

COUNTY OF CAPE MAY INTERNET.
INTRANET AND ELECTRONIC MAIL
ACCESS AND USE POLICY

**(As Adopted by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of
the County of Cape May on July 13, 1999;
Effective on August 1, 1999)
(Revised November 14, 2000)**

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the County of Cape May that computers are provided to enable County employees to conduct County business in an efficient fashion. This policy applies to all County employees and system users authorized to access and use the Internet and encompasses all decisions and activities affecting or affected by access or use of the Internet by County employees and system users.

To control unnecessary County spending and avoid duplication of effort, separate access contracts with commercial Internet providers shall not be negotiated.

Employee access to the Internet through established County facilities is offered as a tool for meeting the programmatic and operational needs of the County. County-provided Internet access is considered County property and is to be used for County business. Authorized users are expressly prohibited from County-provided Internet access for personal or non-County business. Internet use is not private and employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy in their use of County-provided Internet access. The County reserves the right to review and monitor log listings, work stations and file server space to ensure employee compliance with this policy.

Use of the Internet is a privilege which constitutes the acceptance of responsibilities and obligations that are subject to Federal, State, and local laws. Employees' use shall be legal, ethical, and respectful of intellectual property, ownership of data, and systems security. Internet use may be subject to limitations on their use of the networks as determined by the appropriate supervising authority.

Requests for Internet access must be accompanied by a statement explaining the business need for such access, endorsed by the employee's direct supervisor and/or department head. Approval of the Clerk/Administrator is required for Internet access by County employees.

COMPLIANCE AND VIOLATION

- Use of County-provided Internet access is a privilege which may be revoked by the Clerk/Administrator at any time. Reasons for termination include, but are not limited to violations of this policy or any standards or guidelines referenced herein. Termination of Internet access may be with or without notice.

- Violations of this policy may result in suspension or termination of Internet access and disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

- Unauthorized use of the Internet by employees shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

GUIDELINES FOR ACCEPTABLE COUNTY INTERNET ACCESS

I. Guidelines for General Use of Internet Services

County employees are encouraged to use the Internet to its fullest potential to further County business and to discover new ways to use resources to enhance service.

Guideline I: County employees should use the Internet when appropriate to accomplish job responsibilities more effectively.

The Internet provides access to a wide variety of information and resources that can aid County employees in the performance of their jobs. Employees are encouraged to use the Internet as a research and reference tool.

Guideline II: County employees must conform to reasonable professional standards for use of Internet services as detailed in this guideline.

County employees have an' obligation to learn about network etiquette, customs, and courtesies. Accepted procedures and guidelines are to be followed when using electronic mail communications, participating in electronic mail discussion groups, using remote computer services, transferring files from other computers, or disseminating information to others on the Internet. Employees also have an obligation to be aware of computer security and privacy concerns and to guard against computer viruses.

Guideline III: Use of the Internet by County employees is for County business only. All County employees are responsible for complying with County policies, guidelines, and standards of conduct on the use of the Internet. Violations may result in a revocation of Internet access privileges and disciplinary action.

Employees shall respect intellectual property rights at all times when obtaining information over the Internet. Monitoring of employees' Internet usage shall occur periodically.

Guideline IV: Use of fee-for-service providers on the Internet is not allowed unless the necessary approvals and funding have been obtained in advance. Any individual who obligates the County to pay for services without prior approval is personally liable for these costs and subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

II. Standards of Conduct for Use of Internet Services

County employees have an obligation to use their access to the Internet in a responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs and courtesies. Use of the Internet encompasses many different interconnected networks and computer systems. Many of these systems are provided free of charge by universities, public service organizations, and commercial companies. Each system has its own rules and limitations, and guests on these systems have an obligation to learn and abide by the rules. The Internet is an unsecured system that has no security controls and shall never be used by County employees to transmit confidential or sensitive information, unless such transmissions are encrypted to ensure security. Encryption software used for such purposes shall conform to standards identified by the Management Information Systems (MIS) Department of the County of Cape May.

County employees shall not act as spokespersons for the County by attempting to answer every question asked by the public via the Internet, unless authorized to do so. Employees shall reply only to those questions that are within the scope of their work for the County. Employees shall handle Internet inquiries about County matters that are outside the immediate scope of work as they would handle telephone inquiries.

County employees shall not give out personal information (such as home address, home telephone number, credit information, etc.) about themselves or other County employees when responding to any member of the public on behalf of the County.

