer queries in an effective economical manner

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 In order to promote the economic, efficient and effective utilization of Municipal funds, this document is aimed at informing employees of the policy regarding the acquisition, use, maintenance and reimbursement of cellular telephones, telephones, smart pads and 3G- Cards for official purposes.
- 4.2 The policy seeks to regulate the usage of the Municipality's telephone and facsimile to ensure that telephones are available and are used for the conduct of official municipal business, in the direct support of assigned duties and responsibilities of users, and the delivery of municipal services.

5. SCOPE

- 5.1 This policy applies to all municipal employees authorized to make use of a cellular telephone and 3G-Cards in the performance of their official duties. From a responsibility perspective, this policy is relevant to all Municipal employees. It is, however, specifically applicable to all employees who have a formal, administrative duty to manage and control Municipal funds.
- 5.2 The utilization of cell phones for official purposes is regarded as a work facility, i.e. a tool to execute official business, and not as a right. Cell phones are not allocated to officials with a specific rank, but to a specific function or activity. The awarding of cell phones must be essential, affordable and in the interest of the State. Applications for cell phones must be properly motivated and submitted via the Head of Department. Applications must contain the following:
 - 5.2.1 Reasons for requesting a cell phone,
 - 5.2.2 Why are other means of communication not sufficient,
 - 5.2.3 The necessity that the user should always be available and in contact with staff,
 - 5.2.4 Why would the cell phone be the most economical and practical communication instrument,
 - 5.2.5 The financial implications for utilizing a cell phone,
 - 5.2.6 Whether it is budgeted for.

6. PROVISION OF TELEPHONE SERVICE

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of Council to provide all municipal offices or a combination of municipal offices with a reliable and satisfactory telephone service.
- 6.2 Council may centralise its telephone operating system through which all outgoing and incoming calls shall be routed.
- 6.3 The municipal switchboard(s) shall be housed in a safe and secure environment and the switchboard instrument as well as the office in which the switchboard is housed shall be provided with lockable device(s); the keys of which shall be in the possession of a person designated by the Accounting Officer.
- 6.4 It shall be the responsibility of the switchboard operator to ensure that no unauthorised person obtains access to the switchboard.

7. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 7.1 The responsibility for the management of cellular telephones and 3G-Cards are assigned in terms of the MFMA, to the Municipal Manager.

7.2 Treasury Regulations 10.1.1 and 10.1.2 states:

“Regulation 10.1.1- The Accounting Officer of an institution must take full responsibility and ensure that proper control systems exist for assets and that-

- a) Preventative mechanisms are in place to eliminate theft, losses, wastage and misuse; and
- b) Stock levels are at an optimum and economical level

Regulation 10.1.2 - The Accounting Officer must ensure that processes (whether manual or electronic) and procedures are in place for the effective, efficient, economical and transparent use of the institution’s assets.”

8. CELL PHONE CONTRACTS - PROCEDURES

CATEGORIES

The Municipal shall consider the requirements for cellular telephones in accordance with the following categories:

8.1 Category A: Management

This category applies to Municipal Manager, senior managers and Managers within Municipality. The Municipality shall provide these employees with a cellular telephone contract. Only a free cellular phone included in the contract tariff package can be utilised by the official. If the official wants to obtain a phone outside the specifications of the contract tariff package, the additional amount must be paid in cash by the official.

8.2 Category B: Other Officials

Qualifying Criteria:

8.2.1 An employee has proven that a need exists that necessitates a cellular phone.

8.2.2 The relevant responsibility manager has provided proof that funds have been appropriate for this specific purpose, and the Municipal shall provide these employees with a cellular telephone contract. Only a free cell phone included in the contract tariff package can be utilised by the official. Should the official choose to obtain a phone outside the specifications of the contract tariff package, the additional amount must be paid in cash by the official.

