

WASHINGTON COUNTY  
TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE USE POLICY

**PURPOSE**

This policy covers the use of all technology resources belonging to the Washington County. It includes, but is not limited to pagers, radios, all computer systems of any size and function and their attached peripherals, phones, cellular phones, faxes, voice mail systems, email systems, network resources and internet resources. All technology resources owned by Washington County are in place to enable the County to provide its services in a timely and efficient manner. This is the primary function of these resources and any activity or action that interferes with this purpose is prohibited. Because technology systems are constantly evolving, Washington County requires its employees to use a common sense approach to the rules as set forth below, complying not only with the letter but also the spirit of the policy.

A violation of this policy shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment.

**DEFINITIONS**

**E-Mail:** The distribution of messages, documents, files, software or images by electronic means over a phone line or a network connection. This includes internal e-mail, external e-mail and Internet e-mail.

**Internet and World Wide Web:** A world wide network of computer servers connected by phone lines that allow access to the public through a special language (Hyper Text Markup Language or HTML) and a special protocol (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol or HTTP).

**Information Access and Ownership:** All technology resources and all information transmitted by, received from or stored on Washington County systems is the property of the County and as such, is subject to inspection by agency Supervisors and/or the County Manager. Washington County reserves the right for business purposes to enter, review and monitor the information on all systems or media, without advance notice. This might include investigating theft, unauthorized disclosure of confidential business or proprietary information, personal abuse of the system or monitoring of workflow and productivity.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Anytime information is transmitted through electronic media, there is the possibility that it could be intercepted. Therefore, no confidential County information may be transmitted electronically without prior approval of the County Manager or his or her designee. If the employee is uncertain whether the information is confidential, he or she is to obtain prior approval before transmitting the information.

If Washington County determines an employee has used technology resources in a manner that violates this policy, the County will take appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## **PERSONAL USE**

Personal use of County owned technology resources by an employee is subject to the following restrictions:

1. Personal use of County owned technology resources is subject to all of the rules in this policy including inspection and monitoring.
2. There must be no cost to the County.
3. Use must not interfere with other employees performing their jobs or undermine the use of the resources for official purposes.
4. Occasional personal use of computers, printers or the Internet is permissible if conducted on an employee's own time.
5. Use of County technology resources for operating a personal business or soliciting of any kind is prohibited.
6. Personal local telephone calls on non-cellular phones or personal use of e-mail on an occasional basis may be permitted providing it does not interfere with the employee's obligation to carry out his or her duties in a timely and effective manner.
7. Some technology resources such as cellular phones are billed from the first minute of use (both local and long distance) and are not allowed to be used for personal use except in an emergency. In the event of emergency use the employee is required to reimburse any charges to the County.

8. Individuals who are not employees (including an employee's family and/or friends) are not allowed to use the County's technology resources.
9. Personal use of County resources by an employee neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by Washington County.

## **SECURITY**

Each employee is responsible for all actions taken while using his or her user profile, password or access code. None of these are allowed to be shared with anyone else (including other employees) except by County Manager approval. They must not be written down and stored, posted anywhere, programmed into macro or stored on the computer system in an unencrypted form.

Excepted as provided elsewhere in this policy, the examination, modification, copying or deletion of files and/or data entered by other employees without their prior consent is prohibited.

Any file, program or document received on media (diskette, CD-ROM or tapes), through the Internet (including e-mail) or through file transfer must be virus checked immediately. This is to prevent viruses from infecting the entire network. Each employee is responsible for the prevention of the spread of viruses. In addition, software may not be loaded onto any agency computer system, through any of the above methods without prior approval from the County Manager or his or her designee. This includes shareware, freeware, personal software or Internet distributed programs.

## **APPROPRIATE USE**

At all times when an employee is using technology resources, he or she is representing Washington County. Employees are expected to use sound judgement in all technology resource use as they would in written correspondence or in determining appropriate conduct.

While in the performance of work-related functions or while using for personal use, when using County owned or County provided technology resources, employees are required to use them responsibly and professionally. They will make no intentional use of these resources in an illegal, malicious, inappropriate or obscene manner. Each Internet capable workstation is configured to allow Supervisors and/or the County Manager to screen and review sites visited on the Internet. Employees have no expectation of privacy related to any personal or agency related use of any County owned or provided technology or equipment.

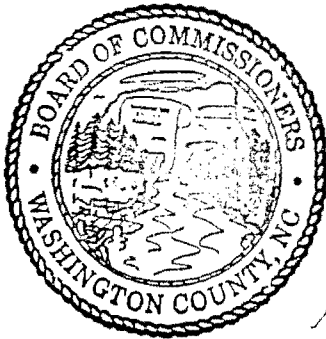
Using technology resources of Washington County to access pornography or hate group sites shall be grounds for the immediate termination of employment for reasons of unacceptable personal conduct.

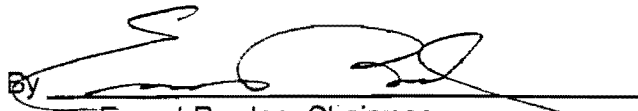
While sending or forwarding e-mail, either internally or externally, all employees shall identify themselves clearly and accurately. Anonymous or pseudonymous posting is expressly forbidden.

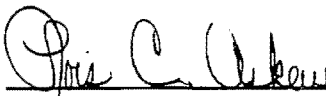
Employees of Washington County have a responsibility to ensure that all public information disseminated via the Internet is accurate. Employees will provide, in association with such information, its source and the date at which it was current and an electronic mail address allowing the recipient to contact the employee responsible for making the information in its current form.

Any violation of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment.

Adopted this the 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2001.



By   
Ernest Burden, Chairman  
Washington County Board of Commissioners

Attested by   
Lois C. Askew, CMC  
Clerk to the Board