

CITY OF HAMILTON, OHIO

No. 331

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

Effective Date: 5-16-16

Supersedes No. 331 dated 04/28/16, 04/14/00,
02/17/09, 05/03/00

Approved by: Joshua A. Smith,
City Manager

SUBJECT: INTERNET AND EMAIL USAGE POLICY

Note: Page 6 of this Directive is an employee Acknowledgment of Understanding sheet that is to be signed by all employees.

PURPOSE: To establish policy for the use of the City's Internet and Email resources. This policy is intended to protect the City's computer and network systems including all data, hardware and software; to reduce the possibility of an employee's actions having any negative impact on the City; and to maximize value of the City's investment in this technology.

1. Policy.

a. The City of Hamilton provides various workgroups and employees access to the vast information resources of the Internet where there is a legitimate business need. The facilities to provide that access represent a considerable commitment of City resources for telecommunications, networking, software, storage, etc. This Internet usage and email policy is designed to help the individual employee understand the expectation for the use of these resources, and to help the employee use those resources wisely. Users are to conduct themselves in an honest and appropriate manner when using email and when on the Internet, Social Media, and respect the copyrights, software licensing rules, property rights, privacy and prerogatives of others, just as you would in any other business dealings. All existing City of Hamilton directives and policies as well as departmental directives, apply to employee use of email and conduct on the Internet.

2. Privacy.

a. The City has software and systems in place that can monitor and record all Internet and email usage. All should be aware that our security systems are capable of recording, for each and every user, each Internet site visit, each chat, newsgroup or email message, and each file transfer into and out of our internal networks, and we reserve the right to do so at any time. No employee should have any expectation of privacy as to his or her Internet usage. The IT Department will at their discretion or as needed, review employee Internet activity and analyze usage patterns. Department and/or division heads will be notified of any inappropriate or questionable usage by an employee. They may choose to use this information in anyway necessary to enforce the City's policies as well as any additional department/division directives, or specific limitations from a supervisor.

b. The City reserves the right to inspect any and all files stored in all shared and private areas of the City's networks, computers and data storage devices in order to assure compliance with policy.

3. Internet Usage.

a. The City of Hamilton has many management tools available to provide appropriate access to the Internet. In an effort to provide the best possible access while providing the necessary protection of City resources including employee productivity, a carefully selected set of management tools are in place. These tools include software that limits access to types of websites, logs all internet usage by user, and provides reporting that identifies inappropriate use of the Internet.

b. Unlawful and inappropriate Internet usage may garner negative publicity for the City and could expose the City to significant legal liabilities.

- c. The Internet provides users an immense and unprecedented reach to further the City's image, goals and operations. Because of that power, special care must be taken to maintain clarity, consistency, and integrity in communications, as well as to maintain a positive image of the City. Anything an employee writes in the course of acting on behalf of the City in an email or on the Internet can be taken as representing the City of Hamilton.
- d. City information and communication systems exist for the conduct of City business. Limited personal use is nonetheless permissible only if the use does not interfere with worker productivity, does not preempt any business activity, does not affect Network security, does not utilize excessive bandwidth, cannot result in legal liability on behalf of the City, and does not result in performance issues by or between workers. Use of Company computers, networks, and Internet access is a privilege granted by management and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct carried out on such systems or otherwise violates this policy.

