



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

(Applies to computers, printers and other peripherals, programs, data, local and wide area networks, email and use of the internet)

City **information technology resources** ("City IT resources") include computers, printers and other peripherals, programs, data, local and wide area networks, email and use of the internet. This policy applies to employees, interns and contractors ("users") of the City of Providence IT resources. IT also applies to access to City resources from personal computers or mobile devices.

Using any City IT resource constitutes acceptance of the terms of this policy and any corresponding policies such as those prohibiting harassment, discrimination, offensive conduct or inappropriate behavior.

User Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of any person using City IT resources to read, understand, and comply with this policy. Users are expected to exercise reasonable judgment in interpreting this policy and making decisions about the use of City IT resources.

Failure to observe this policy may subject individuals to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any person with questions regarding the application or meaning of this policy should seek clarification from your supervisor, department director or the Department of Information Technology.

Acceptable Uses

IT resources empower users and help them deliver better services at lower costs. Therefore, employees and contractors are encouraged to use City IT resources appropriately to the fullest extent in furtherance of the City's goals and objectives.

Unacceptable Uses of City IT Resources

Unless such use is reasonably related to a user's job, it is unacceptable for any person to use City IT resources:

- In furtherance of any illegal act, including violation of any criminal or civil laws or regulations, whether state or federal;
- For any use that causes interference with or disruption of network users and resources, including but not limited to propagation of computer viruses or other harmful programs;
- For any political, religious or commercial purpose;
- To solicit or proselytize for outside organizations or any other non-job-related solicitation;
- To send threatening or harassing messages, whether sexual or otherwise;
- To access or share sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials;
- To infringe any intellectual property rights;
- To gain, or attempt to gain, unauthorized access to any computer or network;
- To intercept communications intended for other persons;
- To misrepresent either the City or a person's role at the City;
- To distribute chain letters;
- To access online gambling sites;
- To libel or otherwise defame any person;



- To play or distribute pranks that can reasonably be expected to adversely affect any employee's job performance or workplace conditions;
- To access online social networking or dating sites, such as Match, Facebook, MySpace or Twitter. Please see the City of Providence Social Media Policy for more information;
- To access, install or use computer games.

The City of Providence, at its discretion, will review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose. The City will, at its discretion, block or restrict access to or from public websites or non-City email accounts that violate this policy.

Data Confidentiality

In the course of performing one's job, City employees and contractors often have access to confidential or proprietary information, such as personal data about identifiable individuals or commercial information about business organizations.

- Under no circumstances is it permissible for employees or contractors to acquire access to confidential data unless such access is a necessary job requirement.
- Users are prohibited from disseminating any confidential information that they have rightful access to, unless such dissemination is a necessary job requirement. Employees should seek clarification from the City Solicitor's Office they have any questions regarding dissemination of confidential information.

Copyright Protection

Computer programs and data are valuable intellectual property. Software publishers can be very aggressive in protecting their property rights from infringement. Legal protections also exist for information published on the internet, such as the text and graphics on a website. It is important that users respect the rights of intellectual property owners and exercise care and judgment when copying or distributing computer programs or information that could reasonably be expected to be copyrighted.

Any person with questions concerning possible violation of copyright or intellectual property rights should seek clarification from the City IT Department.

Passwords, Network Integrity and Security

Users must exercise reasonable precautions in order to prevent the introduction of a computer virus into the local or wide area networks. While virus scanning software is used to check any software downloaded from the internet or obtained from any questionable source, it is not foolproof. Certain precautions should be taken.

- Executable files (program files that end in ".exe") should not be stored on or run from network drives.
- Emails from unknown senders, particularly with attachments, should be deleted without opening.

Most desktop computers are connected to a local area network, supporting most other computers in City government. Users should take the following precautions to avoid compromising the security of the network:

- Users shall never share their passwords with anyone else.
- Users shall promptly notify City IT personnel if they suspect their passwords have been compromised.
- The password used for City network access must not be used for any personal account.
- Users must either log off the network or lock their account when leaving computers unattended for any period of time.
- Users should be wary of email solicitations requesting passwords for work or personal accounts/applications, and contact the IT Department personnel if they receive such a solicitation.