The privilege of County-provided access to the Internet may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct. Examples of inappropriate conduct include but are not limited to:

- use of the Internet for other than County-related business .use of the Internet for unlawful activities
- use of abusive or objectionable language in either public or private message

- misrepresentation of one's self or the County
- accessing pornographic sites or those sites appealing to prurient interests
- accessing vendor sites to purchase personal items .activities that could cause congestion and disruption of networks and system (i.e., downloading files over 5 MB) and network security

NOTE: If for law enforcement purposes, conduct that would normally be considered in appropriate will be considered valid County business and appropriate.

III. Guidelines for Use of Electronic Discussions/News Group Services on the Internet

County employees who participate in electronic discussion groups (such as List servers, Usenet, news groups, etc.) must learn and abide by the rules and etiquette of those groups. List Servers can automatically generate high volumes of unwanted mail. This can have significant impacts on network performance, especially if large files are involved. When using electronic discussion group services some general guidelines are:

- Use Listservers and Usenet news groups only when absolutely necessary.
- Observe the conventions and particular interests of the group prior to becoming an active participant.
- Be aware that the information available via the Internet is provided "as is". Check all information obtained via the Internet with other sources, and attempt to discern fact from opinion.

IV. Guidelines for Use of TEL NET Services on the Internet

When using TELNET to access remote computer systems, County employees should remember that they are guests on another institution's system. To help ensure that other Internet users have access to the same information in a timely manner, remote users should observe a few basic courtesies:

- Logoff a remote computer system when finished.
- Maintaining a connection that is not actively being used may prevent others from connecting to that system.
- Read or obtain instructions or documentation files when using a system for the first time.
- Be aware of time and resource limitations of remote systems.
- Adhere to any stated restrictions.

V. Guidelines for Use of File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Services on the Internet

When using FTP, County employees are guests on other systems. To ensure that other Internet users have access to the information, a few basic guidelines should be followed:

- a) Login as anonymous and respond to the PASSWORD prompt with your electronic mail address, unless the system specifies otherwise. Logoff the remote computer system when finished.

- b) Avoid transferring files during peak business hours for the remote system.
- c) Be aware of time and resource limitations on remote systems.
- d) Adhere to any stated restrictions.
- e) Remove files transferred to shared systems areas as soon as possible. Copy the files to local disks if needed for future use.
- f) Use common sense when transferring files from the Internet. All files transferred from the Internet, especially program files, should be checked for computer viruses. Please contact the County MIS Department and request a virus check.
- g) Respect and observe copyright and licensing agreements of transferred files.

INTRANET POLICY

This policy applies to all County employees and system users utilizing the Cape May County network (CMC network).

I. The following use of the CMC network is prohibited:

- a) Using the CMC network for personal profit.
- b) Intentionally interfering with or attempting to intentionally interfere with the performance of the CMC network.
- c) Using a computer user-ID or account belonging to another individual or department without express permission.
- d) Attempting to access data being transferred through the CMC network or files on any computer connected to the CMC network without the express permission of the owner.
- e) Interfering with the legitimate work of other system users.
- f) The unauthorized copying or transmission of software. All proprietary computer software is legally protected by Federal, State and local laws
- g) Abusing or sabotaging any interconnected network such as the Internet.
- h) Using the CMC network to attempt to violate any computer system's security.
- i) Using the CMC network to spread computer viruses, Trojan horses, worms or any other program designed to violate security, interfere with the proper operation of any computer system or destroy/disable another user's data.
- j) Using the CMC network in any manner which violates any County policy, Federal, State or local law.

II. Each County employee or system user is responsible for any misuse of his/her user-ID.

III. Password(s) should be changed often in order to protect users and their data. The following recommendations are provided for selecting passwords:

- a) Select passwords that are difficult for someone else to guess.
- b) Avoid words that might appear in the dictionary.
- c) Select passwords that have imbedded number or punctuation or consist of multiple words.
- d) Do not write your password where it might be found by another system user or unauthorized user.

ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY

This policy sets forth the County's right to access, utilize and monitor its computers, computer networks, electronic mail (E-mail), and other electronic communication systems. This policy applies to all County employees and system users.

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of Cape May County's electronic communications is to facilitate the timely and efficient conduct of County business. The communications are also provided to encourage and facilitate the free exchange of business-related communications and ideas between employees. This includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail systems (E-mail), voice mail systems, faxes, Internet and other electronic media that generate, store, transmit and display correspondence for internal and external business communication purposes. All electronic data are the property of Cape May County and may be public records.

