



ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM
COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

NUMBER: F-3

SUBJECT: Internet Usage Policy

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Information Services Department

APPROVED: _____

DATE: October 27, 2014

John L. Maltbie, County Manager

1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline appropriate use of the Internet resources available to San Mateo County workforce members and the public. Access to the internet through the County's network is a privilege and carries responsibilities reflecting responsible and ethical use.

The County supports Internet use that enables County workforce members to perform their job faster and smarter, and encourages its end users to develop Internet skills and knowledge.

The County also provides Public WiFi access to enable better public access to government services and information.

The facilities that provide Internet access represent a considerable commitment of resources for data networking, digital virus protection, Internet fire-walling and Internet bandwidth. This Internet usage policy is designed to help County workforce members understand the limitations for use of those resources. Inappropriate use exposes the County to risks including virus attacks, Internet bandwidth saturation, negative publicity, and potential legal liabilities.

2. Policy Scope

As custodians of resources entrusted to us by the public, we should always be mindful of how we utilize these resources. We should also be mindful of our responsibility to act so that others are not deprived of access to useful resources as they perform their duties.

This policy applies to County workforce, including all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy applies to all equipment that is owned or leased by the County and all connections to the County network.

3. Policy Description

Background

The purpose of Internet access is to distribute, or make available, services and information to public constituencies or to perform research in support of County work assignments.

The County has implemented the necessary network infrastructure to provide Internet access across the County's Wide Area Network. The County has other policies that address technology-specific areas including policies on information security, e-mail and portable computing. Departments may have internal policies that also address these issues. These policies are cumulative and in the event of conflict, the policies providing the County with the greatest level of security apply.

General Guidelines

The County recognizes that use of the County's Internet access resources for personal use may be necessary, just as personal telephone calls from the office may be necessary, and may be more efficient than using the telephone or leaving the office to conduct personal business. Personal use of the County's Internet access resources is permitted subject to this policy. Users should not expect that transmissions made through the County network are confidential.

The use of the County's Internet resources and services for non-work purposes is permitted only in compliance with the following criteria:

1. The cost (in time spent using the Internet for non-work activities) to the County must be negligible.
2. The use must not hinder productivity or interfere with a County workforce member's obligation to carry out their duties in a timely and effective manner. Time spent engaged in the non-work use of County Internet resources is not considered to be County work time.
3. The use must in no way undermine the use of County resources and services for official purposes.
4. The use neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by the County. Any posting to public forums such as newsgroups, or any transmittal of electronic mail through the Internet for personal use must include a disclaimer that the views are those of the County workforce-user and not the County of San Mateo. Forums should be used with care and not cause any adverse publicity or embarrassment to the County.
5. The use must be consistent with local, state and federal laws regarding obscenity, libel, fraud, piracy (software, film or music) or the like, and state and federal laws and County policies regarding political activity, the marketing of products or services, or other inappropriate activities.
6. The use shall not result in personal gain, i.e., outside business activities, items for sale, etc..

Examples of Acceptable Use of the County's Resources:

The list below is by no means exhaustive, but is an attempt to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of acceptable use.

1. Obtaining information regarding County business, i.e., policy, legislation, public meetings, technical research, etc.
2. Transmitting or receiving a file or document (in conjunction with Email) that does not fall into the category of unacceptable use.
3. Providing information regarding County business to the public, i.e., meeting agendas, key points of contact, etc.
4. Delivery of County services, such as tax payments, facility reservations, health education and disaster coordination. Providing information regarding County business to the public, i.e., meeting agendas, key points of contact, etc.
5. Incidental use of the internet, i.e., less than 10 minutes at a time, for the purpose of checking bank balances, transit schedules, traffic congestion, map sites for directions, etc.

Examples of Unacceptable Use of the County's Resources:

Illegal activities under local, state, federal, or international laws are strictly prohibited. In applying these guidelines, each case will depend upon the particular circumstances and other important factors such as materiality or reasonableness. The ultimate control, therefore, lies with each County workforce's supervisor, as that person should have direct knowledge of the behaviors and needs of the individual County workforce.

County workforce members should consult with their supervisors in advance if they have any questions about appropriateness of certain practices. A supervisor's decision cannot, however, circumvent other policies and procedures of the County of San Mateo that may restrict personal use beyond the limitations cited in these guidelines.

The list below is by no means exhaustive but attempt to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of unacceptable use.

1. Accessing any kind of website to view images or documents that are in violation of our Equal Employment Opportunity policy on discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. In addition, such material, including sexually explicit images and documents may not be viewed, archived, stored, distributed, edited or recorded using our network or computing resources.
2. Downloading software from the Internet without prior written approval of the Chief Information Officer or his/her designate.
3. Introducing malicious software onto the County network and/or jeopardizing the security of the County's electronic communications systems.
4. Downloading of any executable files or programs which change the configuration of your system by anyone other than Information Systems personnel is prohibited.
5. Installing or running any programs or services that provide ongoing communications with the Internet which have not been approved by the Chief Information Officer, including but not limited to non-County instant messengers, screen savers, peer to

peer communications (skype, bitTorrent, for example), or other on-line services to access the internet on County computers which do not fulfill legitimate job functions.

6. Accessing any on-line gambling websites (i.e., casino.com).
7. Accessing any non-work related, time consuming internet sites, including but not limited to on-line gaming or on-line auctions (i.e., gamezilla.com, mpog.com, eBay).
8. Accessing any streaming media sites which do not fulfill legitimate job functions (viewing full episodes of network television shows, streaming internet radio)
9. Conducting any non-County business activity not listed above for longer than 10 minutes.

4. Management and Administration

The County has software and systems in place that can monitor and record all internet usage. All sites and downloads are monitored and may be blocked if they are deemed to be harmful to the County network. County workforce members shall have no right or expectation of privacy in any Internet activity using County equipment or networks. Supervisors and Managers shall have the right to review any Internet activity of any County workforce supervised by them at any time and for any reason. If the activity to be reviewed goes beyond the department, other Department systems and records may be searched with the approval of the head of that Department.

The County may monitor and report on Internet use by County workforce members. Managers may restrict Internet use by anyone supervised by them at any time and for any reason. The County may restrict access to Internet sites whose content appears to have no purpose related to the business of the County.

5. Enforcement

Violators of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including employment termination, termination of agreements, denial of service, and/or legal penalties, both criminal and civil. For inappropriate release of Protected Health Information (PHI) the disciplinary action contained in the Protected Health Information Sanction Policy will apply.

6. Definitions

Terms	Definitions
County Network	As used here "County network" includes the County's information network backbones, department Local Area Networks and all devices that attach, directly or indirectly, to the networks including remote attachments.

Terms	Definitions
County Workforce	As used here "County Workforce" include all County employees, contractors, volunteers, trainees, temporary and other persons whose performance is under direct control whether or not they are paid by the County of San Mateo as well as all consultants, vendors, and business affiliates, including persons affiliated with third parties who operate computer equipment on behalf of the County or operate computer equipment that remotely access the County's internal network.
Graphics	Includes photographs, pictures, animations, movies or drawings
Public Wi-Fi	The County of San Mateo offers public Wi-Fi service in selected areas of the County so that anyone with a computer or wireless access device can connect to the internet to address connectivity needs in underserved areas. Public Wi-Fi provides unrestricted, unfiltered, open access to the internet, however, bandwidth and session time lengths may be limited.
Users	Synonymous with County workforce
Wi-Fi	Wi-Fi is the technology that allows computers, Smartphones and Tablets to connect over the air to wireless networks.

7. Revision History

Effective Date	Description
08/12/2008	Original Policy
10/27/2014	Updated Policy