Applications which consume high network or server resources or internet bandwidth, disrupt other users' network access, or degrade network performance, may be blocked. If a website or application is unavailable, but required for business use, notify the IT Department.

Email

Format:

- Email addresses identify the organization that sent the message (yourname@providenceri.gov). Therefore, emails are no different than letters sent on official City letterhead, and must be treated as such.
- All emails should be written in a professional and courteous tone.
- Emails can be stored, copied, printed, or forwarded by recipients. Therefore, users should not write anything in an email message that they would not put into an official memorandum.

Use:

- Users are prohibited from using their work email address for personal correspondence, commercial ventures, religious or political causes or personal subscriptions, purchases or accounts.
- Users must not send electronic mail to all other employee users through the use of the "Everyone" address group unless expressly authorized by management to do so.
- All emails sent and received through work email are stored by the City and are the property of the City.

Content:

- The email system shall not be used to harass, intimidate, ridicule, embarrass or discriminate against any individual or group. Use of the City email system to create or forward intimidating, harassing or offensive and disruptive messages.
- The email system is not to be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Sexually explicit messages;
 - Messages which contain derogatory, gender-specific comments;
 - Messages containing racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, religious or other slurs;
 - Messages that contain profane or abusive language;
 - Messages which stereotype, harass or ridicule based on race, color, religion, country of origin, language(s) a person speaks, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, marital status or pregnancy status;
 - Messages that harass, make fun of, or gossip about another individual (even if not based upon the above classifications);
 - Messages that endorse a political position or candidate;
 - Users are prohibited from entering into any contracts or agreements on behalf of the City of Providence through electronic mail. Any such contracts or agreements must be executed through normal channels and must be expressly authorized by the City;
 - The email system must not be used to send or receive identifiable employee information except for employee information specifically set forth in the Access to Public Records Act (Rhode Island General Law 38-2-2(5)(i)(A)(1));
 - Disclosure of any confidential information through electronic mail to any party not entitled to that information is prohibited;
 - Messages soliciting funds or support for outside organizations are prohibited - even if such is not for personal gain - except as authorized by the Mayor's office or Human Resources.



No Expectation of Privacy

City IT resources are the property of the City and are to be used in conformance with this policy.

The City, at its discretion, will inspect any user's computer, any data contained in it, and any data sent or received by that computer, to include internet access and use.

Network administrators, in order to ensure proper network operations, routinely monitor network traffic. Use of City IT resources constitutes express consent for the City to monitor and/or inspect any data that users create or receive, any messages they send or receive, and any websites that they access.

Emails involving any matter in which the City has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power over may be considered public records in accordance with the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act and have the potential to be released to the public.

Social Networking and Publication

Users should recognize that they are representatives of the City, both in their professional capacity and, to the extent they are associated with this administration, in their personal life. Careful consideration should be taken when referencing the City of Providence, individual departments, coworkers or business topics in public forums or social networks. Messages disseminated through the internet may be captured, forwarded and put to unintended use by others and, once disseminated, cannot be recalled. For more information please see the City of Providence Social Media Policy.

City WiFi Use

City WiFi is provided as a service for visitors to City buildings, and to provide staff access to networks while working outside their usual office. Employees may use City WiFi for purposes unrelated to their employment - using personal smart phones, tablets or laptop computers - only during regular breaks and lunch periods, or before or after regular working hours. However, employees may not use City WiFi at any time to engage in a personal business enterprise, work on behalf of another employer, or when working or volunteering for a political candidate. As always, the use of the system must not interfere with your job duties or disrupt activity in the work place. Use of City WiFi is also governed by applicable portions of this policy, such as its limitations to accessing inappropriate websites, downloading games or disseminating offensive material.