

CITY OF PLANO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

223.000

Department Name: Human Resources Manual

Procedure: Internet and E-mail

Effective Date: 11/01/00

Revision Date(s): 01/01/02, 04/01/06, 04/01/09

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the employees of the City of Plano concerning their use of the Internet and e-mail. ***Access to Internet and use of e-mail are City resources, which are provided to enable City employees to work more efficiently and effectively.*** The Internet provides numerous opportunities to access information, interact with other professionals, and conduct business. Use of the Internet and e-mail is encouraged when it results in the most efficient and/or effective means of communication of City business. Employees are to use e-mail and the Internet as they would any other type of official City communication tool or resource.

II. Policies and Procedures

These policies and procedures shall apply to all employees.

A. Property of the City

All Internet and e-mail communications sent through, received, or stored in the City-owned system are the property of the City of Plano. Additionally, the City has the unilateral right to access all stored electronic communications. Access to the Internet with the assistance of City owned equipment is a City privilege. All Internet and e-mail activity must be in compliance with this policy and other applicable policies, procedures, and rules.

In order to protect its interests, the City retains the right to monitor all of its electronic communications systems at its discretion and as allowed by law. By using these systems, employees consent to monitoring by the City. ***Any information transmitted or stored on the City's equipment is public property and subject to disclosure and public access as provided by law.***

E-mail and Internet are intended for business purposes. Personal use is permitted if it does not interfere with work responsibilities or productivity. Personal e-mail should be removed from City computers, servers, and other equipment no later than twenty-four (24) hours after being viewed.

B. Right to Access

The City's right to access e-mail messages, including sites reviewed on the Internet, may occur under the following circumstances:

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1. Upon an employee's departure or absence from the City, the user's mail may be accessed to save or review those messages that pertain to City business and as necessary to locate information;
2. If required by law;
3. When information is present which indicates improper use of the Internet or e-mail;
4. When necessary to investigate a possible violation of a City policy or a breach of the security of the electronic mail system;
5. Monitoring may be done for mechanical and service quality control as well as for compliance with this policy;
6. For all stored communications.

C. Disclosure/Privacy

1. City Owned Computers or Electronic Devices:

The contents of electronic mail/Internet access files or data may be disclosed without the permission of the user. Any individual using the City's e-mail system has no expectation of privacy in any e-mail message that the individual may generate or receive, including personal messages (if any). At any time an employee's Department or Division Manager, Director of Technology Services or any other appropriate person selected by the City Manager, acting City Manager or their designee may review an individual's messages or sites.

2. Non-City Owned Computers or Electronic Devices:

The contents of City related electronic mail, files, or data may be viewed, copied or disclosed by the City without the permission of the user. Any individual, using a non-City owned computer or electronic device for City business has no expectation of privacy in any e-mail message or other document that the individual may generate or receive if the e-mail message or document relates to City business.

D. Reservation of Rights

The City reserves the rights to monitor all traffic on the network, including sites accessed, content examined and time spent. Individuals must not use

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computers or networks in such a way that would disrupt or impair the use by others or be contrary to any City policy.

No employee shall use the Internet or e-mail to present his or her views, ideas, questions, or actions as representing the City unless doing so in an official capacity and authorized by the City Manager or his/her designee.

E. Other Internet Related Services

Newsgroups are Internet posing services, which can be valuable research tools for certain City employees. However, these services also generate unsolicited e-mail from a variety of sources (including groups who distribute materials unrelated to City business). Employees shall not access newsgroups without prior approval from their Department Director, and training from Technology Services' staff to protect against the unauthorized distribution of the employee's e-mail address.

Resources which require a fee, including on-line purchases for subscriptions, are prohibited without prior written approval from a Department Director.

F. Responsibilities

1. Department Director

Department Directors have the authority to determine which members of their staff may have access to the Internet.

Specifically these responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Department Directors are responsible for determining which employees' work productivity can be enhanced by Internet access. Department Directors are then responsible for authorizing and monitoring the use of the Internet within their department. Authorization must be in writing. Monitoring will be based upon reports generated by Technology Services;
- b. The Department Director shall ensure that each computer-using member of the department receives, reviews and understands this policy and provides Human Resources with a signed acknowledgement;
- c. Departmental Directors must keep and maintain an updated list of all approved Internet users and their applications (i.e., Web or

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gopher research, FTP file downloads, e-mail, newsgroup usage, etc.). A copy of this list must be given to the appointed representative of the City's Technology Services Department.

