

CBE Policy on Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Device Use in the Labs

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Summary: The CBE Operations Committee drafted a policy for cell phone and personal electronic device use in the labs. The OC recommends a self-enforced, common sense policy that is well publicized in order to bring more attention to the issue of these devices in the labs and their role as [fomites](#) (inanimate objects that can contribute to the spread of disease). We advise that personal devices only be used in the lab as needed for research related communication and according to the specific guidelines below.

Specific Guidelines:

1. Cell phones and other personal electronic devices must only be used in the lab for research-related communication, listening to music, and taking research photos.
2. Earbuds/headphones must be used in such a way that allows the user to hear what is going on in their surroundings and be safe *e.g.* appropriate volume, in one ear only, cords tucked inside lab coat or clothing.
3. Gloves must be removed and hands must be washed prior to operating personal devices and handling earbuds in the lab.
4. Personal devices can only be set down in the lab in designated clean areas, which have been rendered free of biological, chemical, or hazardous material, and otherwise must be kept stored safely in a pocket. This also applies to visitors-please assist them by disinfecting an area to set down personal devices.
5. Non-work related communication must be handled outside the lab after washing hands.
6. 70% ethanol wipes are available for routine disinfection of all devices used in laboratories.

Definitions:

Personal electronic devices- examples include phones, tablets/iPads, notebooks/laptops, iPods/mp3 players, walkmen, earbuds/headphones, etc.

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