

S A M P L E:
USE OF INTERNET AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Computer systems that allow access to the Internet and electronic communication systems are the property of _____ County, and are provided to facilitate the effective and efficient conduct of _____ County business. Users are permitted access to the Internet and electronic communication systems to assist in the performance of their jobs. Incidental and occasional personal use of the Internet or computer systems is permitted only with prior approval from your supervisor or _____. Use of personal e-mail accounts or other personal electronic communication is prohibited. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy in any message, file, image or data created, sent, retrieved or received by use of _____ County equipment and/or access.

Employees will be assigned a pass code or codes to use when the employee uses the computers, e-mail and the Internet in performing their job duties. The employees are to use their assigned pass code or codes in all appropriate applications. The employees are not to share their assigned pass code or codes with anyone. Employees may not change pass codes without prior approval from _____. All pass codes are the property of the _____ County. Employees will use only the pass code issued to him or her and will not use pass codes unknown to _____ County or issued to another employee.

_____ County has the right to monitor all aspects of their computer systems including, but not limited to, websites, instant messaging systems, chat groups or news groups visited by employees; material downloaded or uploaded; and e-mail sent or received by employees. _____ County reserves the right, at any time and without notice, to access, audit, read, delete, retain, review all electronic communications, sent, received, stored, accessed or transferred on the company system. This includes monitoring information pertaining to Internet usage. Electronic records may be subject to the Missouri State and/or federal laws and therefore, may be made available for public review.

_____ County property must not be used for personal use (photocopying, faxing, etc.) without prior approval from _____. Certain activities are prohibited when using the Internet or electronic communications. These include, but are not limited to:

- Accessing, downloading, printing or storing information with sexually explicit content,
- Downloading or transmitting fraudulent, threatening, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory, or otherwise unlawful messages or images,
- Installing or downloading computer software, programs, or executable files without approval,
- Uploading or downloading copyrighted materials or _____ County proprietary information without approval,
- Uploading or downloading access-restricted information contrary to policy or in violation of policy,
- Sending e-mails using another's identity, an assumed name, or anonymously.
- Permitting a non-user to use for purposes of communicating the message of a third party individual or organization, and any other activities designated as prohibited by _____ County.

Electronic communications should be managed with the same level of care, professional judgment and discretion as paper memoranda or documents. When using Internet access or electronic communications, equipment and capability, individuals must:

- Ensure e-mails are not offensive, defamatory, or illegal (employees should not publicize or provide link to such material);
- Ensure the electronic media is not used to harass any employees, volunteers, or clients,
- Ensure e-mail security is safeguarded when sending official confidential information and is so noted on documents,
- Ensure the Internet is not used to conduct illegal activities,
- Not access the e-mail account of another except in an official capacity,
- Maintain the conditions of security (including safeguarding of passwords) under which they are granted access to such systems,
- Check with the supervisor prior to downloading or accessing a file or document if the source of the file or other circumstances raises doubts about its safety, or copyright status.

Cellular telephones:

Cell phones should not be used when a less costly alternative is safe, convenient, and readily available. Text messaging while operating a motor vehicle is strictly prohibited. The use of a cellular phone while operating a vehicle is strongly discouraged. Employees should plan calls prior to traveling or while stopped. Employees should refrain from conducting personal business while on official duty. Personal use of office telephones is limited to essential need. Employees with cell phones are required to take appropriate precautions to prevent theft and vandalism as with all ____ county equipment.

Guidelines for Social Networking:

____ County would prefer employees not to use the company electronic communication systems for personal use. However, limited personal use will be permitted if it complies with the following:

- Need to establish a clear separation between work duties and personal pursuits:
- Divulging proprietary or confidential information
- Comments are not derogatory or defamatory about co-workers or board members
- Comments are not false or misleading statements about company policy, services, opinions or relationships to other organizations
- Comments/postings do not contain offensive content that is anti-social, bigoted or promotes illegal activities
- Comments/postings do not contain the employer's name or refer to any company employees by name.
- Comments/postings do not discuss confidential company business

Violations of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, or immediate revocation of any or all electronic communications access and user privileges.