



Georgia Department of Community Health

Voice Mail	Policy No. 421
Effective Date: April 1, 2000	Page <u>1</u> of <u>2</u>

I. Purpose

To provide an effective and efficient means of responding to telecommunications expeditiously.

II. Scope

Voice mail will not be available for all uses or for all staff in the Department of Community Health (DCH). Voice mail will be installed on an as-needed basis to be determined by Division, Office, or Board Directors

III. Policy

It is the policy of DCH for employees to respond to all telephone calls in a timely manner. The Department will ensure to the best of its ability that a timely response will be provided to all telephone inquiries. DCH will employ the use of voice mail in areas of high volume calls, high profile staff with demanding schedules that lessen telephone accessibility, and for staff for whom frequent telephone interruptions are counterproductive as approved by the Division, Office or Board Directors. At no time however, will the use of voice mail preclude the timely return of telephone calls. Properly used, voice mail can enhance the service provided to callers. If used improperly, it can create negative feelings toward the Department and frustrations for the caller. Any abuse of the voice mail system (failure to return calls promptly) will result in loss of this privilege.

IV. Procedures

- A. Ensure that a staff member is available during the core business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (5:00 p.m. during the Legislative Session) to handle calls that require immediate attention.
- B. Retrieve messages a minimum of four times a day if necessary.
- C. Return all calls promptly. All phone calls received prior to 3:30 p.m. should be returned the same day. All received after 3:30 p.m. should be returned no later than the morning of the following day.



- D. Forward your phone line to the voice mail system when you are away from your desk to avoid caller waiting unnecessarily.
- E. In the case of an employee's prolonged absence or illness, forward your phone line to another extension so calls can be handled appropriately.
- F. Each user is responsible for changing his/her greeting when in or out of the office.
- G. Use the following message formats as a guide for your greeting.
 - 1. You have reached the telephone of your name. I am either on another call, away from my desk or out of the office, but unavailable to take your call immediately. Please leave your name, telephone number and a brief message at the tone. I will be checking for messages on a regular basis and will return your call promptly. If you need to speak with someone immediately, press 0 now.
 - 2. You have reached the Department of Community Health Division, Office, Board or Section Name. We are unable to take your call at this time. AT the tone, please leave your name, telephone number and a brief message. If you need to speak with someone immediately, press 0 now.
 - 3. You have reached your name, Division, Office, Board or Section name. The office is closed today in observance of a state holiday or for whatever the reason might be. The office will reopen on day and date at 8:00 a.m. Thank you for your call. If you would like to leave a message, please do so at the tone.
- H. Message box size for each telephone line will be ten unless otherwise requested by Division, Office or Board Director.
- I. A Request for Voice Mail form must be completed and approved by the Division, Office or Board Director and submitted to the Office of Support Services.

Approved By: 	Date: 4-3-00
---	-----------------