8.2.3 At the end of the 2-year contract, the official must apply again to obtain the contract, or it will be cancelled. If the official's supervisor sees that the cell phone is not taken care of, the cell phone can be suspended. Any other arrangement needed shall only be reviewed on the anniversary of the relevant cellular telephone contract.

8.3 All Categories: Management and Other Officials

8.3.1 In the event of the loss of a cellular telephone by the employee, the Municipal expects the employee to pay the necessary excess required by the Cell phone provider to acquire another cellular telephone. The Thulamela Municipality will enter insurance contracts for all gadgets that will be acquired through cellular phone providers.

8.3.2 **Acquisition:** The acquisition of devices and service packages will be aligned with the approved job levels, in accordance with corresponding job descriptions. Prior verification will be conducted to ensure that all packages offered are consistent with the designated job level at the time of entering into a new

contract. In cases where a package previously exceeded the approved job level, explicit authorization will be required for continuation. Without such approval, acquisitions will be limited to the standard provisions of the applicable job level. Degrading and upgrading of packages will be based on financial allocation and availability.

8.3.3 **Disposal:** On expiry of the cellular phone contract, the official will keep the cellular telephone at a cost of R20.00 that will be deducted once off. On termination of a cell phone contract before it reaches 24 months measures will be taken in line with the disposal process. Any other arrangement needed shall only be reviewed on the anniversary of the relevant cellular telephone contract.

8.3.4 A member of the Council or official must be in possession of a contract phone for at least 24 months before such a phone can be disposed of in terms of this policy.

8.3.5 **Tariffs alignment:** The Municipality shall cover the following maximum monthly limits, for the contract tariff package per official, and any excess above these limits shall be recovered directly as once-off salary deductions from the official, by the Financial Accounting Directorate. The said official will be informed in writing of their account details and any recoveries that will follow.

9. SPECIFIED MONTHLY AIRTIME ALLOWANCE

Current Packages

SPECIFIC MONTHLY AIRTIME ALLOWANCE		
Designation	Limit	Possible package
Municipal Manager		Unlimited minutes on all networks, unlimited SMS's and 45GB of Data or Similar
Senior Managers, Managers, Liaison		
Cell Phone Administrator, Council Support	R3 600 (Excl. Insurance)	
Assistant Managers, ICT Support, Secretary to Senior Managers	R2 400 (Excl. Insurance)	Unlimited data, 1100 minutes on all networks', unlimited SMSs and unlimited Telkom networks
The majority Union Secretary and any other employees as approved by the MM.	R1 000 (Excl. Insurance)	Unlimited data, 800 All networks' minutes, unlimited SMSs and unlimited Telkom networks
Driver Operators		

NB: The Municipality will pay the above as follows: subscription, administrative costs and insurance, and please note that the insurance cover varies according to the type of handset the user has selected, and this means that the monthly instalments will also differ depending on the insurance cover band of the phone. The above limits are also informed by the service provider's current packages, which if the service provider changes its packages, we are also bound to align with them.

The Municipal Manager, in agreement with the Senior Manager responsible, may decide to increase an allowance if the job of an official is seen to require more airtime.

10. TELEPHONE USAGE CONTROL MEASURES

- 10.1 Each qualifying official shall be allocated a secret telephone access pin code signed for and known to the employee who will always be responsible for its protection.
- 10.2 The Pin code is for use by a single person only; that individual is responsible and liable for the usage of the pin code.
- 10.3 Should an official suspect that his/her code has been used by another person; that official must report the matter immediately to the Senior Administration officer or a designated person who may upon consideration through a specified operating procedure issue or authorise the reissue of a new pin code.
- 10.4 The custodian of the pin code is still liable for any cost arising out of calls by someone who fraudulently obtained it.
- 10.5 Management may change pin codes frequently to mitigate risks.
- 10.6 The Council may provide an electronic device for monitoring all outgoing telephone calls.
- 10.7 Private calls shall not be allowed except during situations of emergency.
- 10.8 Each user should be able to identify private calls made by him/her at the end of each month, and the official may request a print-out of all calls made from the Telephone Management System.
- 10.9 The Payroll Section shall, based on information supplied regarding private calls made by an official, deduct from such an employee's salary the full cost of private calls, including VAT, for the month.
- 10.10 In general, the duration of a single call should not be more than 5 Minutes.

11. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 11.1 All employees must enter into an agreement with the Municipality that sets out his or her liability in the event of loss, theft or damage.
- 11.2 The maximum monthly amounts allocated for official calls, messages, voicemail retrievals and rentals are as per item 9 above.
- 11.3 The official shall be given a limited amount for his/her official calls, and if the official exceeds the limit given, the Head: Corporate will be authorised to make deductions to the excess amount from the monthly salary of the official.
- 11.4 The itemised billing must be returned to the Senior Manager: Corporate Services by the 7th of each month.
- 11.5 Airtime is part and parcel of the rental agreement. As the phone belongs to the Municipality, so does the airtime. It is therefore conclusive that the airtime be accounted for on the basis that it is paying for official calls only and not private calls.
- 11.6 If an official appointment is terminated, the cellular phone must be returned to the office of the Senior Manager: Corporate Services.

12. MAINTENANCE OF CELLPHONES AND EQUIPMENT

BATTERIES AND CHARGERS.

- 12.1 The above may be replaced at the cost of Council provided that the Senior Manager: Corporate Services is satisfied that the equipment was not misused.

DAMAGED OR FAULTY CELLULAR PHONES.

- 12.2 Faulty or damaged cellular phones must be reported timeously and under no circumstances shall officials temper or attempt to make any repairs to their cellular phones.

13. 3Gs CONTRACTS – PROCEDURES

- 13.1 The 3G packages must be used entirely for the Municipal needs only, and the official is expected to take full responsibility for any abuse and will be the official's

responsibility to ensure purchase of Data when the monthly allowed data may be exhausted.

3G packages are as follows:

Designation	Data Package Amount in Rands
Liaison officer & ICT Administrators	TopUp Package at an Amount of R500
Councilors	In line with the upper limit regulation

14. EMPLOYEE SUPPORT BENEFIT

14.1 For both cellphone and data packages, an employee who is not satisfied with their approved packages and would require a better package would be allowed to request a package deduction form from ICT and apply for additional deduction of resource he/she requires to be deducted directly from one's salary every month to a maximum of 20 months on a 24-month contract.

15. SMART PADS/TABLETS CONTRACTS – PROCEDURES

15.1 The Smart Pads will be afforded to officials as per the discretion of the Municipal Manager and will follow all other necessary prescripts, manuals and directives, including Finance and Asset Management.

15.2 **Councilors** will be given contracted smart pads with 1GB data monthly for council usage and communication, this will remain their property after the 5-year council sittings. Smart pads may be refreshed after 2 and ½ years if the council still have 2 and ½ years to go and if there are no additional financial charges to be added.

15.3 **Traditional Leaders** will be given contracted smart pads with 1GB of monthly data for council usage and communication, this will remain their property after the 5-year council. Smart pads may be refreshed after 2 and ½ years if the council still have 2 and ½ years to go and if there are no additional financial charges to be added.

15.4 **Senior Managers** will be given tablets for a contract period of 36 months, with 20GB of data monthly. And this will remain their property after 36 months. The above will also apply to any other employee who will be approved to receive the tablet.

16. DESK PHONE - PROCEDURES

16.1 In the spirit of addressing cost containment measures, the table below was prepared to protect both the employee and the employer. All telephone queries should be forwarded to ICT, and all managers should take responsibility to ensure their full implementation.

