


<p style="text-align: center;">City of Petaluma, CA Administrative Policy</p>	<p>Number:</p> <p>Last Revision Date:</p> <p>Date: September 21, 1999</p> <p>Page:</p>
<p>Subject: Internet Use and E-Mail Policy</p>	<p>Authority: City Manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> City Manager</p>

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines pertaining to access to and usage of the Internet and Internet protocols, including access to the World Wide Web (WWW) and downloading of files and programs. The procedures and principles presented in this policy apply to all City officials, officers, employees, volunteers, and other affiliates who use City-provided access to the Internet, regardless of the user's location when accessing the network.

II. POLICY

Using the Internet to facilitate performance of job functions is encouraged. However, browsing the WWW, downloading of supportable programs and files, posting messages on bulletin boards, and participating in chat rooms, except for City business purposes, is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. Oversight of employee usage of the Internet is a department head's responsibility and will be handled on an individual basis. The City reserves the right to monitor individual workstations accessing the Internet.

The following types of activities, using City equipment and software for personal use or non-City business purposes, are specifically prohibited:

1. Illegal, fraudulent, or malicious activities; partisan political activity; political or religious lobbying.
2. Activities for the purpose of personal or commercial financial gain. This includes chain letters, solicitation of business or services, sales of personal property etc.
3. Storing, processing or displaying offensive or obscene material, such as pornography, hate literature, etc.
4. Annoying or harassing another person, sending uninvited e-mail, or posting such messages on public bulleting boards.

Section III

5. Obtaining, installing, storing or using software obtained in violation of the appropriate vendor's license agreement or not supportable by Information Services Department.

III. PROCEDURE

ACCESS AND CONNECTION

Staff requesting the installation of and access to the Internet from their workstations must receive approval from their department head or designee via a written request, justifying the use of the Internet for work purposes. Requests are forwarded to the Human Resources Department. Information Services schedules the installation of the standard browser, assigns the unique identifier and approved domain name, and reserves a license if required.

DOWNLOADING FILES

Since the Internet is a public network, information made available on the Internet without access controls is available to anyone and, therefore, vulnerable and subject to attacks, such as computer viruses. A virus is a program embedded in a file that "does what the programmer wanted it to do but of which, if aware, the user would not approve." That is, damaging, modifying, or destroying data on the user's computer. To protect against downloading viruses from the Internet, staff will need to virus-check all files downloaded. Files obtained from the Internet should be downloaded to a floppy disk and virus-checked before being placed on the computer's hard drive. If files are compressed, a second check of the decompressed files should be performed. Files should not be downloaded to a network or shared drive to reduce the possibility of a rapidly spreading virus.

BULLETIN BOARDS, USENET NEWSGROUPS and LISTSERVS

Bulletin Boards, USENET news groups, and LISTSERVS provide a mechanism for the exchange of information, allow topic-specific research, and enable communication with a larger, topic-specific audience with shared interests. Access to and use of these protocols by City staff is subject to the "Acceptable Use" policy outlined above.

I certify that I have read, understand, and will abide by the City of Petaluma's Internet Use and E-mail Policy. I understand that violation of these policies may result in suspension and/or revocation of my Internet access privileges in addition to my being subject to disciplinary action or criminal prosecution.

Employee Name Printed

Employee Signature

Date

Department Head Approval

Date

INTERNET E-MAIL POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Electronic mail (E-mail) is an authorized and recommended method of communication within the City and with the larger Internet community. This policy is to establish guidelines pertaining to access to and usage of internet E-mail; it applies to all City officials, officers, employees, volunteers and other affiliates who use City approved access to Internet E-mail, regardless of the user's location when accessing the network.

II. PROCEDURE – ACCESS

E-mail addresses are assigned to personnel by completing the appropriate request form and forwarding it to the Human Resources Department for processing. Each E-mail user, once assigned an internal E-mail address, automatically is assigned an Internet E-mail address. All employees who are assigned an individual E-mail address shall become proficient in the use of the Citywide E-mail system.