4. Email Usage.

- a. The City of Hamilton is the owner of all e-mail accounts and addresses in its registered domains. All e-mail messages processed by the City servers and/or cloud servers hosting City email become the property of the City of Hamilton. City of Hamilton e-mail users have no right of ownership or expectation of personal privacy in their e-mail usage.
- b. The City reserves the right, without notice, to inspect, modify, return, reject, redirect or discard any e-mail message it receives, for any reason. The City reserves the right, without notice, to limit or restrict any individual's e-mail usage.
- c. City e-mail services shall be used in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws, City ordinances, policies, rules and regulations, and Administrative Directives, and may not be used as a vehicle to harass, discriminate, or intimidate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, military status, and ancestry or protected activity. All users of City e-mail services are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner.
- d. City e-mail services are provided to employees for the purposes of communications, study, research, and other activities, which must be in the conduct of official business or in furtherance of the mission and purpose of the City. Every full-time employee shall have a City provided Email account. Additionally, full-time employees will be required to check their work provided e-mail account at least once a week (during working hours) or at earlier intervals when notified by supervisor. Employees are encouraged to check more frequently if their schedule permits.
- e. Access to City e-mail services is granted to an individual by the City for that individual's sole use only. Users are authorized to access, use, and copy, modify or delete files and data on their own accounts. Users shall not perform any functions on another user's e-mail account. No employee may send an e-mail so that it appears to come from another individual. Users shall not allow someone else to use their account(s) and/or password(s). City e-mail users are responsible for their e-mail accounts and shall be held accountable if someone else uses their service with permission and violates this policy. Users shall not leave passwords where they can be found, share passwords with others, or leave confidential information on a screen where it could be viewed by an unauthorized person.
- f. City e-mail users shall use only City information technology resources (i.e., City e-mail services) to send and receive e-mail messages in the conduct of official City business. City e-mail users shall not automatically forward e-mail messages received at City e-mail addresses to any personal or non-City e-mail account(s) or address(es) or from personal or non-City e-mail accounts to any City e-mail account or address
- g. Subscriptions to mailing lists, "listservs," or other mass mailings are authorized only when used to conduct official City business. Non-work-related subscriptions to mass mailings are prohibited.
- h. E-mail "chain letters" are not to be originated, forwarded or otherwise distributed using any City resource under any circumstances. An e-mail "chain letter" is defined as any message sent to one or more recipients that direct the recipient to forward it to one or

more other recipients and contains some promise of reward for forwarding it or threat of consequences for not doing so.

- i. Employees should use discretion in composing and sending messages. Messages that appear to be deleted may remain in the system for months or years. Employees should not send an email message that they would not send on the City of Hamilton letterhead.
- j. Access to City e-mail services shall be permanently revoked upon employee termination or retirement. The City shall not forward e-mail messages addressed to terminated or retired City employees except to other City e-mail addresses. The City shall not provide address verification, correction or forwarding to personal or non-City e-mail accounts or addresses without authorization by the City Manager or his or her designee.
- k. Users shall not intentionally forge, obscure, obfuscate, or otherwise alter the date, time, physical source/destination, logical source/destination, routing, or other label or header information of any e-mail message, file or report.

5. Security.

- a. While our direct connection to the Internet offers a multitude of potential benefits, it can also open the door to some significant risks to our systems, and data including the risk of possible identity theft if we do not follow appropriate security discipline.
- b. The City has installed security systems including firewalls, filters, and proxy servers to assure the safety and security of its networks, systems and data. Any employee who attempts to disable, defeat or circumvent any security facility will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.
- c. Files containing sensitive information that are transferred in any way across the Internet must be encrypted. If the employee does not know how to accomplish this, he or she should contact the Information Technology Department for assistance.
- d. Computers that use their own modems to create independent data connections sidestep our network security mechanisms. An individual computer's private connection to any outside computer can be used by an attacker to compromise any city network to which that computer is attached. That is why any computer used for independent dial-up or leased-line connections to any outside computer or network must be physically isolated from the City's internal networks, or have been configured and approved by the Department of Information Technology. Any employee adding a modem or other means of accessing the Internet to a computer system attached to the City's network will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.
- e. Wireless access and networks present an additional level of threat to the integrity of the City's network, systems, and data. Any wireless access to the City's network must be done only through the IT department. Any employee that causes a wireless connection to be made to a City computer attached to the City's network by the addition of a wireless access point or by any other means without going through the IT department will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.
- f. Only those Internet services and functions with documented business purpose for the City of Hamilton will be enabled at the Internet firewall.

