

4.11 COMPUTER, INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC MAIL USE

A. Definitions

1. **Computing Resources** are all County-owned controlled computer and network systems, internet connections, intranet, electronic mail, voicemail, facsimiles, telephones and other information systems used for the transmission of electronic communications.
2. **Electronic Mail (E-Mail)** is an office communication tool whereby electronic messages are prepared, sent, and retrieved on personal computers, workstations or hand-held electronic devices (i.e. cell-phones).
3. **The Internet** is an online service communication tool whereby business information, reference material and messages are sent and received electronically.
4. **Network** is defined as all the servers, PCs, laptops and the infrastructure of the County's electronic storage system.
5. **Software** is defined as any computer program.

B. Function and Use

The County's Electronic Mail, Internet and Computer Resources enable employees to send and receive messages, as well as store information electronically. These systems are provided by the County to the employees for the sole purpose of assisting employees in conducting official business within the County. Limited, occasional, or incidental use of electronic media (sending or receiving) for personal, non-business purposes is understandable and acceptable, and all such use should be done in a manner that does not negatively affect the system's use for their business purposes. However, employees are expected to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and not abuse this privilege.

Additionally:

1. All Electronic Mail, electronic documents and files, the County Network, Computer Resources, hardware and software are property of the County. Additionally, all messages composed, sent, received and stored on these systems are and remain the property of the County. They are not the private property of any employee;
2. No employee should have any expectation of privacy concerning any electronic communications, including but not limited to: Electronic Mail, file storage and Network or Internet use;
3. The County has the right to monitor the use of all electronic communications at its discretion;
4. All users of Software shall adhere to copyright laws;
5. Employees may not install any hardware or Software product on computer equipment until approval has been given by the Information Technology (IT) Department;
6. Employees may not install County-owned Software on their personal home computers unless given approval by Management and the Information Technology (IT) Department.

C. Unacceptable Activities

Employees may not use their computer, internet or email for the following activities:



1. Performing work unrelated to their employment with the County. Use of the Internet and Electronic Mail is intended for the transmission of business-related transactions;
2. Entering data under another person's computer identification/account or permitting another person to enter data under your identification/account;
3. Performing any activity meant to foster personal gain;
4. Soliciting others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes or other non-job-related solicitations;
5. Sending Electronic Mail that may be disruptive, offensive or threatening. This includes messages or images that contain sexually explicit/oriented, defamatory, obscene, threatening, pornographic, profane, racially offensive, discriminatory or any other material otherwise construed as harassment;
6. Creating, distributing, forwarding or copying Electronic Mail chain letters, jokes, advertisements or other "junk" Electronic Mail;
7. Downloading any non-business related material from the Internet without prior approval from your supervisor and/or the County IT Department;
8. Intentionally seeking information about, obtaining copies of, or modifying contents of electronic files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, unless explicitly authorized to do so by other users;
9. Attempting to impair or subvert County Computers or bypass restrictions set by the administrators or assisting others in such activity;
10. Performing any action relating to illegal drugs, gambling, pornography, prostitution, the spread of viruses or any other illegal criminal activity;
11. Attempting to hide activity or records of activity;
12. The bypassing of any and all security measures to gain access to voice or electronic information or systems that the employee has not been specifically authorized to view or use is prohibited;
13. Attaching unauthorized devices to the County's Computer Resources;
14. The destruction of any record except in accordance with Ohio Public Records Law or Ohio Sunshine Laws.

D. Passwords, Access and Security

Log-on identifications and passwords may not be shared with anyone. It is the responsibility of each user to safeguard access to the internet and Electronic Mail via their computer by unauthorized users. An employee shall only access those Computing Resources for which he/she is authorized by the County to use. An employee's ability to access other Computing Resources does not grant authorization to do so.

If an employee suspects or knows of activities by any individual or entity that are in violation of the aforementioned unacceptable activities, he/she is obligated to report it to their immediate supervisor, IT Department and the Department of Human Resources as soon as possible.

E. Disclosure and Consent

The County reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of Internet and Electronic Mail activity for any purpose without prior notice to, or approval of law enforcement, government officials or other third parties, without notification or permission from the employee sending or receiving the messages.



Internet records and Electronic Mail messages are to be treated like shared paper files, with the expectation that anything in them is available for review by authorized representatives of the County or by members of the public in accordance with public records laws.

Use by an employee of the County's computer, internet and email communications systems shall constitute express consent of the employee to monitoring and/or disclosure by the County of all activity or contents of messages.

F. Account Disabling

Upon termination of employment, an employee's electronic accounts are immediately disabled. Data associated with disabled accounts should be removed according to the County's records retention policies.

