407.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper access, use and application of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) system in order to ensure proper access to confidential records from local, state and national law enforcement databases, and to ensure effective electronic communications between Montana State University Billings Police Department (Department) members, the Billings Police Department and the City/County Dispatch Center.

407.2 POLICY

This policy shall be applicable to all Department members that utilize Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) during the course of their duties.

Department members using the MDT shall comply with all appropriate federal, state and Montana University System rules and regulations and shall use the MDT in a professional manner, in accordance with this policy.

407.3 PRIVACY EXPECTATION

Department members forfeit any expectation of privacy with regard to messages accessed, transmitted, received or reviewed on any Department technology system (see Department Policy 317 - Information Technology Use for additional guidance).

407. 4 RESTRICTED ACCESS AND USE

MDT use is subject to Information Technology Use and Protected Information policies in addition to Criminal Justice Information System (CJIN) rules and regulations. Department members shall not access the MDT system if they have not received prior authorization and the required training.

Department members shall immediately report unauthorized access, or use of the MDT by another Department member, to their direct supervisor. Use of the MDT system to access law enforcement databases or transmit messages is restricted to official activities, business-related tasks, or communications that are directly related to the business, administration or practices of the Department.

In addition to potential Departmental disciplinary consequences, criminal penalties apply for misuse of confidential criminal justice information under Montana Code Annotated §45-7-601.

In the event that a Department member has questions about sending a particular message or accessing a particular database, the Department member should seek prior approval from his/her supervisor. Sending derogatory, defamatory, obscene, disrespectful, sexually suggestive, harassing, or any other inappropriate messages on the MDT system is prohibited and may result in discipline.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message or access a law enforcement database under another Department member's name, or to use the password of another Department member to log in to the MDT system, unless directed to do so by a supervisor. Department members are required to log off the MDT or secure the MDT when it is unattended. This added security measure will minimize the potential for unauthorized access or misuse.

407.4.1 USE WHILE DRIVING
Use of the MDT by the vehicle operator should be limited to times when the vehicle is stopped. Information that is required for immediate enforcement, investigative, tactical or safety needs should be transmitted over the radio.

In no case shall an operator attempt to send or review lengthy messages while the vehicle is in motion.

407.5 DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVITY

Except as otherwise directed by a shift supervisor, or other Department-established protocol, all responses to calls for service assigned by the City/County Dispatch Center should be communicated over the police radio and electronically, via the MDT, unless security or confidentiality prevents such broadcasting. Proper documentation through the Department's Automated Records Management System (ARMS) system must be completed and should be reflective of the corresponding MDT information (i.e. call type, times, location, etc.).

All responses to calls for service assigned through direct contact with the University Police Department must be documented through the Department ARMS system. MDT and Department ARMS system entries will be used to document officers' daily activities.

407.6 DUTY STATUS

All Department patrol personnel shall immediately log in to their MDT at the start of their shift, unless otherwise directed by a Department supervisor. Officers responding to in-progress calls should advise City/County Dispatch on the nature of the complaint, the location of the incident, and any change in status over the radio to assist other officers responding to the same incident. Other changes in status can be made on the MDT when the vehicle is not in motion.

407.7 MALFUNCTIONING MDT

Whenever possible, Department members will not use vehicles with malfunctioning MDTs. Whenever Department members must drive a vehicle in which the MDT is not working, they shall notify the City/County Dispatch Center.

407.8 BOMB CALLS

When investigating reports involving suspected or possible explosive devices, Department members should avoid communicating on their MDT's. It is possible that radio frequencies emitted by the MDT could cause devices to detonate.