



Town of North Attleborough, Massachusetts

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Policy Letter 005 – INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

1. **Scope.** This policy applies to all employees, authorized vendors, and designated users of the Town of North Attleborough who have access and to computer and information systems.
2. **Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to outline the acceptable use of Town information technology, computer equipment and network services. Computer hardware and network services require the appropriate, efficient, ethical, and legal utilization. The use of this equipment and these services must be consistent with the Town's objectives and mission. Employees will abide by this policy.
3. **Policy.**
 - a. The Town's networks and computers are for lawful business-related purposes, except as specified or authorized by this policy. Users must abide by all federal, state and local statutes, bylaws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, provisions relating to copyright protection.
 - b. Only legally obtained software programs are to be installed and/or used on Town computers. All software will be installed and retained by the Information Technology Department. The use of Town computer equipment to run unauthorized software is prohibited. Town owned software shall not be copied, duplicated, or used for personal use.
 - c. Computers and related equipment, other than assigned laptops, may not be removed from the workplace, or moved to other locations within Town facilities, unless approved by the Department Head and IT Director.
 - d. The use of Town provided computer equipment and network resources for an individual's participation in activities that are not work related (such as charitable, social, political or religious purposes, commercial use for profit, union business, or for outside employment) is prohibited. This includes notices/solicitations for donations.
 - e. All Town electronic information systems, hardware, software, temporary or permanent files and any related systems or devices created or stored on the Town's computers are the property of the Town and subject to public disclosure under the Public Records Law. As disclosure of email messages (or any other data files) is required under the Public Records Law, (despite the designation of any message as "private" or "confidential"), the Town shall not be liable for this disclosure in any way. These computer systems are provided for official Town business only. The information in the computer and the employee's use of the computer is subject to the Town's review and control. Therefore, the Town reserves the right, without notice, to have access to, review and/or monitor any user's workstation and all the information stored therein, and users should not consider any of the material

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transmitted via network resources or stored in the Town's computer systems to be private or confidential.

- f. The use of Town computer equipment for personal purposes including sending and receiving emails and access to the Internet shall be limited to infrequent usage. Such personal use shall be conducted in a way to make it clear that the employee is not representing the Town. Such use may be made only during the time an employee is relieved from duty, such as during breaks or lunch period. No personal use of Town computer equipment shall interfere with the efficient provision of work by an employee. All files and emails, even if sent as authorized incidental personal use of the computer, are the property of the Town and users can have no expectation of privacy in or ownership of same. Any and all emails, files, work product, etc. may be subject to disclosure as public records.
- g. Network accounts are to be accessed only by the authorized user of the account and the system administrator. No employee (including system administrators, other information system support staff or an independent contractor) is allowed to access email or other data files except for purposes related to Town business. The confidentiality of passwords and user accounts shall be protected for security purposes. Passwords should never be shared with others. Individual users will be held accountable for the use of their account by others, unless such use occurred through no fault of the user.
- h. Users are prohibited from downloading, viewing or transmitting any inappropriate material on or through any of the Town's Networks. The Town has the sole discretion to determine whether material is inappropriate. The Town also reserves the right to remove any inappropriate material from its software/hardware. If you receive an inappropriate email message under these guidelines, you are to contact your Department Head or the Town Manager. Inappropriate material includes, but is not limited to, material that:
 - i. is unlawful or illegal;
 - ii. is pornographic or obscene;
 - iii. is threatening;
 - iv. is abusive;
 - v. is libelous or defaming;
 - vi. is offensive;
 - vii. encourages or incites conduct that would constitute a criminal offense;
 - viii. violates the Town's harassment policies; or
 - ix. could potentially lead to civil and/or criminal liability or adverse publicity for the Town, its officers and /or employees.
- i. Users may not attempt to circumvent user authentication or security of any host, network, or account. This includes, but is not limited to, accessing data not intended for the user, logging into a server or account the user is not expressly authorized to access, or probing the security of other networks. Users may not attempt to interfere with service to any user, host, or network. This includes but is not limited to; "flooding" of networks, deliberate attempts to overload a service, and/or attempts to "crash" a host. Users may not use any kind of program/script/command, or send messages of any kind, designed to interfere with another user's session, via any means, locally or by the Internet. Users who violate network security may incur criminal and/or civil liability as well as disciplinary action.
- j. It is important to use care when sending email messages from Town owned equipment and from Town supplied email addresses. Messages should be polite and professional; be sure your messages don't appear brusque or curt. Do not write

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anything you would not repeat to others. The text of any email should be appropriate to be sent as a signed letter on Town letterhead. Again, the confidentiality of electronic mail cannot be assumed, communication that needs to remain confidential should not be sent electronically.

- k. Any computers and all related equipment are the property of the Town and must be treated with care. If you have a problem with computer equipment assigned to you, report the problem promptly to Information Technology staff. Do not attempt to resolve network problems, move computer equipment or fix broken equipment yourself.
 - l. All employees shall acknowledge that they have received and read this directive. Such acknowledgement shall be retained by the Human Resources Department. Nevertheless, the failure to provide such acknowledgement shall not in any way limit the Town's ability to enforce this directive.
 - m. All employees shall complete annual cybersecurity awareness training. Training will include information about cybersecurity initiatives, IT best practices, and regulatory compliance. These may include how to avoid phishing and other types of social engineering cyberattacks, spot potential malware behaviors, report possible security threats, follow company IT policies and best practices, and adhere to any applicable data privacy and compliance regulations. Failure to complete this training will result in revocation of access to Town computer information systems.
4. Any violations of this policy's provisions may result in revocation of employee access to the computer networks and equipment. Additionally, Town employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
5. The point of contact for this policy is the undersigned at mborg@nattleboro.com or by telephone at (508) 699-0100.



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