



# County of Ottawa

## INTERNET USE POLICY

### I. POLICY

Access to the Internet is recognized by the County of Ottawa as a technological resource and is provided to its employees as a business communications tool. There are numerous resources, available through the Internet, which allow employees to gather information, conduct research, training, networking, and monitoring information pertinent to their technical areas. Every employee has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the County's public image and to use the Internet in a responsible manner. Access to the Internet, transmittal and receipt of information over the Internet, software and files downloaded through the Internet, and information accessed on the Internet must be in compliance with County Personnel Policies as well as existing standards and procedures of the Information Technology (IT) Department.

All County employees are authorized to access the Internet unless specifically denied access by their Department head. Department heads wishing to deny access to specific employees will notify the IT Director or a designated representative via e-mail, noting the reason for this denial. Denying access using technical means should be used as a last resort. Employees who are misusing or suspected of misusing internet access should be counseled and corrected by their immediate supervisor. If internet abuse is suspected, IT can be contacted to monitor the access of specific computers on the County network. For confidentiality, these requests should be directed to the IT Director, or a designated representative, by the Department head.

Employees accessing the Internet are representing the County. The use of the Internet via the County's computer/telecommunications system is reserved solely for the conduct of County business. With the exception of incidental personal use, all communications should be for County business purposes.

### II. STATUTORY REFERENCES

None.

### III. COUNTY LEGISLATIVE OR HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Board of Commissioners Resolution Number and Policy Adoption Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board of Commissioners Review Date and Resolution Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Date of Last Committee Review: \_\_\_\_\_



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## INTERNET USE POLICY

### PROCEDURE

1. The Internet is not to be used for personal gain or advancement of personal views. The use of County of Ottawa information and communication systems for any communication or activity which is in violation of any law or County policy is strictly prohibited.
2. Users are expressly prohibited from using computer systems within the County's network for any of the following purposes (The following examples are not meant to be an all inclusive list):
  - a. Solicitation of non-County business, or any use of the Internet for personal gain.
  - b. Copying or transmission of any document, software or other intellectual property protected by copyright, patent or trademark law, without proper authorization by the owner of the intellectual property.
  - c. Engaging in any communication that is threatening, defamatory, obscene, offensive, or harassing.
  - d. Political activities including sending political messages and solicitation of funds.
  - e. Gambling.
  - f. Viewing, downloading, or exchanging obscene material.
  - g. Illegal activities of any kind.
  - h. Disclosure of protected health information in a manner inconsistent with our Privacy Policies and Procedures.
  - i. Use of e-mail addresses for marketing purposes without explicit permission from the target recipient.
  - j. Forwarding of e-mail from in-house or outside legal counsel, or the contents of that mail, to individuals outside of the County without the express authorization of counsel.
  - k. Misrepresenting, obscuring, suppressing, or replacing a user's identity on an electronic communication.
  - l. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others with no substantial County business purpose.
  - m. Attempting unauthorized access to data or attempting to breach any security measure on any electronic communication system, or attempting to intercept any electronic communication transmissions without proper authorization.
  - n. Using personal Voice over IP (VOIP) i.e. Skype.



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o. Accessing streaming media sites for non-business use i.e. Internet Radio.

3. The County retains the rights to the information transmitted on or stored in all information and communication systems and equipment. The County retains the right to access and review all materials and information contained in or used in connection with County computer and communication systems. Employees should be mindful that they should have no expectation of privacy when utilizing the Internet and all information stored or transmitted could be subject to disclosure as a public record under the Freedom of Information Act, or on other grounds. For these reasons, all communications and uses of information should be consistent with the Employee Behavior, Discipline and Rules of Conduct Human Resources Policy.

4. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. In addition, the County may refer cases to the appropriate authorities for civil and/or criminal prosecution.

5. This policy applies to all County computers accessing the Internet via the County's network. County supported computers not connecting to the internet via the County's network will not be governed by the restrictions of this policy.

## **REVIEW PERIOD**

The Information Technology Director will review these policies and procedures and report to the Planning and Policy Committee at least once every two years.