

Who Knows Your Cell Phone Number?



By Berkeley Shop Steward Liz Cornea (edited)

There are a great number of us that own and use our cell phones; it's the sign of the time, where convenience is now within a reach of grabbing your phone and making a call.

I am amazed at how many carriers have given management their cell phone numbers. I've also had to listen to carriers complain that their supervisor keeps calling them. On occasion, a carrier will complain that her supervisor keeps calling her throughout the day, wanting to know her every move. She is feeling harassed by the repeated phone calls.

A TE (Transitional Employee) that reported to work as scheduled was sent home. She was told that if she had given up her cell phone number, then management could have saved her trip to the office. She was told this so she would give up her number. Oh, by the way, the TE would have been guaranteed 4 hours of work for reporting as scheduled.

Some employees are under the impression that it's a requirement to provide management their cell phone numbers. What I don't think you understand is that when you give up your cell phone numbers, you have also given away some of your privacy. Your home phone number is good only when you are at home, whereas a cell phone number is usually with you at all times, therefore the chances of contacting you are greater.

The other thing that gets me is that there are no Postal Regulations that requires employees **to** own a cell phone, or to have them in their possession at all times, or that they must surrender their number to management. The Postal Service won't pay your cell phone bill. Umm, does that sound about right?

What I do know is that stand-ups are given instructing carriers not to use them, including your Bluetooth. That is understandable. After all, you are paid to deliver the mail, not to be on the phone. It could also be a safety hazard. Of course, this does not apply while taking your break or lunch, if you are not driving.

Who knows what the future will have in store for us. The next generation scanners may be designed to be like walky-talkies. Then they will have a way in which management will be able to contact all carriers. Until then, they will have to wait for the carrier to call them.

It all boils down to convenience and what is time-consuming. Some carriers would rather receive a call from management informing them where they can pick up their auxiliary, rather than making a trip back to the office to pick it up. Gee, that might require more overtime.

Cell phones... I see as just another tool that management wishes to use to cut down on overtime. You may have noticed that your route has less phone booths. They are no longer as available as they were in the past. You may have to travel some distance to find any phone booths. Believe me, management expects you to call them from your cell phone because it would cost them additional time if you don't.

So, even though, you've been told not to be on your cell phone, "ring, ring" goes your cell phone with your supervisor on caller ID. Do you answer it?

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