

# **SOL PLAATJE MUNICIPALITY**




## **TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

*Final Approved Version of November 2020*

# TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY

## POLICY ADOPTION AND REVIEW PROCESS

**The Municipal Manager** has resolved, **in terms of the power vested in him by Council Resolution 298/10**, to adopt the following policy and procedure guidelines as the **Telecommunications Policy** of the **Sol Plaatje Municipality**.

Approved by	Date Reviewed/ Approved:	Signature
B. Dhluwayo Acting Municipal Manager	26/11/2020	

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## 1. Definitions

Employee	According to the conditions of service definition of an “employee” means— (a) any person, excluding an independent contractor, who works for another person or for the State and who receives, or is entitled to receive, any remuneration; and (b) any other person who in any manner assists in carrying on or conducting the business of an employer
Municipality	The Sol Plaatje Local Municipality.
Official	All persons in the employment of Sol Plaatje Municipality.
Unauthorized Persons	People who are not employees of Sol Plaatje Municipality
Private Automated Branch Exchange (PABX)	A telephone exchange that serves a particular business or office.
Telecommunications	The municipality’s Voice-over-IP telecommunications service that is provided via its Local and Wide Area Network.
Telephone Management System	A Telephone Management System is a device or service connected to your PBX/telephone system. It monitors all calls made in and out of your office by all extensions and provides important information. It enables you to manage your telephone spend.
Voice-over-IP	Voice over Internet Protocol (also voice over IP, VoIP or IP telephony) is a methodology and group of technologies for the delivery of voice communications and multimedia sessions over Internet Protocol (IP) networks.

## 2. Introduction

Sol Plaatje Municipality is a service orientated public entity whose legislated mandate is to in the main, provide services to residents, and in pursuit of this mandate make use of various communication methods and mechanisms including but not limited to communication tools such as telephones.

The telephone policy seeks to provide a framework aimed at ensuring that telephones as a working tool is used appropriately

## 3. Legal Framework

- Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act (Act No. 56 of 2003),
- Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000 as amended),
- Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act (70 of 2002) (“RICA”) Gazette 24286,
- Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act (Act No 4 of 2013),
- Criminal Procedures Act (Act No. 51 of 1977).

## 4. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure effective and efficient use of municipal telecommunications services, in particular office phones and fax services.

This entails:

- a) Minimizing costs related to municipal telecommunications services.
- b) Preventing the use of municipal telecommunications services by unauthorised persons.
- c) Outlining the expected recourse for the misuse of municipal telecommunications services.

## 5. Scope

The policy applies to all employees of the Municipality (as defined in section 1 of this document).

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

- d) The Accounting Officer, through the Chief Information Officer shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy and for its annual review.
- e) Line managers are responsible for making all subordinates aware of the policy and for ensuring subordinate compliance with the policy.
- f) Employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of this policy and for complying with its provisions.
- g) The ICT Steering Committee shall be responsible for oversight of the policy's implementation.

## 7. Provision of Telephone Services

- a) It is the responsibility of the Municipality to provide all of its facilities with a reliable landline telephone service for the execution of their official duties.
- b) The hosted Voice-Over-IP (hereinafter referred to as "VOIP") Private Automated Branch Exchange (hereinafter referred to as "PABX") service of the Municipality, shall be the officially preferred exchange used for making and receiving calls on municipal fixed line phones (hereinafter referred to as "handsets"). Handsets shall be provisioned through the ICT department of the Municipality.

### (a) Provision of Fax Services

- a) It is the responsibility of the Municipality to provide all facilities for which a fax service is required, with same (to be provisioned through the municipal ICT department).
- b) The Email-to-fax service of the Municipality shall be the officially preferred service used for outbound faxes.
- c) The Fax-to-email service of the Municipality shall be the officially preferred and service used for inbound faxes.

## **(b) Call Management and Call Recording**

- a) All calls that pass through the municipal PABX may be monitored by a single telephone management system (hereinafter referred to as “TMS”), that may record the following information:
  - (i) The caller’s number and pin used,
  - (ii) The number that was called,
  - (iii) The date and time that the call was initiated,
  - (iv) The date and time that the call ended and,
  - (v) The duration of the call.
- b) Telephonic conversations passing through the municipal PABX, shall not be recorded by the Municipality, nor any of its service providers.
- c) The exception to paragraph 8.b. shall be calls made to and from the following Municipality contact centres:
  - (i) Infrastructure and Services Contact Centre,
  - (ii) Revenue Contact Centre,
  - (iii) Emergency Services Contact Centre and,
  - (iv) Any other contact centre that may be established by the Municipality during implementation of this policy.
- d) In terms of paragraph 8.c. such calls are recorded:
  - (i) for legislative and quality control purposes,
  - (ii) using dedicated recording devices under the direct custodianship of the relevant user departments,
  - (iii) with full disclosure to the caller of the Municipality’s intent to and reason for recording the call,
  - (iv) with all the protections offered to those participating in the call by, and in line with the requirements of the following legislation:
    - The Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act 70 of 2002 (“RICA”) Gazette 24286,
    - Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, 2013 and,
    - Criminal Procedures Act, 51 of 1977.
- e) The following must be retained for a period of 5 years:
  - (i) All audit trails relating to activities on the TMS.
  - (ii) All TMS reports and logs.
  - (iii) All voice recordings made as per the provisions of paragraph 8.

