

Town of Boylston
Computer, E-Mail, Voicemail, and Internet Usage Policy

Introduction

The Town of Boylston (hereinafter the "Town") recognizes that the use of computers and the Internet has many benefits for Town employees. The Internet and e-mail make communication more efficient and effective. Therefore, employees are encouraged to use computers and the Internet appropriately. Unacceptable usage of computers and the Internet can place the Town at risk. This policy discusses their acceptable usage.

Guidelines

The following guidelines have been established for using the Internet and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical and professional manner

1. The Town Internet and e-mail access may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing of any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene or X-rated. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference shall be transmitted. Harassment of any kind is prohibited.
2. Disparaging, abusive, profane or offensive language; materials that would adversely or negatively reflect upon the Town or be contrary to the Town's best interests; and any illegal activities -- including piracy, cracking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access to any computers on the Internet or e-mail -- are forbidden.
3. Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than the Town may not be transmitted by employees on the town network. All employees obtaining access to other companies' or individual's materials must respect all copyrights and may not copy, retrieve, modify or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy to reference only. If you find something on the Internet that may be interesting to others, do not copy it to a network drive. Instead, give the address to the person who may be interested in the information and have that person look at it on his/her own.
4. Do not use the system in a way that disrupts its use by others. This includes excessive connection time; downloading audio or video; sending or receiving many large files; and sending excessive amounts of e-mail.
5. The Internet is full of useful programs that can be downloaded, but some may contain computer viruses that can extensively damage our computers. Be sure to download from reliable sources only. Also, many browser add-on packages are available to download. There is no guarantee that such will be compatible with other programs on the network and may cause problems; therefore, please refrain from downloading add-on software packages.
6. Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that he/she places or sends over the company's Internet and e-mail system. No e-mail or other electronic communications may be sent which hides the identity of the sender or represents the sender as someone else. Also, be aware that the Town's name is attached to all messages so use discretion in formulating messages.
7. E-mail is not guaranteed to be private or confidential. All electronic communications are property of the Town. Therefore, the Town reserves the right to examine, monitor, and regulate e-mail messages, directories and files, as well as Internet usage. Also, the Internet is not secure so don't assume that others can't read -- or possibly alter -- your message.
8. Internal and external e-mail messages are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Be aware of this possibility when sending e-mail within and outside the company.

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The following guidelines have been established for using the telephone system and voicemail in an appropriate, ethical, and professional manner.

1. The telephone and voicemail systems are the property of the Town. They have been provided by the Town for use in conducting town business. All communication transmitted by, received from, or stored in this system are company records and property of the Town.
2. The Town, in its discretion as owner of the telephone and voicemail systems, reserves and may exercise the right to monitor, access, retrieve and delete any matter stored in, created, received or sent over the telephone and voicemail systems.
3. The Town's policy against sexual or other harassment applies fully to the telephone and voicemail systems, and any violation of those policies is grounds for discipline. Therefore, no telephone or voicemail messages should be created, sent or received if they contain intimidating, hostile, or offensive material concerning race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or other classification protected by law.

Town's Right to Monitor and Consequences

All company-supplied technology, including computer systems and company-related work records, belong to the Town and not the employee. The Town routinely monitors usage patterns for its computer, telephone, e-mail and Internet communications. Although encouraged to explore the vast resources available on the Internet, employees should use discretion in the sites that are accessed.

Since all the computer systems and software, as well as the e-mail and Internet connection, are company-owned, all company policies are in effect at all times. Any employee who abuses the privilege of company-facilitated access to e-mail or the Internet may be denied access to the Internet and, if appropriate, be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If you have questions regarding the appropriate use of the Internet or e-mail, contact the Town Administrator.

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**TOWN OF BOYLSTON
COMPUTER, E-MAIL, VOICEMAIL AND INTERNET USAGE
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Town of Boylston's ELECTRONIC POLICY. I agree to read it thoroughly, and agree that if there is any provision in the policy that I do not understand, I will ask questions of the Town Administrator.

I understand that my use of the Town's electronic system constitutes my consent to all terms and conditions of that policy.

In particular, I understand that the system and all information transmitted by, received from or stored in the system are the property of the Town. The system is to be used only for business purposes and not for personal purposes, and I have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of the system that is the transmission, receipt or storage of information.

I agree not to use a code, access a file, or retrieve stored communications unless authorized. I acknowledge and consent to the Town's monitoring the use of the system at its discretion.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND SIGNATURE

Date: _____/_____/_____

Employee Signature: _____

Print Name: _____