III. USER RESPONSIBILITIES

Personnel who have been assigned an individual E-mail address shall check incoming messages at least once during each workday. All personnel shall, in a timely, respond to E-mail, which requires a response. Staff is responsible for adhering to departmental policies and procedures for handling E-mail, including having E-mail responses authorized at the appropriate level.

E-mail message trays shall be emptied as soon as practical to reduce overhead processing on the City server. Any records that must be retained according to the City's Records and Information Management Program should be filed electronically or printed and saved outside of the E-mail system. Back-up tapes of E-mails are retained for only thirty days.

IV. RETENTION

Users may hold messages in their system for not more than 30 calendar days. After 30 days from the date of creation/or receipt of transmitted messages, the user should delete the messages providing they no longer have administrative, fiscal, legal, historical or referential value. Deleted messages are held for 30 days on tape backup by Information Services.

E-mail messages containing information relative to a current project or a policy-making decision qualifies as records when they meet the definition thereof under the California Public Records Act. As such, they may be subject to discovery, subpoena and used in litigation in the same manner as other record of the City. Users must retain these records in accordance with the retention policy of the department's records.

Once staff has determined that an E-mail message is an official record, users should store the record in an approved record system. The system may be either paper or electronic. In either case, the record keeping system must:

1. Logically relate or group records in accordance with the department's file plan.
2. Ensure the records are accessible to authorized persons through their life.
3. Support retention of the record for as long as required.
4. Facilitate destruction of records as called for in the department's retention policy.
5. Enable transfer of records that will not be destroyed.

V. ACCEPTABLE USE

The use of E-mail capabilities for non-business purposes is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. The City's Internet E-mail system shall not be used for personal gain, and/or to distribute junk mail, unsolicited announcements, personal announcements, or social engagements. Exceptions to this usage statement may be made upon approval of an employee's manager if some City or departmental benefit is derived from the activity.

VI. PROHIBITED USES

Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
2. Use of electronic communications to send messages, access to which is restricted by laws or regulations.
3. The "capture" and "opening" of undeliverable electronic communication except as required in order for authorized employees to diagnose and correct delivery problems.
4. Use of electronic communication to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of other to conduct City business.
5. Constructing electronic communications so that they appear to be from someone else.
6. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial City business purpose.
7. Use of obscene or harassing language.
8. Providing confidential attorney-client information intended to be confidential in nature to the City Attorney or other attorneys employed by the City.

VII. PRIVACY

All E-mail messages that are created, received, transferred to or from, or maintained on City Computer systems are the property of the City. As with all City records, employees have no personal or property right to E-mail messages. There is no legitimate business need. The content of a distributed E-mail message and the maintenance of a user's E-mail box are the user's responsibility. E-mail messages containing information relative to work in progress are considered public documents and may be subject to public disclosure. Work in progress that is not subject to public disclosure should be clearly marked in the body of the text "private/confidential" or "draft" before it is distributed via E-mail. Employees should be aware that the deletion of a message or file might not fully eliminate the message from the system.

VIII. "EVERYONE" ISSUANCE

The "Everyone" function on the City's E-mail system allows the sender to distribute an E-mail message to all employees. The use of "Everyone" should be minimized, and is reserved only for business matters pertaining to all City employees. Whenever possible the sender of a message should identify specific recipients or create personalized distribution lists for the message. All "Everyone" messages must be approved in advance by the appropriate department head. The department head is responsible for ensuring this widespread issuance of E-mail is not over-used and that employee' mailboxes are not inundated with unnecessary E-mail.

Examples include: Phone or computer system unavailability, City Hall power shut down, and emergency, policy or traffic information read by the City for City employees and the general public. Department heads may give blanket approval for "Everyone" messages of this nature.

Topics not pertaining to departments' everyday business activities should be distributed with the discretion of the respective department head.

Examples include: Employee retirements, vacation notices, and name changes. All messages of this type must be reviewed and approved by department heads on a case-by-case basis.

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Employee Name Printed

Employee Signature

Date

Department Head Approval

Date

