

**TOWN OF SUNDERLAND
NETWORK AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES USAGE
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

General Statement: The Town of Sunderland is pleased to provide administrative support for its staff through its electronic equipment office and software systems. In return, staff members have an obligation to use their access in a responsible and informed way while conforming to network etiquette, customs, and courtesies. The purpose of this policy is to prevent misuse of the Town's Network and Electronic Resources (NER), to protect the Town from liability that could result from misuse, and to promote appropriate communication among staff members, and between that staff and the citizens of the Town.

All NER systems, including but not limited to telephones, electronic mail, facsimile machines, internal network, and the Internet are subject to this policy. All Town employees are required to read and comply with this policy. Failure to comply will result in a review and disciplinary action may be invoked when warranted.

The following policy may be updated from time to time, and/or amended, at the discretion of the Selectboard.

A. PROHIBITIONS:

1. The following activities are strictly prohibited:

Any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, the transmission of copyrighted, trademarked, patented, trade secret material or the participation in any type of criminal activity.

Any illegal activity, including but not limited to, the transmission or inquiry of obscene, defamatory, discriminatory or threatening material.

Attempts to tamper with or violate the computer security systems implemented by the Town or other institutions, organizations, companies or individuals.

2. The following activities are strictly prohibited because they violate Town policies, are inappropriate uses of Town owned equipment and facilities or may be objectionable and/or disrespectful to fellow employees and to citizens:

NER shall not be used for personal, family, volunteer, civic, social or religious purposes, except for work-related professional or civic organizations. (NER may be used, with permission of an employee's supervisor, for *brief* family or personal business messages when such messages cannot be scheduled for breaks, lunch or before or after work.

Except in emergencies, long-distance telephone calls shall not be charged to the Town.

Computers with access to the Internet, but not to the internal network, will be available at various locations for employees to use for such purposes on lunch or coffee breaks or before or after work. However, all of the other prohibitions contained in this NER policy apply to use of those computers as well.

NER shall not be used for personal, for-profit activities, such as consulting for pay or for work performed for another employer.

NER shall not be used to solicit contributions for personal activities, for outside organizations or other non-work related purposes, no matter how good the cause.

NER shall not be used to access the e-mail or files of another staff member without that person's permission.

NER shall not be used to distribute chain letters, to participate in "chat rooms" or bulletin boards (unless they are work-related) or to play computer games.

NER shall not be used to proselytize or advertise for religious or political causes.

E-mail, the internal network, and the Internet are not to be used for communications that express anger or criticism or which deliver "bad news," such as the denial of an employee request. Such communications, when they are necessary, are to be in person, by telephone, or in carefully worded written form when face-to-face communication is impossible or inappropriate.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Access to the Internet at work is for work-related purposes only. It is neither a right nor a "perk." Therefore, employees who are provided such access shall be responsible for appropriate use in accordance with this NER policy.

E-mail messages are considered public records and are therefore legally discoverable and subject to record retention policies. Employees are responsible for maintaining messages in a manner that makes them easily recoverable. Employees should not expect that e-mail messages and any other files maintained on their computer, even those marked "personal", are private or confidential.

All users are expected to undertake precautions to prevent infection of Town computers by computer viruses. In particular, executable programs imported from other sites to Town computers must not be used unless they have been authorized by and subjected to virus detection procedures.

Employees shall not install unsupported software, freeware or shareware on town computers.

For external correspondence, staff is expected to apply the same grammatical quality and professional letter writing standards that are applicable to paper-based correspondence. Electronic correspondence should reflect the Town's commitment to quality performance and professionalism at all levels.

For internal correspondence and messages and for external messages, staff is expected to exercise good judgment regarding form and content. Language and content that is inappropriate in traditional forms of communication is not appropriate in NER.

The Town Administrator or Department Head is responsible for periodic audit, without prior notice, of equipment and systems to ensure that violations of this policy do not occur.

The Board of Selectmen is responsible for appropriate security measures, including the maintenance of password systems. Employees are responsible for complying with these security measures by following procedures established for secure and private use of passwords and other procedures that may be established to enhance security of Town systems.

Department Heads and supervisors are responsible for requesting additions, changes to, and deletions from network access for all of their employees and for ensuring that all of their employees using the Town's NER have read these Regulations and understand its applicability to departmental activities. Department Heads or supervisors are responsible for posting this policy in a conspicuous location with the Department.

(Amended 2/12/07)

C. COMPLIANCE:

Upon the request of the Town Administrator or of a Department Head with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, review of or monitoring of NER usage by an employee, without notice, may be necessary.

(Amended 2/12/07)

D. VIOLATIONS:

The Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator will review alleged violations of this policy on a case-by-case basis. Supervisors will inform the employee promptly and specifically of any alleged violation.

E. WIRELESS (CELL) PHONE USAGE:

- **Town issued wireless (cell) phones and associated equipment are provided and paid for by the town for business use only.** It is recognized that some business issues may occur outside of the regular business day or locality, however, this should be minimal.
- **Text messaging** is beyond the phone plan scopes and additional charges associated with text messaging will not be assumed by the town. Text messaging charges will be assumed by the individual.
- Wireless (cell) phone minutes accumulated above the plan allowed minutes will NOT be paid for by the town and will be the responsibility of the individual. *Exception will be for demonstrated business call ONLY.*
- **Submission of cells phone bills for payment *must include ALL pages of the bill, not just the front page.***
- All wireless (cell) phone and equipment must be surrendered to the town when employment is terminated or when requested.

(Amended 12.5.05)

**Town of Sunderland
Network and Electronic Resources Usage Administrative Policy**

Please sign and return the signed page to the Board of Selectmen's office.

This policy was issued by: Board of Selectmen

This policy was read and is understood by:

Print Name

Employee's signature

date signed

Adopted: July 1, 2002

Amended: December 5, 2005

Amended: February 12, 2007