

**CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA**

**NUMBER: 1.10 (11.0)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/01/04**

**SUBJECT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE  
VOICE MAIL**

**SUPERSEDES: 06/30/95**

**I. PURPOSE**

The following policy is adopted to establish uniform standards for implementation and use of voice mail technology to enhance levels of service and support provided to both internal and external customers.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

The provisions of this policy shall apply to all users of the City's voice mail system.

**III. POLICY**

**A. Justification for Implementation**

Justification for implementation of voice mail will be based on improving customer service for both internal and external customers. Employees whose primary responsibility is to answer the telephone shall not use voice mail. Instead, their extensions shall be programmed to "roll over" to an extension which is staffed at all times during core operating hours. All authorized users will be required to record personal greetings which offer the customer the option to dial "0 and the pound key" for immediate assistance.

All requests for implementation of voice mail capabilities will be approved by the appropriate Department Head. This approval will be contingent upon the requesting department having staff available to provide live response when lines are "rolled over", or to provide immediate assistance when "0 and the pound key" are dialed. **AT NO TIME SHALL A CUSTOMER RECEIVE ANOTHER VOICE MAIL MESSAGE AFTER DIALING "0 and the pound key" FOR ASSISTANCE.** Requests for voice mail implementation will be forwarded from the approving Department Head to the Information Technology Department Help Desk for further action.

**B. Assignment of Responsibilities**

**1. Department Heads**

- a. Department heads shall approve installation of voice mail in writing on the basis of improving customer service and support, and only after determining that adequate staff is available within

the department to provide personal assistance when primary lines are “rolled over”, or when “0 and the pound key” are dialed.

- b. Department Heads will forward approved requests to the Information Technology Department Help Desk for further action.
- c. Department heads will ensure that voice mail capabilities are being used only to enhance customer service and support, and will assume responsibility for taking prompt action when voice mail abuses occur. Potential abuses include, but are not limited to the following: “filtering” incoming calls, unnecessary forwarding of the telephone to voice mail, not returning calls promptly, not answering the telephone when in the office, not checking the voice mail mailbox promptly when voice mail messages are received, not recording personal greetings which offer the customer the option to dial “0 and the pound key” for immediate assistance, and not maintaining current greetings – particularly when away from the office for extended periods of time.
- d. Department heads will appoint an employee within the department to be responsible for training new voice mail users. The designated employee will also be the primary liaison between their own department and the Information Technology Department for all voice mail issues.

## 2. Voice Mail Users

- a. All prospective voice mail users must receive appropriate training from their departmental voice mail trainer.
- b. All voice mail users must, at a minimum, record an external (no answer) greeting and an internal (busy) greeting to include the following:
  - Polite greeting;
  - Employee name and department;
  - Statement that they are away from their desk (no answer greeting) or that they are on the telephone (busy greeting);
  - Request for the caller to leave a detailed message;
  - Statement informing caller that for immediate assistance they may either dial "0 and the pound key" or hang up and dial a specified telephone number; and
  - Polite close.

A sample greeting is as follows:

“Hello. You have reached (NAME) at the City of Chesapeake (DEPT NAME) Department. Today is (DAY, DATE). I am away from my desk and unable to take your call at this time. Please leave your name and number, the date and time of your call, and a detailed message, and I will return your call as soon as possible”. If you need more immediate assistance, please press ‘zero and the pound key’, and your call will be answered by a member of our department staff”.

NOTE: Greetings will be maintained on a daily basis to ensure that callers receive the most current status on any given day.

- c. All voice mail users will forward their extension to the voice mail system when away from the office for an extended period of time. In addition, they will record and use the alternate greeting to let callers know that they are not currently available, and when they expect to return. The "alternate" greeting must also include a statement informing the caller that for immediate assistance they may either dial “0 and the pound key”, or hang up and dial a specified telephone number.
- d. Voice mail users will not forward their extension to voice mail to avoid answering the telephone, nor will they use voice mail to “filter” incoming calls. In addition, all voice mail users will ensure that they respond to any or all voice mail messages as promptly as possible.
- e. Voice mail users will maintain their accounts on a regular – daily, if possible – basis. Proper voice mail account maintenance includes daily updating of all greetings as appropriate, prompt response to all voice mail messages, and deletion of unnecessary stored voice mail messages on a regular basis. The City-wide standard capacity for individual voice mail boxes is ten (10) messages. Requests for exceptions to this standard will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Director of Information Technology. Regular voice mail maintenance by all users will help ensure optimum benefits of the system for all authorized users.

### 3. Department of Information Technology

- a. The Department of Information Technology Help Desk will process all approved requests for voice mail implementation. When the request has been completed, a notice of completion will

be returned to the requesting department and will include the interim password established for the new voice mail account.

- b. The Department of Information Technology will provide training for departmental training representatives as required.
- c. The Department of Information Technology will provide voice mail utilization reports at the request of department heads or City Management.
- d. The Department of Information Technology will process approved voice mail requests accounts in accordance with established service level agreements.
- e. The Department of Information Technology will maintain the voice mail system in good working order and explore opportunities for enhancements that will improve system performance, increase flexibility and capabilities for authorized users, and enhance the quality of service provided to our customers.

#### **IV. VIOLATIONS**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

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Dr. Clarence V. Cuffee, City Manager

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Date