

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 2014 – 25 (Supersedes 2004-4, 2004-5, and 2009-16)**

**SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

**DATE ISSUED: MARCH 11, 2014**

**DATE EFFECTIVE: APRIL 1, 2014**

**APPROVED BY:**   
**William C. Murphy, City Manager**

**PURPOSE:** This policy supersedes all prior administrative policies regarding electronic communications, computer hardware and software, computer networks, internet usage, email, and telephones. It is intended to update and simplify the City's policies regarding electronic communications, usage of computer hardware and software, prohibited uses of the City's technology resources, restrictions about downloading files from the internet and opening email attachments, and permitted uses of the City's telephone system. This policy applies to all City personnel. Responsibility for changes and updates to this policy rests solely with the City Manager.

This policy does not address all required, allowed, or prohibited behaviors by employees, but merely covers common examples. In general, the City relies on the good judgment of its employees to ensure that City Technology Resources are used in the public's best interest.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. "Electronic communication" means any communication done electronically, including email, mobile/cell phones, and text messaging.
2. "Email" is a web-based system of electronic communication, in which a computer user can send a message to another computer user, whether sent through the City's electronic mail system or the internet.
3. "Information Technology" is sometimes referred to herein as IT, and includes all electronic equipment, software and/or data used by City employees in the performance of their work, including but not limited to computers, email, the internet, telephones, cell phones, fax machines, flash drives, scanners, and pagers.
4. "Internet" is the communication system conducted via a network of computers using the World Wide Web (www).

**GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT:** It is the policy of the City of Toppenish to maximize the cost-effective use of computer systems as a means of improving productivity. The City provides communication resources capable of offering computing resources, electronic mail (email), internet access, telephone and voicemail, facsimile machines, cellular telephones and other electronic communications devices (collectively referred to as the City's Technology Resources) to employees to assist in and facilitate City

business and communications. The primary purpose of the City's network and systems is to provide service to the public as part of City business, in a manner that is consistent with the City's vision and values. De minimus, incidental personal use of the City's Technology Resources by employees is permitted if accomplished in compliance with the provisions of this policy as set forth below. It is recognized and expected that hardware, software and all other aspects, means and practices of electronic communications and information technology are regularly changing in unpredictable ways and that therefore it is not possible to formulate a policy that specifically addresses unknown future developments in any of those facilities and amenities. Nevertheless it is intended that this policy will pertain to all such advancements.

**NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY:** By using the City's Technology Resources, employees acknowledge and agree that they have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in their use of these systems or in any data that they create, store, or transmit on or over the systems, including any data created, stored or transmitted during an employee's incidental personal use of the Technology Resources as permitted under this policy. Employees further agree that they are aware of, understand and will comply with the provisions of this policy, and that their use of the Technology Resources can and will be monitored and any data that they create store, or transmit on or over City systems may be inspected by City management at any time. Employees should understand that certain email messages, other electronic communications, and documents created on City computer systems may be considered a public record subject to disclosure and/or subject to discovery in the event of litigation.

**STANDARDIZED SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE.** The City has established standard software and hardware for commonly used applications. The use of unauthorized, non-standard software or hardware, including flash drives and any other portable devices, and personally owned software or hardware on City computer systems without approval of the Information Technology Specialist (ITS) is prohibited. The ITS is whoever is then currently providing IT services authorized by the City Manager for all departments except the Police Department. The ITS for the Police Department is whoever has been approved by both the Police Chief and the City Manager to provide IT services to that department.

**INSTALLATION OF SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE.** Improper installation of software or hardware can damage a computer system, cause system malfunction, or conflict with system configuration. All standardized software and hardware is to be installed by the ITS. Specialized software and hardware technologies exclusive to individual departments may be managed within the appropriate department, in coordination with the ITS. Any moving, relocating, or rearranging of computer software or hardware should also be: coordinated with the ITS.

**OWNERSHIP AND CONFIDENTIALITY.** All software, programs, applications, templates, data, data files and web pages residing on City computer systems or storage media or developed on City computer systems are the property of the City. The City retains the right to access, copy, modify, destroy or delete this property. Data files containing confidential or sensitive data should be treated accordingly and should not

be removed from the workplace without proper authorization.