Group	Passwords	Limitations
MM &Senior Managers	Disabled	Internal
Managers PL3	Disabled	Internal
Operational Staff	Enabled	National & Cellphone

17. ROAMING

17.1 When an official is required to travel overseas and a need is identified to activate a roaming service with the service provider, that official may contact the ICT for these services, but upon return, should ensure that the service is discontinued. The roaming services should be linked to the period of absence from the country by the user, for which the roaming period shall be within the approved period of absence of that user. Officials should avoid using Data and Data cards when they are outside the country, as it is very costly.

18. RESIGNATIONS OR TRANSFER OF OFFICIALS

18.1 When an official resigns, dismissed, retires, his or her service is terminated for whatever reason or is transferred to another Municipality, Smart Pad and 3G will not be returned to the ICT Management, instead an amount will be deducted from their last salary or they can go and pay at the cashiers and bring the proof of payment in line with disposal processes.

18.2 When transferred to another Municipality or in case of resignation officials' lines will be removed/terminated from our account and then they will have to apply for new line/s with their new employer.

19. SAFEGUARDING AND INSURANCE

- 19.1 The responsibility of ensuring the safety of all telephony instruments is the sole responsibility of the user, and where it can be proved that the user was negligent, that user will be liable for replacing the instrument.
- 19.2 As after usage, the employee will be keeping the cell phone instrument, it is therefore advised that the employee take responsibility to ensure the equipment, as the Municipal will not take any responsibility to renew any stolen or broken cell phone instrument until such time that the contract is ready for renewal.
- 19.3 In case of loss, an employee will be given **two days** to ensure that he or she purchases another instrument to use, so a connection cut will only be allowed for two days, and a SIM swap can be provided by ICT.

20. LOSS/THEFT/DAMAGE

In case of loss/theft/damage, officials are responsible for the following:

- 20.1 A loss /damage must immediately be reported in writing to the Manager: ICT.
- 20.2 In the case of the loss of a cell phone, the user must instruct the ICT Unit to inform the service provider to block the phone card, and a reference number must be obtained.
- 20.3 The South African Police must be informed within 24 hours if the loss has occurred because of possible criminal acts, and a case number must be obtained.
- 20.4 In the event of the loss/damage or theft of a cellular telephone, the Municipal will investigate the possibility of getting the insurance to substitute the lost tool set and where Excess is required, the official will take full responsibility to pay thereof.

21. DISPOSAL

CELLULAR PHONES AND SMART PADS/TABLETS

- 21.1 In all conditions, the employer is responsible for contracts to the end, if the employee resigns/gets dismissed; the employee can opt out of the contract on prepaid bases.

21.2 In all conditions, the employee will keep the smart pad, cellular phone & 3G at the end of the contract.

21.2.1 CELLULAR PHONES: If the employee leaves the Municipality within the **first year** of the contract, a stipend of **R2000** will be deducted from the employee's salary to cover cell phone instrument acquired and as a contract default cost; If it is within the **Second year**, a stipend of **R1000** will be deducted from the employee's salary to cover instrument and contract default cost.

21.2.2 SMARTPAD/TABLET: If the employee leaves the Municipality within the **first year** of the contract, a stipend of **R2000** will be deducted from the employee's salary to cover smartpad/tablet instrument acquired and the contract default costs; If it is within the **Second year**, a stipend of **R1000** will be deducted from the employee's salary to cover instrument and contract default cost; If it is within the **Third year**, a stipend of **R500** will be deducted from the employee's salary to cover instrument and contract default cost.

21.2.3 END: In all conditions, the employee will be expected to keep the **Cellular Phone** instrument and its accessories at a cost of **R20** and a **SmartPad/tablet** and its accessories at a cost of **R100** at the end of the contract, because it is an expense to store, safeguard and dispose.

3G INSTRUMENTS

21.3 No 3G instruments will be returned to the ICT after cancellation of the contract; a Stipend of **R20** will be deducted from the official's salary to carry over the gadget. Employees with internal 3Gs will not be given 3G instruments and, therefore, excluded from the above rule.

