

Using Information Technology Resources

Reference Number TEC 01.00

Purpose

To establish roles and responsibilities for use of information technology resources.-

Scope

This Policy applies to all information technology resources:

- Owned or leased by the City
- Used on or accessed from City premises
- Used for City business

This policy applies to anyone who uses information technology resources, including employees, temporary employees, contractors, vendors and members of the public.

This Policy does not apply to the Information Technology Resource Services provided for the public by the Bellingham Public Library.

Definitions

COBPUBLIC - A wireless network provided at certain City facilities which provides direct access to the internet for use by the public and vendors. No direct access to City network resources are provided or allowed on this network.

COBSTAFF - A wireless network provided at certain City facilities which provides City staff with secured access to City network resources.

Confidential Information - See Policy TEC 04.00 SECURING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES for definition

Information Technology Resources – (ITR) - includes any and all technology resources paid for by City funds including, but not limited to:

- Desktop and portable computer systems
- Payment card terminals
- Portable data storage devices
- Software
- Electronic mail (email)
- Internet access
- Telephones, cell phones, smart phones, pagers and voice mail
- Copiers, scanners, fax machines and printers
- Information and data in the ITR system
- Network servers, switches, routers, firewalls and wireless access points

ListServ - A program that automatically sends messages to multiple email addresses on a mailing list. When someone subscribes to a mailing list, the ListServ will automatically add the address and distribute future email messages to that address along with all the others on the list.

Portable Data Storage Devices - Any mobile device that can store electronic data. Examples include: laptop and tablet computers, USB drives (data keys or thumb drives), CDs/DVDs, memory cards (SD, PCMCIA, XD, memory stick, flash drive, etc.), portable hard drives, smart phones, etc.

RSS Feed - Commonly referred to as "Really Simple Syndication". RSS is a method of providing website content such as news stories or software updates in standard XML format. Used in conjunction with RSS-enabled web browsers or other programs designed for retrieving RSS feeds.

Social Networking - Internet services that integrate technology, social interaction and content creation, such as FaceBook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Streaming Audio/Video - Any technology used to "play" audio or video on a PC over a network, whether used for music, movies, lectures and other audio/video material. It generally consists of a continuous stream of data coming from a network.

Systems Steering Committee (SSC) - City of Bellingham Department and Executive level staff who meet regularly to discuss and advise the direction of ITSD and/or the Mayor with regard to technology projects and priorities.

Technical Resource Team (TRT) - Team of technical employees who meet regularly to discuss technical issues, projects and standards.

Policy

1. Employee use of ITR for City Business Purposes Only

We encourage employees to make maximum use of ITR for accomplishing the business of the City. The City's Information Technology Resources are the property of the City (See Policy, ADM 00.00.03, USING CITY PROPERTY).

2. Definition of Prohibited Non-Business Use

We define prohibited non-business use of City ITR use to include:

- Use to engage in any communication that violates federal, state or local laws, codes, regulations or City policies
- Use that would violate copyright laws
- Use for an employee's private or commercial business, benefit or gain
- Use for any other person's private or commercial business, benefit, or gain, unless such use is directly related to the employee's work assignment in economic development
- Volunteer work for an outside nonprofit agency, unless the work for the agency is part of the employee's work assignment
- Use for union activities unless specifically authorized by a labor agreement
- Promoting, advertising or soliciting for any non-City business or activities, including but not limited to:
 - Commercial activities
 - Religious causes
 - Political causes and campaigns, including federal, state or local legislative proposals or ballot measures
 - Support for outside organizations or charities, unless permitted by law and authorized specifically by the Mayor, such as the United Way
 - Other personal use causes or activities not related to City business
- Playing or installing games on City ITR and/or the internet

- Internet gambling
- Using ITR for any offensive content, including obscenity, vulgarity, pornography, profanity, name calling, sexual content or any content offensive or illegal on the basis of race, national origin, citizenship, religion or creed, physical or mental disability, sex/gender, sexual orientation, political or union affiliation, or involvement in prior complaints of discrimination or harassment
- Purchase or sale of personal items
- Propagation of computer worms or viruses
- Using streaming audio and/or video for non-business purposes
- Subscribing to a ListServ or RSS feed for non-business purposes

3. Employee May Use ITR for Minimal Personal or Non-Business Purposes

Employees may make minimal personal use of ITR if all of the following conditions are met:

- The use is brief and does not disrupt or distract from City business due to volume, frequency or timing
- The use is on the employee's own time, not work time
- The use does not interfere with the performance of the employee's official duties
- There is no cost to the City or the employee pays the same cost as the public
- The use does not compromise the security or integrity of City ITR
- The use does not adversely impact network/systems performance by consuming significant resources

Permissible personal uses include:

- Communication with family, friends or volunteer work

All such personal use, including use of personal email or social networking sites, must be during break time or other approved non-work time. Employees recognize that they have no expectation of privacy with respect to their use of ITR and that personal information shared across ITR is not private.

Employees may never use ITR for the specific prohibited uses described in Section 2 (Prohibited non-business use) and Section 4 (Misuse of ITR) of this policy.

If the permissibility of use is unclear, the employee must request supervisory approval prior to using the ITR. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable permissible minimal use are found in Appendix A of this policy.