**COPYING SOFTWARE, PROGRAMS, APPLICATIONS, TEMPLATES, ETC.**

Employees must notify their supervisor or department director and the ITS and receive prior authorization before attempting to copy software, applications, programs or templates. In many cases, copyright laws and/or licenses for commercial software, programs, applications and templates used by the City prohibit the making of multiple copies. The City and its employees are required to abide by the federal copyright laws and to abide by all licensing agreements.

**ACCEPTABLE USES OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES.** The City's Technology Resources are to be used by employees for City business. Incidental, de minimus personal use may be permitted where, in the judgment of the employee's supervisor or department director, such use does not interfere with employee or department productivity, nor distract/take time away from the worker or co-workers assigned work. Generally speaking, incidental, de minimus personal use means: (1) it is occasional and of short duration; (2) it is done on an employee's personal time, such as on a lunch break; (3) it does not interfere with job responsibilities; (4) it does not result in any expense to the City; (5) it does not solicit for or promote commercial ventures; (6) it does not utilize excessive network resources; and (7) it does not constitute any prohibited use, as discussed below.

**PROHIBITED USES OF CITY'S TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES.** Use of the City's Technology Resources to engage in any communication that violates federal, state, or local laws or regulations, or any City policy, is strictly prohibited at all times. In addition, the following uses of the City's Technology Resources are inappropriate and are prohibited at all times, unless specifically exempted below:

- Personal commercial use (benefiting an employee's outside employment or commercial business);
- Accessing, receiving or sending pornographic, sexually explicit or indecent materials, including materials of an unreasonably offensive nature (unless as part of a law enforcement investigation conducted by authorized Police personnel);
- Usage for any type of unlawful harassment or discrimination, including the transmission of obscene or harassing messages to any individual or group because of their sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or other protected status;
- Gambling;
- Usage for recreational purposes including the loading of computer games or playing online games;
- Usage that precludes or hampers City network performance; such as viewing or listening to streaming audio and/or video (unless for City business, such as for online training);

- Unauthorized copying or downloading of copyrighted material;
- Usage that violates software license agreements;
- Downloading of software programs (unless specifically approved by applicable director and coordinated with the ITS);
- Usage for political purposes, including partisan campaigning;
- Sending anonymous messages and/or misrepresenting an employee's name, position, or job description;
- Deliberately propagating any virus, worm, trojan horse, malware, spyware, or other code or file designed to disrupt, disable, impair, or otherwise harm either the City's networks or systems, or those of any other individual or entity;
- Releasing misleading, distorted, untrue or confidential materials regarding City business, views or actions;
- Using abusive, profane, threatening, racist, sexist, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages;
- Use of Technology Resources in an excessive manner so as to deprive others of system use or resources, including the sending of bulk email for other than official business or forwarding "chain letter" emails of any kind;
- Connecting to the City network, or any specific software package, utilizing somebody else's security identification login information to gain alternate security permissions;
- Any personal use, even if incidental, that result in expense to the City;
- Using Facebook, Twitter, or any other such social media.

Any employee who violates these policies could be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, employees may be held personally liable for damages incurred as a result of copyright and licensing requirements.

Any of the foregoing uses are exempted from the listed prohibitions if they must be used by an employee to do the work he/she has been assigned to do, PROVIDED they have prior approval and specific documented authorization by the designated ITS.

**DOWNLOADING FILES FROM THE INTERNET OR OPENING EMAIL ATTACHMENTS.** Downloading files from the internet or opening email attachments from sources outside the City can lead to spyware and/or virus attacks that can severely damage, or degrade the City's network and/or data. The ITS has installed anti-virus and anti-spyware software on all City computers and continuously updates signature definition files. However, that does not guarantee that all spyware is blocked, or that all viruses are caught.

If you are downloading a file and receive a message that a virus or spyware has been detected, you must contact the ITS immediately for assistance. Similarly if you receive an email with a suspicious attachment, or from an unusual source, you should notify the ITS before opening it. If you notice that your computer is behaving strangely or you suspect spyware or a virus, notify your supervisor or department director.

**CITY PHONE SYSTEM – PERSONAL CALLS PROHIBITED.** Employees are not permitted to make personal telephone calls on City telephones, except with prior approval of his/her immediate supervisor, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld but will be granted only when there are exigent circumstances and the employee's personal cell phone is not available.