

BLAIR COUNTY POLICY



TITLE: Computer System/Internet Usage

BLAIR COUNTY POLICY NO.: 302

POLICY APPROVAL BY:

COMMISSIONERS:	Initials	Date
Terry Tomassetti	TT	6/10/09
Diane L. Meling	DM	6/10/09
Donna D. Gority	DDG	6/10/09
HR DIRECTOR:		
Dianne Carland	DC	6/12/09

1.0 PURPOSE

The County provides computers with access to email and Internet to complement traditional methods of data collection and communication and to improve administrative efficiency. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the appropriate use of the County's electronic data and communication systems. Users have the responsibility to use these resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner.

2.0 REFERENCES

2.1. PA Right to Know Act

3.0 POLICY REGARDING APPROPRIATE USAGE

- 3.1. The County reserves the right to monitor computer, Internet and email usage. The County may and will monitor computer, Internet, and email usage at any time, without the employee's permission. Violations of the policy discovered through this monitoring will subject the employee to an appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In order to further secure the safety and security of all Users, the County reserves the right to monitor and record the activity of all computer, Internet, and email usage. Electronic communication is subject to County review at any time. No electronic communication sent through the County system is private. Under certain circumstances, such as a result of investigations, subpoenas, or lawsuits, the County may be required by law to disclose the contents of email communications.
- 3.2. All work product generated on a County computer is and remains the property of Blair County.
- 3.3. All information, email, and Internet data that is written, sent, or received through the County's computer systems is part of official County records, which can be legally required to be provided when requested by outside parties. Therefore, always confirm

- that the business information contained in email and other transmission is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and legal.
- 3.4. The personal use of County computers, networks, applications and email by employees is prohibited.
 - 3.5. Employees shall not allow anyone who is not an employee of the County to use the County Computer system. Employees shall not access the County computers, networks, applications, and email of another user. Employees shall not utilize the access information of another user. Further, employees shall not share, publicize, or otherwise make available any County access information.
 - 3.6. Since County computer systems are intended for business purposes only, an employee must inform his/her supervisor of any private access codes or passwords used on the computer system, including e-mail passwords and Internet site passwords, upon request.
 - 3.7. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization or use internet/email for any purpose other than official County business.
 - 3.8. The County does not condone the illegal duplication of software. Employees may not use the computer systems to illegally duplicate software, without regard as to whether or not the County owns the software license.
 - 3.9. The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is prohibited.
 - 3.10. Playing games, videos, or music is prohibited while using County systems. This includes prohibiting the use of radio and instant messaging services available on the Internet.
 - 3.11. Employees shall not load any unauthorized software onto a County computer, network, or other technological resource. This policy prohibits the employee from utilizing, downloading, or installing any file-sharing or other peer-to-peer networking utilities or programs.
 - 3.12. Employees shall not connect any unauthorized hardware to a County computer, network, or other technological resource without supervisor approval.
 - 3.13. The County's Anti-Harassment Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy apply to the use of the computer system. In order to maintain a workplace that is free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of County employees, the use of computers, Internet and email in ways that violates such policies is prohibited.
 - 3.14. Obscene, pornographic, and any other sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons on County equipment shall not be displayed, downloaded or emailed. County-owned computers and email shall not be used for ethnic slurs, racial

comments, off-color jokes, or any other harassing, discriminatory, or disrespectful communications.

- 3.15. Employees shall not use any inappropriate language or profanity on County equipment or systems.
- 3.16. The use of email to solicit contributions of any kind is prohibited.
- 3.17. The use of County equipment, systems or email for political activity is prohibited pursuant to state and federal law.
- 3.18. If violations to this policy are observed, notify your supervisor, the Human Resources Department or any Department Head.
- 3.19. Users are on notice that any violation of this policy that is also a violation of any law may result in criminal and/or civil prosecution.
- 3.20. Immediately upon becoming aware of the possibility of litigation against the County or any of its departments or agencies regarding any matter, or against any party with whom the County contracts and such litigation relates to the County contract, contact the Chief Clerk (or Commissioner if the Chief Clerk is not available), the County IT Department and the Human Resources Director to arrange for immediate copy of all electronically stored information (which includes metadata) for preservation in accordance with state and federal law.

4.0 ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES WHICH MAY SUBJECT THE USER TO CRIMINAL OR CIVIL LIABILITY

- 4.1. Users shall not attempt to gain unauthorized access (hacking) to the County's network resources (equipment or applications) either internally through the County's network or an outside non-County network. Users may not attempt password cracking or change another user's password in order to log in through that user's account. Such violations will also be reported to the proper legal authorities.
- 4.2. Users may not attempt to access, copy, or modify another user's files. Actions of this nature are illegal, and any activity of this nature will be subject to an appropriate penalty as provided herein without regard to the user's intent in carrying out the prohibited activity. Such violations will also be reported to the proper legal authorities.
- 4.3. Users shall not achieve or attempt to achieve access beyond that authorized by County administration.
- 4.4. Users shall not attempt to subvert network security, impair the functionality of the network, or bypass restrictions set by the County administration.
- 4.5. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the District's computers, data, applications, and/or network functionality of the data, applications, or functionality on another user's computer, including but not limited to the uploading or creation of computer

viruses, shall be construed as an act of vandalism in violation of Pennsylvania law. Any act of vandalism will be subject to an appropriate penalty as provided for herein without regard to the user's intent or purpose in carrying out the prohibited activity. The County reserves the right to prosecute and hold liable any User whose activities in violation of this policy or acts of vandalism result in damage to the County's systems. Users whose actions inflict damage upon the county's systems shall be held liable for any damages resulting from their acts in violation of this policy. Vandalism will result in the immediate cancellation of access privileges and the County reserves the right to prosecute and hold the User liable for any damages, foreseen or unforeseen, resulting from the User's acts of vandalism.

5.0 DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

- 5.1. The County is not liable if personal electronic data stored on the computer systems by the employee is damaged, destroyed, or otherwise lost. Such personal data should not be stored or accessed on County computers.

6.0 VIOLATION

- 6.1. Employees who violate any prohibition of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Internet usage and access within the County is a privilege, not a right; and inappropriate, unauthorized, and/or illegal use will result in the cancellation of access privileges and appropriate disciplinary/legal action. Where appropriate, violations of law will be reported to the proper authorities.
- 6.2. Employees who access data, websites, applications, software, or any other form of computer, Internet, or network resources in violation of this policy will be responsible for any damages resulting from said access, including any lost/extended resource time for Technology staff or outside contractors, any effects upon County equipment, systems, software, and/or functionality resulting from deliberate or willful acts.
- 6.3. Deliberate and willful acts will be construed so as to include any accidental infection or damage resulting from the intentional violation of any provision of this policy, even if the infection or damage was not the intended goal of the activity.
- 6.4. Under Pennsylvania law it is a crime to access, alter, or damage any computer system, network, software, or database, or any part thereof, with the intent to interrupt the normal functioning of an organization. It is also unlawful to knowingly and without authorization disclose a password to any computer system or network, to gain unauthorized access to a computer or to interfere with the operation of a computer, or to alter any computer software without authorizations. Violations of these sections of Pennsylvania law are a felony punishable by a fine of up to \$15,000 and up to seven (7) years of imprisonment. Disclosure of a password to a computer system or network knowingly and without authorization is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine up to \$10,000 and imprisonment of up to five (5) years.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT OF COMPANY
COMPUTER SYSTEM/INTERNET USAGE POLICY**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the above County Policy; that I understand the provisions thereof and that I agree to abide by said Policy. I further understand that failure to abide by said Policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including separation from employment.

Date

Signature

Print Name

Department