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, extra help employees, volunteers and other individuals who are provided access to Cape May County's electronic communications systems. Employees are representing the County, and thus all communications shall be professional and appropriate. Employees are prohibited from using electronic communications for solicitation of funds, political messages, harassing messages, and other messages as specifically prohibited. Employees who have resigned, are terminated or laid off have no rights to the contents of the County electronic communications and will not be allowed access. The misuse of electronic communications may subject the employee to disciplinary actions including, but not limited to termination of employment.

II. NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

Employees and systems users are advised that computer, computer networks, E-mail and other electronic communications systems and all communications created, received, stored on or transmitted through these systems are solely for County business and are County property. Accordingly, employees and systems users have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding this equipment or these communications and are advised that the systems and their communications are subject to monitoring and interception.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **Access**: To gain the ability to view, read and/or copy the contents of a computer-generated and maintained file.
2. **Disclosure**: To expose a computer-generated and maintained file to the attention of someone other than the originator.
3. **Electronic Mail**: Non-interactive communication of text, data and images between a sender and designated recipient(s) by systems utilizing telecommunication links. Electronic mail usually requires the sender and recipient(s) to enter a password as a precondition to access.

4. **Monitor:** The ability of a computer program or human to check, observe, test, track, or watch in order to detect errors, trends, discrepancies, opportunities, irregularities and/ or patterns.

IV. POLICY

- A. The County's electronic mail systems are the property of the County of Cape May and are intended for official business. An employee should not expect their communications to be private, and should not use electronic mail for personal and/ or confidential matters that are not intended for public disclosure.
- B. Employees should treat the electronic mail system as a shared file system, with the expectation that messages sent, received, or stored in the system, including individual hard disks will be subject to access, monitoring, and disclosure.
- C. Employees should be aware that documents created and sent by electronic mail for official business or as evidence of official acts may constitute official records of the County. Any document created or sent by electronic mail, whether internally or externally through systems such as the Internet, is subject to this policy, and may be subject to other regulations, laws, or policies on public records or by the County.
- D. Work place electronic communications are always subject to monitoring and interception. While the systems may contain passwords, locks, encryption or other security features provided to employees and systems users, employees and systems users are advised that these security features exist to protect the County's business interest and not to protect an employee's personal use of a business resource.
- E. Use of the electronic mail is subject to all applicable County policies. The use of the County's computer system, including the E-mail system, for vulgar, abusive, harassing, offensive or inflammatory language is not permitted.
- F. Employees who receive electronic mail containing confidential information shall take all necessary measures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained, and shall not disclose or transmit confidential information to any unauthorized persons.
- G. Except as set forth below, authorization to monitor, access or disclose employees' electronic mail shall be subject to the County's policies and procedures on investigating employee conduct.
- H. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for misuse or unauthorized access, disclosure, monitoring of electronic mail and violations of this policy.
- I. Employees who receive electronic mail containing a message(s) that violate this policy or any other County policy is advised not to delete the message(s) and to notify your supervisor.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. Authorized data processing and systems personnel may, *with prior approval of the County Prosecutor*, access or monitor electronic mail in the course of system maintenance and repair, and for purposes of assuring system security or detecting breaches of that security. Any unauthorized use of electronic mail discovered during such monitoring shall be reported to the Clerk/ Administrator and the user's immediate supervisor.
- B. Approval to monitor, access, or disclose employees' electronic mail may only be granted by *the County Prosecutor at his or her own volition or upon request* of the Clerk/Administrator upon the advice of the County Counsel for any legitimate purpose, including but not limited to, the following circumstances:
1. In the course of asserting a claim or legal defense of the County employee in a civil action or administrative proceeding;
 2. Investigations of allegations of employee misconduct or violations of the law;
 3. Investigations of abuse of County resources;
 4. Investigations of breaches of security; and
 5. When an employee or systems user is unavailable and the County must conduct business. Verification of employee's or systems user's unavailability is required. In this instance, management should attempt to contact the individual and inform the individual prior to asking the Clerk/Administrator for permission to access the individual's computer files.
- C. Employees and systems users should use E-mail as cautiously as they would use any more permanent communication medium, such as a letter or memorandum. Employees and systems users must realize that messages:
1. May be saved and read by third parties;
 2. May be retrieved even after message is deleted; and
 3. May be accessed by authorized County personnel for previously enumerated business reasons. This policy shall be distributed to all County employees' systems users and new hires. This policy may be updated on an as needed basis and is subject to annual review.

NOTE: Amendments to policy indicated by *italics* pursuant to Resolution No. 861-00 dated November 14, 2000.