2. User's Responsibility

Users of City of Plano e-mail or Internet must abide by the following:

- a. Shall not use City equipment to attempt any unauthorized use, or interfere with other users legitimate use of any internal or external computer.
- b. Shall not create, install, or knowingly distribute a computer virus of any kind on any municipal computer, regardless of whether any demonstrable harm results;
- c. Must follow all City established procedures for loading any files or data from an external source, including the Internet. Damage to City computer systems resulting from a failure to follow City procedures will result in appropriate corrective action being taken.

G. Personal Use of E-mail or Internet

City employees using the Internet or e-mail capabilities provided by the City for personal use which causes a degradation of service to other City employees using it for business purposes will have their use reduced or restricted.

H. Additional Prohibited Uses of E-mail or Internet

All use of Internet must comply with all applicable laws and policies (Federal, state, and local laws, in addition to City policies). Therefore, Internet access must not be used for illegal, improper or illicit purposes or for purposes contrary to City policies and procedures.

Prohibited uses of all e-mail and Internet include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Sending chain letters;
2. Sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws;
3. "Moonlighting" or the advertisement of personal business on the City's system;

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4. Sending messages containing offensive, abusive, threatening, or other similar kinds of language inappropriate for the organization and/or inconsistent with City policies and procedures;
5. Using the system for illegal purposes;
6. Using another person's e-mail account or identity without authorization;
7. Sending sexually oriented messages or images when not authorized for legitimate law enforcement purposes;
8. Allowing receipt of messages that are not permitted by this policy or other City procedure. Individuals shall notify the sender to remove them from their list within twenty-four (24) hours or by the close of the next business day;
9. Transmitting confidential information when not authorized to do so;
10. Obtaining unauthorized access to any computer system.

Anyone receiving unsolicited prohibited materials must report the incident to their supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours or by the close of the next business day of opening the prohibited materials. Unreported prohibited material will be considered "solicited by the individual user".

I. Security

Due to the inherently unsecured nature of electronic mail and potential for unauthorized interception, employees, officers and officials of the City should refrain from using e-mail to communicate confidential or sensitive information among other employees, officers, officials or legal counsel of the City when another more secure method of communication is available. When requested, Technology Services will provide the capability and training necessary to encrypt all such communication. Encryption of files and/or data is not permitted without the written permission of the City Manager or Deputy City Manager. When permission is received the encryption "key" and a copy of the encryption software will be provided within two (2) business days to the City's Director of Technology Services.

These guidelines should also be followed when discussing any pending, threatened, known or ongoing legal proceeding among employees, officers, officials or legal counsel of the City.

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The City will implement an Internet tracking program and monthly reports will be provided to each Department Director. Each report will identify and log each departmental employee's time and the accessed Internet site.

Any e-mail attachments associated with work being performed for the City shall be marked either as:

1. "DRAFT";
2. "WORK IN PROGRESS"; or
3. "FINAL"

J. E-mail

Employees are responsible for deleting unnecessary mail items from the e-mail system. E-mail over thirty (30) days old will automatically be deleted from the Mail, Trash and Sent Items Folders.

Employees are also responsible for retaining e-mails of enduring value. Unless addressed by your department's retention schedule, "enduring value" is a determination made by each employee. Any e-mail items that need to be saved should be moved to a Cabinet Folder or saved as a file.

An alternative to the above is to archive e-mails of enduring value on the employee's hard disk. If this approach is taken, employees become responsible for ensuring that backup copies are made on a regular basis. A second alternative is to print a copy of the e-mail of enduring value and file it in an appropriate folder.

Employees that have subscribed to list-services should request to be removed from such lists before terminating employment with the City.

Messages sent to all e-mail users should be restricted to information that will have a direct impact on employees and/or the employee work area (i.e., power outages, interruption of services, etc.). Messages of general purpose, such as newsletters, out-of-office information, and general announcements should be posted to the City's electronic Bulletin Board mailbox.

III. Appendices

None referenced.