

Department of Behavioral Health  
**TRANSMITTAL LETTER**

<b>SUBJECT</b> DBH Long Distance Telephone Calls		
<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> DBH Policy 681.1	<b>DATE</b> APR 06 2015	<b>TL#</b> 279

**Purpose.** This policy was converted from a Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy to a Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) policy. The policy was generally updated and addresses long distance calling by individuals in care at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.

**Applicability.** All DBH employees and contract staff, and individuals in care at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.


**Policy Clearance.** Reviewed by affected responsible staff and cleared through appropriate Behavioral Health Authority offices.

**Effective Date.** This policy is effective immediately.

**Superseded Policies.** This policy replaces DMH Policy 681.1, DMH Long Distance Telephone Calls, dated May 28, 2002.

**Distribution.** This policy will be posted on the DBH web site at [www.dbh.dc.gov](http://www.dbh.dc.gov) under Policies and Rules. Applicable entities are required to ensure that affected staff is familiar with the contents of this policy.

  
Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D.  
Interim Director, DBH

<p align="center"><b>GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b></p> <p align="center">*** </p> <p align="center"><b>DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</b></p>	<p><b>Policy No.</b> <b>681.1</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b> APR 03 2015</p>	<p><b>Page 1</b></p>
	<p><b>Supersedes:</b> DMH Policy 681.1, DMH Long Distance Telephone Calls, dated May 28, 2002</p>		

**Subject: DBH Long Distance Telephone Calls**

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to promote the responsible and cost effective use of long distance calling.

2. **Applicability.** All Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) employees and contract staff, and individuals in care at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.

3. **Authority.** Department of Behavioral Health Establishment Act of 2013.

4. **Policy.**

4a. DBH funds shall not be used for payment of long distance telephone calls, except for those made by authorized users in the conduct of official DBH business.

4b. Long distance calls shall be made only if the official business to be transacted is essential and if a less expensive means of communications would not suffice.

4c. Employees and contract staff who have DBH-issued cell phones are encouraged to use their cell phone for official business long distance calls in place of land lines whenever possible.

4d. Use of DBH telephones for placing non-official long distance calls is prohibited and may result in the caller reimbursing DBH for the total cost of the call(s) and in disciplinary action.

4e. Individuals in care at Saint Elizabeths Hospital may be allowed to make long distance calls as determined by their clinical treatment team. See Section 5b below.

5. **Procedures.**

5a. **Long Distance calling by DBH Employees and Contract Staff.**

(1) Supervisors must submit requests for employees to have long distance service available on land lines (desk telephones) to the DBH Information Services department.

(2) DBH Employees and Contract Staff shall reimburse DBH within five (5) work days of receiving notice for the value of long distance charges that are not business related.

5b. **Long Distance Calling by Individuals in Care at Saint Elizabeths Hospital.** In order to gain access to long distance calling, hospital staff responsible for the treatment of individuals in care

must use their assigned codes from DBH Information Services when making long distance calls on behalf of an individual in care.

6. **Consequences for Making Non-Official Long Distance Calls.** Making non-official long distance calls may result in the caller reimbursing DBH for the total cost of the call(s) and may result in disciplinary action. Also see District Personnel Manual, Chapter 16 for guidelines.

7. **Inquiries.** Questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the DBH Information Services TeleCom Project Manager at dbh.telecom@dc.gov.

**Approved By:**

**Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D.**  
**Interim Director, DBH**

  
(Signature) (Date)