

CHAPTER 7

USE OF AGENCY PROPERTY

All items provided to an employee for the purpose of performing job duties (for example: keys, uniforms, vehicles, equipment, phones, firearms, credit cards) remain MRCA property and must be returned upon termination.

Employees who are on leave for longer than a 5-day period may be required to return MRCA property for the duration of their leave. Violation of these guidelines will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment. Any known or suspected violations of the following policy must be reported immediately to a supervisor or the Human Resources Specialist.

7.1 PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

No MRCA officer or employee may use, or permit others to use, MRCA resources for a campaign activity, personal or other purposes which are not authorized by MRCA. California law²¹ prohibits the expenditure of public funds or the use of a public office to campaign for or against candidates for public office or any other election issue.

MRCA employees are prohibited from engaging in any political campaigning while at work, on agency time, or in MRCA uniform. This prohibition includes campaigning for or against candidates for office as well as ballot initiatives. There is no prohibition on political campaigning by off duty MRCA employees, so long as there is no expenditure of public funds or use of public resources.

Likewise, the MRCA may not spend any public funds to

advocate for or against a ballot initiative or a candidate for public office. However, the MRCA Governing Board may authorize the release of fair and impartial presentation of the facts –including consequences– of any election issue.

Nothing in this section shall prohibit supervisors from authorizing vehicle use for work purposes by Reserve Employees, if such vehicle use improves the Reserve Employee’s availability for emergency call-outs.

MRCA employees are prohibited from engaging in any political campaigning while at work, on agency time, or in MRCA uniform.

²¹ For more information, refer to Government Code section 81000 *et seq.*

7.2 TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES

All MRCA-owned electronic and telephonic communications systems and all communication and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of MRCA, and as such are to be used for job-related communications.

Employees do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy when using agency equipment, including internet, email, and telephones, or using personal electronic devices for agency business. Any records maintained on personal electronic devices may be considered a public record and discoverable pursuant to law.

As a general rule, it is expected that all employees will use common sense and sound judgment when utilizing the internet and all technology. Employees may not use any electronic devices in a manner prohibited in any other part of this handbook.

All policies in this handbook, including discrimination and harassment policies, apply to employees' activities online. Employees are solely responsible for what they post online.

7.2.1 Cell Phones

Cell phones may be issued to MRCA employees for the express purpose of conducting MRCA business. Cell phones are not intended to be used for personal business or in lieu of an employee's personal cell phone or

computer. Incidental personal calls of short duration are permitted during business hours. Excessive personal use may be cause for discipline. If an employee makes multiple personal calls or personal calls of a long duration, they must notify a supervisor, and proper reimbursement to MRCA will be determined.

Employees may use text messaging for MRCA business.

Personal text messaging on an incidental basis is allowed; however, please note that excessive personal use of text messaging may be cause for disciplinary action. The use of a cell phone while driving without proper hands-free equipment or the use of text messaging while driving is strictly prohibited.

7.2.2 Social Media

Social media is a useful professional and personal tool, and MRCA recognizes that employees may visit and engage with social media sites in the workplace for both professional and personal use. MRCA expects that employees will exercise sound judgment and that such activities will not interfere with work duties.

Accessing social media for personal use is a privilege, not an entitlement. Before creating online content, employees should consider any negative consequence to the posting. Conduct that adversely affects the job performance of the poster, the performance of other employees or contractors, or MRCA's business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees are expected to maintain the confidentiality of MRCA's sensitive information. Unless posting on a social media platform on behalf of the agency, express only your personal opinions and do not represent yourself as a spokesperson for MRCA.