

**Town of Freetown
Board of Selectmen**

**Information Systems
Policy**

**Adopted: June 25, 2007
Revised: May 9, 2011
Supersedes Previous Policies**

**Board of Selectmen
3 North Main Street
Freetown, MA 02702**

**508-644-2201 (Phone)
508-644-3342 (Fax)
www.freetownma.gov**

Information Systems Policy

General Statement: The Town of Freetown is pleased to offer network and electronic resources access to its employees and hopes that it will assist those working in the Town to better serve its constituency. Town employees have an obligation to use their access to the Internet in a responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs and courtesies.

The following regulations may be updated from time to time and amended at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

1. The following activities are strictly prohibited:
 - a. Any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, the transmission of copyright or trade secret material, the transmission of obscene¹, pornographic or threatening material, or the participation in any type of criminal activity.
 - b. Use of Town Systems for on-line gambling activities.
 - c. Downloading and/or viewing of pornographic material.
 - d. Mass Mailings, chain letters, and/or Spam, except in accordance with sanctioned procedures.
 - e. Electronic Harassment of any kind.
 - f. Compromising the privacy of user's confidentiality.
 - g. The transmission of files related to commercial promotion, product endorsement or political lobbying.
 - h. Attempts to violate the computer security systems implemented by the Town of Freetown or other institutions, organizations, companies or individuals.
 - i. Software piracy, or the downloading and transferring of software for which the user does not have the proper licensing.
 - j. Deliberate destruction or tampering of files, databases or programs.
 - k. Misdirection or misappropriation of Town-owned or Town-created files, documents, programs or materials for personal gain.
 - l. Misuse of Town-owned equipment, hardware and software for personal business or personal financial gain.
 - m. The transmission or disclosure of materials holding a federal security classification as defined in Executive Order 12958, sec. 1.3. is strictly prohibited.
 - n. Any activity that can be construed as offensive or causing a hostile work environment.

2. E-mail and other on-line services are the property of the Town of Freetown, and should be used for business purposes relative to the Town/Department. Occasional personal use of e-mail and the Internet is permitted. However, misuse of these

¹ The word "obscene" is defined by reference to Massachusetts General Laws chapter 272, section 31 (<http://www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/272-31.htm>).

systems may result in serious disciplinary action by the Town/Department up to and including dismissal. Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to: Disruptive or offensive messages containing sexual implications, racial or gender-specific slurs, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin or disability. Use of Town Internet, Email and Network services is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct. Illegal use of the Town's systems may result in referral to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

3. E-mail messages and computer files prepared, displayed, stored and transmitted or received on Town computer systems are public record and are legally discoverable. No right to privacy is to be expected or assumed. Employees should not expect that e-mail messages (even those marked "personal") are private or confidential; confidential information should not be transmitted via electronic means. Where there is a legal necessity, (e.g. the records may be exempt from public records access) to protect the confidentiality of particular information stored or processed on Town computer systems, the employee or designated Town official responsible for the information must make specific arrangements with the Information Systems Manager and strictly adhere to the procedures established to protect the designated information. Employees shall not read e-mail received by another employee when there is no business purpose for doing so. Employees shall not send e-mail or access the Internet or Network under another employee's name without authorization. No employee shall change any portion of a previously sent e-mail message without authorization. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, however, the Town expressly reserves its right to assert any applicable exemptions available under the Public Records law.

4. Use of the Town's system constitutes consent to monitoring of e-mail transmissions, Network storage and other on-line services and is conditioned upon strict adherence to this policy. The appointing authority may periodically monitor e-mail messages as well as server traffic and Internet use. Reasons for doing so include but are not limited to: System checks, review of employee usage, investigations into claims of possible criminal activity, and investigations into claims of inappropriate use of the Town's Internet, Network, e-mail or on-line services.

5. All users are expected to undertake precautions to prevent infection of Town computers by computer viruses. Though computers have virus-scanning software, the data files are not always up-to-date. It is the end-user's responsibility to periodically update these files in accordance with any procedure established by the Town or with the approval of the System Administrator. The System Administrator is available to assist and input the latest virus scanning technology into all computers. In particular, executable programs imported from other sites to Town computers must not be used unless the System Administrator has authorized them and they have been subjected to virus detection procedures approved by the System Administrator. The System Administrator may, from time to time, impose additional restrictions or regulations on the importing of remote files, and such restrictions or regulations shall be considered part of this policy.

7. Computer programs are valuable Intellectual property. Software publishers can be very aggressive in protecting their property rights from infringement. In addition to software, legal protections can also exist for any information published on the Internet, such as the text and graphics on a web site. As such, it is important that users respect the right of intellectual property owners. Users should exercise care and judgment when copying or distributing computer programs or information that could reasonably be expected to be copyrighted.

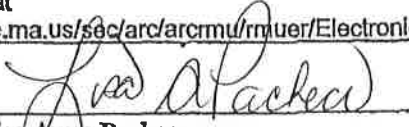
8. Department heads and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all their employees using computers have read this policy and understand its applicability to their activities.

9. The department head is responsible for insuring that any employee who will be given access to Internet services, e-mail and proprietary electronic systems have read and signed a copy of this policy. A signed copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

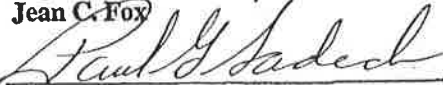
10. E-mail and Internet are work tools. The appointing authority and/or department head shall deem who appropriately can utilize tools such as e-mail/Internet to better perform their job duties and has the right to review/limit the number of hours spent on each application.

11. Employees should be advised that the e-mail system is not intended for use as a filing cabinet. Employees shall periodically save their e-mail files to either a floppy disk or print them out on paper and maintain them as required by applicable records disposal schedules issued by the Supervisor of Public Records. Electronic mail is considered a public record and is subject to Massachusetts General Law c. 66, c. 4, § 7(26)(a-m), and relevant regulations. Further, the Town (through its System Administrator) will ensure the security and reliability of its electronic record keeping and record-creating resources by documenting its systems using the state's "Guideline for the Documentation of Electronic Record-Keeping Systems" (revised 4/29/02) found at <http://www.state.ma.us/sec/arc/arcmu/rmuer/ElectronicRecordsGuideline.tif>

Approved:


Lisa Anne Pacheco


Jean C. Fox


Paul G. Sadeck

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