



DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20224

June 7, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM

FROM: Beth Tucker *Beth Tucker*
Deputy Commissioner for Operations Support

SUBJECT: Clarifying Guidance on Use of Personal Text Messaging for
Official Business

As the use of personal smartphones and tablets continues to grow, and as email and text messages become the common way of communicating, we are clarifying our policies to address security risks and records retention requirements. As a result, we are in the process of updating IRM 10.8.1, *IT Security Guidance and Policy*, and IRM 10.8.40, *Wireless Security Policy*, to address the use of personal phones for email, texting and voice communications.

In accordance with federal requirements, IRM 10.8.1.4.6.3 states that Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) data cannot be transmitted via email or text unless it is encrypted, and IRM 10.8.1.4.6.3.1 prohibits employees from using non-IRS/Treasury email accounts for any government or official purpose. Updated policy will clarify that employees may not send or receive text messages about official business on personally-owned cell phones, smartphones or any other device, including personal devices used in the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) pilot. The sole exception to this policy will be in emergency situations, such as natural disasters, when other forms of communication are unavailable.

In addition, personally-owned cell phones or devices are not permitted to be connected to a government computer for any purpose, including personal devices used in the BYOD pilot. It is, however, permitted to use personal phones to conduct work-related phone calls.

We will keep you informed as to the status of the updated IRM. In the meantime, please reinforce the importance of data protection and official equipment with your managers and employees.

If you have any questions about this new guidance, please contact Stephen Manning, Deputy Chief Information Officer, at 202-927-0774, or a member of your staff may contact Robert Finstad, Associate Director of Architecture and Engineering Advisory, Information Technology, CyberSecurity, at Robert.Finstad@IRS.gov.