

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT

Telephone Coverage and Responsiveness

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PURPOSE

This MAPP describes the role and responsibilities of offices in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) to ensure live telephone coverage and the procedures to be used for establishing live telephone coverage throughout the Center.

As Federal employees and public servants, CDER employees must be responsive to the needs of the public. The public's first line of contact with CDER is often a telephone call. All callers to Office and Division main lines expect to be able to speak with an individual during normal business hours.

POLICY

This policy is established (1) to facilitate telephone communication with the public and among staff members and (2) to standardize procedures for handling the telephones.

All CDER managers will ensure their programs adhere to the established procedures.

PROCEDURES

Each CDER organization (e.g., office, division, branch, and team) will coordinate and establish a documented plan that ensures live telephone coverage during normal business hours in the manner described below.

1. Provide live coverage for all main lines Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., local time. If possible, coverage until 5:00 p.m. is recommended.
 - The staff member answering the telephone conducts the call in a courteous, professional, and efficient manner by identifying the office and/or division and offering to refer the caller to another office/division, or transfer to a voice mailbox.
 - If the entire staff of an office or division must be absent from the office for a period of time during business hours (e.g., all-hands meetings, retreats, team building events), arrangements will be made to forward the telephone line(s) to another office or a staff member, etc. so that live coverage is maintained.
2. During non-business hours, all main lines will be answered by a recording that lists office hours and encourages the caller to leave a detailed voice message, a return telephone number, and an email address.

For information on available telephone services contact the Employee Resource and Information Center (ERIC), Information Technology Services.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This MAPP transfers the responsibility of CDER telephone coverage policy from the Office of the Center Director to the Office of Management. MAPP 4602.1, supersedes MAPP 4114.2.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This MAPP is effective upon date of publication.