### **(c) Private Calls**

- a) Employees are advised that making or receiving private telephone calls is a privilege and not a right.
- b) The Municipality is therefore under no obligation to allow for private calls by employees.
- c) The Municipality however recognizes that there may be occasions (due to circumstances and/or emergency) where it is necessary for employees to make private calls.
- d) When making or receiving private telephone calls, employees should consider the following regulations:
  - (i) Private calls should be brief and the number of calls kept to a minimum,
  - (ii) It is not acceptable for staff to make regular private calls, or use the municipality's telephony services for private business purposes.

### **(d) Pin Codes and Call Restrictions**

- a) Every qualifying employee shall receive a secret pin code with which to make external calls.
- b) Pin codes have to be applied for from the municipal ICT department, and all applications shall be in writing and approved by the applicant's supervisor and relevant executive director.
- c) Every pin code must have an approved account limit assigned to it.
- d) Every employee who has a pin code is responsible for keeping it a secret and for managing their pin account limit.
- e) Using another employee's pin code is tantamount to theft and may be disciplined.
- f) Call charges made to external numbers will be levied against a pin account limit.
- g) When a pin account limit has been exhausted, it will be deactivated for the remainder of the current month.
- h) Employees will be provided with the following facilities to monitor and manage, their pin account limit, if electronically available:
  - (i) A TMS web portal where employees can log in to check their pin account limit and usage reports.
  - (ii) Monthly usage reports emailed to employees by the TMS.
- i) If an employee is of the opinion that their pin account limit is insufficient for the extent of their work, said employee must request to have their pin



account limit increased in writing through their respective supervisor. This request must be approved by the executive director and submitted to the municipal ICT department.

- j) A request for a pin account limit increase will only be considered if the applicant agrees in writing to the following:
  - (i) That all calls made from the applicant's handset be monitored for a period of 30 working days, and the subsequent usage report analysed.
  - (ii) That the numbers of all outgoing calls reflected on the applicant's usage report, be marked as either official or private by them, and if official, that the institutional and contact details relevant to the numbers be indicated on the report
  - (iii) That the applicant agrees to sign a declaration that none of the numbers they have marked as being official in nature, belongs to friends, family or acquaintances, their employers or their employers' switchboard.
  - (iv) That the applicant's supervisor, in writing and after careful review of the applicant's usage report, recommends the applicant's request for a pin account limit increase, and that the relevant executive director approves.
- k) If an employee has reason to suspect that their pin code has been compromised, they may apply to the municipality's ICT department to provide them with a new pin code. Should it transpire that an employee's pin code is compromised, a new pin code will be issued as per the conditions of paragraph 11.i.4 (without increasing the pin account limit), but the pin code will henceforth be restricted for usage on that employee's handset only.

### **(e) Telephone Etiquette**

- a) Employees shall be mindful of the fact that they are representatives of the Municipality, and as such always be courteous when making or receiving calls from municipality handsets. Presenting a professional image over the telephone is of the utmost importance.
- b) In speaking to someone using a municipality handset, the following shall be adhered to by employees:
  - (i) Greet the other party and clearly identify yourself.
  - (ii) Clearly identify yourself, by providing your name, surname and department when dealing with external parties.
  - (iii) Address the caller by his or her title and surname if you are not on familiar terms with the caller.

- (iv) Speak slowly and in a cheerful, professional manner, making sure to use your normal tone of voice.
- (v) When receiving calls, listen to the caller and respond to requests in a patient and helpful manner.
- (vi) Always focus on the call in session and do not become distracted by your environment.
- (vii) Always ask if you can put a caller on hold and never leave a caller on hold for more than a minute.
- (viii) If you are unable to assist a caller always refer them to someone who can.
- (ix) When taking a message, make sure to take down the caller's contact details.
- (x) When leaving a message, make sure that your message is brief and to the point. Always provide your contact details to the person taking the message.
- (xi) Never end a call before saying goodbye to the other party.

**(f) Violations and Penalties**

Employees who are found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and depending on the severity of the offence, even criminal action according to the code of conduct of the municipality.

**(g) Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed as and when required.