4. Employee Will Not Misuse ITR

Definition and prohibit misuse of ITR to include:

- Installing, moving and/or removing any equipment or software to the City's ITR without ITSD authorization
- Any attempt to circumvent City ITR security or alter physical or configured settings of City ITR
- Any unauthorized attempts to use non-City owned equipment to gain access to the City's network resources
- Use which interferes with employee productivity of self or others
- Use which interferes with the operation of the ITR
- Masking user's identity or misrepresenting information and/or communicating as someone other than user
- Unauthorized use of another employee's account ID and password
- Accessing libraries, directories, files, data, programs or machines that are not related directly to work duties or which the employee is not authorized to access
- Unauthorized review, duplication, encryption, interception, dissemination, removal, installation, damage or alteration of files, passwords, computer systems, network configurations, programs or other property of the City
- Improper use of information obtained from an ITR
- Installing software/data onto the City's ITR without authorization

- Copying City software for personal use
- Unauthorized access or use of proprietary information or resources

5. Department Heads Determine Exceptions and More Restrictive Standards

Department Heads may make exceptions to this policy within the general principles of business use and public ethics/accountability.

Subject to review by the ITSD Director, Department Heads may

- Further restrict employee's use of ITR for reasonable considerations
- Expand employee's use of ITR for reasonable considerations
- Authorized non-City employee to use City ITR, but only if they are engaged by the City to perform City business, whether volunteer or paid. Non-City employees using City ITR are subject to all restrictions in this policy

6. We Reserve the Right to Monitor and Audit Employee Use

ITR are provided to employees for use in the performance of their work. The equipment and data remain at all times the property of the City. As stated above, ITR information is not private, regardless of whether or not the information is from personal use, including email and voice mail, as permitted under City policy. Employees recognize that they have no expectation of privacy related to their use of ITR.

We reserve the right to monitor and audit ITR use or information at any time without prior notice to employees. We will monitor and audit for legitimate business reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- To ensure compliance with policies
- To investigate questionable activities that could be harmful to the organization
- To assist departments in evaluating performance, productivity or cost issues and concerns
- To identify and/or troubleshoot ITR system issues

We will monitor and audit in a manner to safeguard, to the extent possible, sensitive employee or citizen information contained in the system. See PRO 100, RETRIEVING AND REVIEWING ELECTRONIC INFORMATION FROM EMPLOYEE'S ITR FILES; PRO 102, MONITORING INTERNET USE: Policy TEC 02.00, CONFIGURATION OF INTERNET USE SOFTWARE.

7. We Manage Electronic Public Records

As obligated under State public records law, the City and its employees maintain electronic files in accordance with the State archivist records retention laws and schedules.

All electronic data, including internet and email communications may be subject to public disclosure. Also, in the event of a lawsuit, potential lawsuit or potential dispute of any nature, electronic data could be held by the City or could be provided to other parties.

The City does not archive instant messaging or text messaging records. Therefore, employees are instructed not to use instant messaging or text messaging for communications records that have retention value.

City records should be stored on City network storage drives or other authorized business applications. Storage of City records on personally owned devices should only occur on a temporary, "as-needed" basis and be transferred to the City's network as soon as practicable

8. ITSD Director Sets Standards for Software, Data Management, Hardware and Disk Space Allocation

The ITSD Director or his/her delegate approves all software used on City ITR. Employees must request prior written approval from ITSD to install any software on any ITR (PRO 101, APPROVING AND REGISTRERING COMPUTER SOFTWARE).

ITSD may remove software installed on City of Bellingham computers which does not conform to this policy, with or without notice.

ITSD Director or his/her delegate set standards for hardware and peripherals that can be connected to the City's network.

- The Director or delegate documents the standards
- The Technical Resource Team reviews the standards periodically

ITSD Director or his/her delegate may establish parameters and allocate maximum disk space for computer system users. Employees may request to increase their disk space by:

- Documenting the business need and
- Requesting in writing to the ITSD Director/designee

ITSD Director evaluates and approves/disapproves requests for exceptions to standards on a case-by-case basis for good business reasons.

The System Steering Committee (SSC) acts as an appeals body for denial of requests under this section.

9. City of Bellingham Complies with Software Licensing Requirements

ITSD staff and employees install and use software on the City's computer systems only

- When approved by ITSD and
- As licensed or authorized by the software's publisher

Employees and users are responsible for reading and understanding the licensing agreement for the given software. ITSD staff will answer employee's questions about the licensing agreements.

10. Departments Must Consult with I.T. Department Prior to Purchase of Systems

(See Policy, FIN 08.00.01, PURCHASING OF GOODS & SERVICES)

- ITSD Director or designee must approve all purchases of new software or hardware systems, including software and services used over the internet
- ITSD Director or designee must review draft purchasing agreements prior to acquisition for the following:
 - Browser/software compatibility and support
 - Management of confidential information
 - Data security, protection, management and ownership
 - Storage and recoverability
 - License compliance
 - Usability
 - Vendor access to City systems, which may require a Remote Access Agreement, and may require the vendor to meet other security requirements
 - Vendor access to Confidential data, which may require a Non-Disclosure Agreement
- ITSD Director shall provide prompt review and response
- Concerns related to recommended changes or purchasing decisions will be forwarded to the Systems Steering Committee for resolution

11. Technical Support Occurs at City Business Locations

Technical staff:

- Provide telephone-based support on a "reasonable effort" basis to assist employees who are telecommuting or otherwise working in non-City locations and need technical assistance
- Provide support on a "limited but reasonable effort" basis to assist members of the public with the use of City applications
- Do not enter homes of City staff or members of the public to provide technical assistance

See Also

- [TEC 01.00 – PRO 01, Retrieving and Reviewing Electronic Information from an Employee's ITR Files](#)
- [TEC 03.00, Responding to a Technology Disruption Incident](#)
- [TEC 04.00, Securing Information Technology Resources](#)
- [ADM 00.00.03, Using City Property](#)
- [ADM 07.04.01, Public Disclosure Guidelines](#)
- [PRA 03.08.02, Social Media Use](#)
- [LEG 01.00.02, Conflict Of Interest](#)
- [RCW 42.52, WAC-292-110 Chapter Use of State Resources](#)

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