DESK PHONES

21.4 In all conditions, the employer will keep the instrument for disposal, and an official will not be required to keep his or her desk phone at the end of the contract. Vandalism will be charged in accordance with Loss Control regulations, and where disposal is required, Asset Management processes will be followed.

COUNCILORS LAPTOPS OR GADGETS

21.5 In all conditions, a Councilor will keep the instrument for disposal at the end of the contract in line with the Upper-Limit Regulation.

TRADITIONAL LEADERS

21.6 In all conditions, a cellular phone, a 3G card or a smartpad instrument and its accessories, will be kept for disposal at the end of the contract, even in case of death, the instrument will be forfeited by the employer, retaining the contract.

22. PRIVATE CALLS

22.1 The municipality recognises that there may be occasions, normally due to circumstances or an emergency, where officials must make private calls.

22.2 Staff should be aware, however, that the making or receiving of private telephone calls is by local arrangement only and is, therefore, a privilege and not a right. The municipality is therefore not obliged to provide allowance for private calls by officials.

22.3 When making or receiving private telephone calls, officials should consider the following regulations:

22.3.1. The making/receiving of private telephone calls shall be kept to a minimum and of short duration.

22.3.2. Private telephone calls should be timed whenever possible to ensure minimum disruption both to the work of the individual and to the workload of colleagues.

22.3.3. It is not acceptable for an official to conduct regular, private business or administration using the municipality's telephone network.

22.3.4. Any such abuse of the telephone system could result in the instances being of fraudulent nature, which may lead to disciplinary or criminal action against an official.

22.3.5. Such abuse could also result in the withdrawal of the facility to make private telephone calls.

22.3.6. The telephone system is an organisational resource, and use of the telephone can and may be monitored.

22.3.7. Officials are trusted to separate between official and private calls with honesty and should know that this can solicit criminal or fraudulent intention if found guilty.

23. TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

23.1 Switchboard operators must be multilingual and answer the telephone in a clear and concise voice. Their voices must be very pleasant while interacting with the other person over the phone and should always answer with a good morning or good afternoon.

23.2 Incoming calls must be picked up as soon as possible.

23.3 All users must refrain from using obscene language.

23.4 Incoming calls must be handled with courtesy and should be directed to relevant people or departments.

23.5 Switchboard operators must be informed if the official leaves the office to ensure calls redirected to the office do not go unanswered.

23.6 All employees are expected to re-direct incoming calls incorrectly put through to them, to the relevant person or cluster.

23.7 After completing the conversation, the person should not just hang up. The operator must confirm with the receiver whether he has downloaded the correct information or not and do end the conversation in a professional manner.

24. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

24.1 ICT DEPARTMENT

24.1.1 Conduct regular inspections of telecommunications infrastructure for compliance.

24.1.2 Report on non-compliance and issue penalties for non-compliance with municipal regulations.

24.1.3 Ensure service report on service coverage and quality.

25. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 25.1 Municipal Finance Management Act, 56 of
- 25.2 Treasury Regulations
- 25.3 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- 25.4 Electronic Communications Act No. 36 of 2005
- 25.5 Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000
- 25.6 National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998

26. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (if applicable)

- 26.1 All the relevant stakeholders, internal and external, will be consulted through the development and implementation of this policy.

27. IMPLEMENTATION

- 27.1 All the respective departments within the municipality must ensure adequate implementation of this policy. The CIO is responsible for enforcing this policy and continuously ensuring monitoring and compliance and ensuring that the corrective steps are taken where necessary.

28. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 28.1 On a continuous basis this policy will be assessed to determine its relevance and effectiveness and to assess whether it has achieved the intended objectives

29. CONCLUSION

- 29.1 It is important to note that any failure to comply with the rules and the standards set out in this policy will be regarded as misconduct. All misconduct or breach will be dealt with within the municipal appropriate disciplinary procedures

30. REVISION DATE

- 30.1 This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis and as on when the needs arise.

31. ANNEXURES

31.1 Business Process Maps

31.2 Standard operating procedure