

**Subject: RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

**Date: May 17, 2017**

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**Replaces Policy Dated: October 22, 2008**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to document employee responsibilities for the proper, secure, and lawful use of the Pinal County Radio Communications System(s).

**APPLICATION:** This policy applies to all authorized full time, part time and temporary employees of Pinal County; all contractors and third parties that are granted access to the Pinal County Radio Communications System(s).

**DEFINITIONS**

FCC: The Federal Communications Commission.

2-Way Radio: A device that will transmit and receive voice communications. Pinal County has various base-stations, mobile (vehicle mounted) and hand held 2-way radios.

County-Issued Radio: A 2-way radio issued by the County that has been programmed with approved channels and licensed frequencies.

Transmit: Depressing the button that activates the microphone on a two-way radio. Releasing the button stops the transmission.

Squelch: A control on some radios that adjusts the sensitivity of the receiver.

Radio Abuse: The misuse of County 2-way radios that include but not limited to the Prohibited Uses listed below.

**POLICY:** Pinal County maintains radio communications systems. These systems are provided to assist in the conduct of business within the County. Pinal County is licensed to provide radio-coordinated activities for the various County departments and divisions. Radio communication is the method that has proven the most effective in improving group operations to meet the increasing public demand for additional services and faster restoration of services after interruptions. All radio systems are licensed and governed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Violations of FCC rules or regulations can result in the revocation of the license to operate, and in Federal disciplinary action against individual violators.

**PERMISSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS:** As noted by Federal law; Title 47, Part 90, of the FCC rules and regulations, to assure the following:

- Communications directly relating to the safety or protection of persons or property.
- Communications considered essential to the efficient conduct of County business, subject to the condition that no harmful interference is caused to safety communications of other licensed stations.
- These rules are clear in their meaning; however, they do allow sufficient latitude for essential

communications resulting in better services to the public.

### **PROHIBITED USES OF COUNTY RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEM(S)**

- FCC rules prohibit the use of any profane or indecent language on the radio.
- Personal messages unrelated to County business are prohibited, unless of an emergency nature.
- Do not reprimand over the air.
- Do not click your microphone or make odd noises on the air.
- Do not transmit anything other than your voice.
- Do not intentionally transmit over someone else unless an emergency exists.

### **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY:**

The IT Radio Communications Department is responsible for the oversight of the Pinal County Radio Communications system(s), including radio equipment, sites and frequencies. The Department needs to be notified as to the assignment or reassignment of these assets so inventory can be serviced and maintained. All requests for equipment, services, frequencies, repairs, and installations need to go through the IT Radio Communications Department so that standards and procedures are met.

#### **Employees are responsible for:**

- Understanding and adhering to the Radio Communications System(s) Policy.
- Understanding the Radio Basic Operation Guidelines.
- Using common sense and good judgment in the use of County 2-way radio system(s) as determined by this County Policy.
- Advising Management of breaches of this policy.
- Maintaining reasonable precautions to safeguard their 2-way radio from unauthorized use.

#### **Management is responsible for:**

- Understanding this policy and related policies and documents.
- Advising their employees about this policy and appropriate use.
- Notifying the department head when circumstances warrant monitoring or disciplinary action of an employee's misuse/abuse of 2-way radio operations

### **PROCEDURES**

The Human Resources Department will provide all employees with a copy of this Radio Communication Policy. Employees required to engage in radio communication will be required to acknowledge their understanding of this policy by signing the policy acknowledgment. When the acknowledgment has been endorsed by the employee's supervisor it should be forwarded for inclusion in the employees personnel file.

If a violation of this Policy occurs or is suspected, the appointing authority or designee should Document the circumstances, approach the department head of the suspected violation, and Report incidents to Human Resources and initiate disciplinary action as appropriate under the circumstances.

**FORMS:** The following forms shall be used in conjunction with this policy.

1. Radio Basic Operation Guidelines

Pinal County Employee Radio Communications Systems Policy Acknowledgment