6. Inappropriate Use.

- a. The display of any kind of sexually explicit image or document on any City of Hamilton system is a violation of our policy on sexual harassment. In addition, sexually explicit material may not be viewed, archived, stored, distributed, edited, printed, downloaded, or recorded using the City's network or computing resources.
- b. The City of Hamilton's resources may not be used for political or religious causes.
- c. The City of Hamilton uses independently supplied software and data to identify inappropriate Internet sites. If you find yourself connected accidentally to a site that contains inappropriate or offensive material, you must disconnect from that site immediately and inform IT department so that the site can be made inaccessible in the future.
- d. The City of Hamilton Internet, email, and computing resources must not be used knowingly to violate the laws and regulations of the United States or any other nation, or the laws and regulations of any state, city, or other local jurisdiction in any material way.

- Use of any of the City's resources for illegal activity will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- e. Any software or files downloaded via the Internet into the City's network become the property of the City of Hamilton. Any such files or software may be used only in ways that are consistent with their licenses or copyrights.
 - f. No employee may use City of Hamilton facilities knowingly to download or distribute pirated software or data.
 - g. No employee may use the City of Hamilton's email or Internet facilities to deliberately develop or send any virus, worm, Trojan horse, trap-door, or any malicious program code.
 - h. Each employee using the Internet and email facilities of the City of Hamilton shall identify himself or herself honestly, accurately and completely (including their department/division affiliation and function where requested) when setting up any type of account on an outside computer systems.
 - i. The City retains ownership of any material posted to any forum, news group or Internet page by any employee in the course of his or her duties.
 - j. Employees are reminded that Internet forums and news groups are public forums where it is inappropriate to reveal confidential or privileged information, or information that is not a "public record," and any other material covered by existing City of Hamilton policies and procedures. Employees are responsible for the safekeeping of confidential or protected information. Action taken against an employee responsible for the release of such information purposely or inadvertently can include all penalties under existing City policies and procedures, as well as departmental/division directives.
 - k. Employees with Internet access may download only software with direct business use, and must arrange to have such software properly licensed and registered. Downloaded software must be used only under the terms of its license.
 - l. The download of any software that does not provide or support a legitimate business need of the City is strictly prohibited. Employees shall not download any screen savers; toolbars, email add-ons, pictures, audio or video files, or any other files not intended to support a legitimate business for the City. Inappropriate downloads may be grounds for disciplinary action.
 - m. Employees with Internet access may not use City of Hamilton Internet facilities to download entertainment software or games, or to play games against opponents over the Internet, or play any game on City equipment.
 - n. Employees with Internet access may not upload or copy any software licensed to the City of Hamilton or data owned or licensed by the City of Hamilton without explicit authorization from the manager responsible for the software or data.
 - o. Time spent on the Internet while on City time shall be limited strictly to the amount necessary for the performance of the employee's duties, or to accomplish a legitimate function for the City of Hamilton as required.
 - p. Use of City of Hamilton Internet access facilities to commit any of the infractions listed in this Directive including such as but not limited to misuse of assets or resources, sexual harassment, illegal harassment, discrimination, unauthorized public speaking and misappropriation or theft of intellectual property are also prohibited and will subject an employee to discipline up to and including dismissal.
 - q. User IDs and passwords help maintain individual accountability for Internet resource usage. Any employee who obtains a password or ID for an Internet resource must keep that password confidential. City policy prohibits the sharing of user IDs or passwords utilized for access to computer systems including Internet sites. Employees who access the Internet by using an ID and password other than the one assigned to them for that purpose will subject an employee to discipline up to and including dismissal.

7. Exceptions.

- a. At the discretion of the City Manager and individual department heads, employees who have access may be allowed to use the Internet briefly, or email occasionally, when not on City time (i.e. lunch time) for appropriate personal use provided it is used in accordance with all other guidelines and restrictions set forth in this policy.

- b. Sworn police personnel engaged in an investigation may be exempted from provisions of this policy as warranted and approved by the Chief of Police.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

OF

INTERNET AND EMAIL USAGE POLICY
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE NO. 331

I have received a copy of the City of Hamilton’s Internet and Email Usage Policy, read and agree to comply with the terms of this policy governing the use of the Internet and Email systems. I understand that any violation of this policy **will not be tolerated** and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Employee Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____