

**SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE****SUBJECT: Telephone Calls and the use of Voicemail****EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2000; Revised January 21, 2010; Revised July 1, 2024**

\*Information Technology related policies are reviewed annually in October as required by external partners

**I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the proper use of the voicemail system at Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”).

**II. Policy**

- A. This policy is intended to be consistent with and not supersede any other College policies, including the Acceptable Usage Policy [6:00:00:00/5](#).

Voicemail is provided by the College to improve communication, enhance effectiveness, and promote efficiency.


Voicemail is not a replacement for the standard that employees of the College should personally answer telephone calls. Voicemail boxes should not be the first point of contact for incoming calls and, employees should make every effort to ensure that initial incoming calls are first answered by an individual. As a communication enhancement, the goal of the voicemail system is to present a consistent and professional image of the College to all callers.

- B. The following guidelines are designed to ensure uniform use of voicemail. Note that during normal business hours, including those on remote workdays, voicemail is not to be used on departmental telephone numbers or on numbers of individuals who have clerical, secretarial, or administrative support.
1. During regularly scheduled hours of operation, multi-line telephones, call forwarding, and call pick-up features are to be utilized to ensure all telephone calls are answered by an employee of the College.
  2. Work units with multi-line telephones and individual employees who have clerical, secretarial, or administrative support should not utilize voicemail during regularly scheduled hours of operation.
  3. After an individual has answered an incoming call, the caller should be given the option to either leave a message or be forwarded to the voicemail of the person being called.
  4. Special permission for use of the voicemail when no one is available to cover the telephones may be granted by the appropriate department head (Vice President or Chief) in departments and units where:
    - a. The department does not employ full-time clerical, secretarial, or administrative support.
    - b. The department employs only one (1) clerical, secretarial, or administrative support employee.
    - c. Voicemail is needed when the support employee has to be away from the telephone for an extended period.

5. Voicemail may be used during the normal workday on personal numbers of individuals who do not have clerical, secretarial, or administrative support when the individual will be out of the office or is otherwise unable to answer the call.
  6. Faculty and others who are in one-person offices must activate voicemail when they are away from their offices.
  7. All employees may use voicemail after hours or when the College is closed for holidays, etc. The IT Services Department will set up voicemail so employees can activate it themselves for after hours, weekends, and holiday periods, and deactivate it during the regular workday, including time of remote work.
- C. The College does not guarantee the confidentiality or privacy of voicemail messages and makes no promises regarding their security. Decisions as to what information to include in such messages should be made with this in mind.

The following elements guide the administration of voicemail as it relates to confidentiality. The College reserves the right to make exceptions as deemed necessary by the President or department head (Vice President or Chief).

1. Administrative Activities – The College reserves the right to conduct routine maintenance, track problems, and maintain the integrity of the system. As is the case with all data kept on all computer systems, the contents of voicemail messages may be revealed by such activities.
  2. Absences – When an employee is absent, that employee’s voicemail may be checked to ensure the orderly operation of an office.
  3. Monitoring – Voicemail messages may be monitored by the College when considered necessary to protect the integrity of the systems or comply with legal obligations.
  4. Violations – Information regarding suspected inappropriate use of voicemail should be referred to the Chief of Administrative Services. Inappropriate messages include, but are not limited to, obscene, harassing, intimidating, and threatening recordings.
- D. All users of Southwest computer and technology resources are expected to read and abide by the Acceptable Usage of Technology Resources policy [6:00:00:00/5](#).

<p>Source of Policy: <u>Business and Finance</u></p> <p>Related Policy: <u>6:00:00:00/5</u></p> <p>Approved: <u></u> President</p>	<p><b>Responsible</b> Administrator: <u>Chief of Administrative Services</u></p> <p>TBR Policy Reference: _____</p> <p>Date: <u>July 1, 2024</u></p>
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