

POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF THE E-MAIL & INTERNET ACCESS SYSTEMS

City of Urbandale, Iowa
Adopted: September 5, 2000

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines regarding the use of the City of Urbandale's electronic mail (e-mail) and internet access systems. This policy has been adopted to protect City employees who use the e-mail system and the internet access system, and to protect the City. The policy is applicable to all City employees and officials.

Overview: E-mail and internet access can provide significant business benefits to the City of Urbandale. The efficient use of these resources can improve the quality of services provided to residents and businesses in the City. The City provides e-mail service (internal and external) and access to the internet to those employees with a business-related need for these services. The City encourages the use of e-mail services and the internet by authorized and trained employees when such use improves the employee's effectiveness or efficiency. As these services are financed with public funds, employees shall use these services responsibly and in full compliance with this policy.

Definitions: The e-mail system is the network of computer hardware and software that permits the sending and receiving of electronic messages from one personal computer to another. In the context of this policy, e-mail transmissions include transmissions that travel via the internet, as well as transmissions that travel via the City's wide area network only.

Internet access is defined as the ability for any personal computer to connect to the worldwide network of computers known as the internet, and to access internet-based applications such as the World Wide Web, File Transfer Protocol, Newsgroups, Gopher, Telnet, and Wide Area Information Services.

Privacy: Under routine circumstances, the City will not monitor employee e-mail messages or internet usage logs. However, the City reserves the right to do so without prior notification to employees. Employees who use the e-mail and internet systems can not assume that the systems afford them any level of confidentiality or privacy. As City-owned resources, the e-mail and internet systems are subject to assessment and inspection by authorized City employees. Such assessments and inspections may be undertaken when there is a legitimate purpose to do so, such as:

- For the transfer of messages and files from one employee account to another employee account.
- When there is evidence of, or suspicion of, use of the e-mail or internet access systems in violation of this policy or any City policy.
- When there is evidence of, or suspicion of, a breach of the security of the e-mail or internet access systems.
- To assist in the investigation of a crime.
- When required by law to do so.

Security: Generally, e-mail and internet access systems are not secure. This is true for the City's systems as well. Employees using these systems should assume that their messages can be intercepted or monitored by unauthorized persons.

To promote security, employees shall not share their passwords or other authentication codes with any other person, unless directed to do so by the City Manager or another authorized person. Each City employee is directly responsible for any and all activity that occurs under his or her e-mail name or internet account. If an employee suspects that the security of his or her e-mail or internet account has been breached, he or she shall notify a supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

Public Information: E-mail (both internal and external via the internet) is considered to be a public record and may be subject to public disclosure in accordance with applicable law. Employees shall follow the record retention and disclosure policies contained in the City's Records Management Policy.

Acceptable Use Guidelines: Employees shall use the e-mail and internet access systems only for the purpose of conducting the business of the City of Urbandale, except as noted in the following section. While using the e-mail and internet access systems, employees shall follow established e-mail and internet customs, rules and guidelines. For example:

- Employees shall use the e-mail and internet access systems for lawful purposes only.
- Transmission of material (text or images) that could be construed as harassing, threatening, obscene, sexist, racist, slanderous, fraudulent, or unethical is prohibited.
- Transmission of documents in violation of copyright laws is prohibited.
- Use of the e-mail or internet access systems for commercial purposes or for personal profit is prohibited.
- Transmission of "chain letters" is prohibited.
- Intentionally disrupting the City's e-mail or internet systems, or the systems of any other entity, by the distribution of a computer virus, worm, or other malicious file, or by overloading a system, is prohibited.
- Unauthorized access to another internet system via the City's systems is prohibited.
- Downloading e-mail attachments or other files at a PC that does not have an active virus detection program running is prohibited.
- Downloading software in violation of a software license agreement is prohibited.
- Use of the e-mail or internet access systems for gaming, political activity, fund raising or religious promotion is prohibited.
- Use of the e-mail or internet access systems to "surf" cyberspace; roam the World Wide Web; engage in on-line forums, chat rooms, or newsgroups; and visit popular sites of personal interest is prohibited.
- Employees shall properly identify themselves when sending e-mail or when using any internet service, and shall clearly distinguish between personal opinion and City policy.
- Employees shall respect the privacy of others.

Personal Use: Employees may use the e-mail and internet access systems for personal use provided that such use:

- Is incidental and infrequent.
- Does not interfere with the job performance of the employee or the employee's co-workers.
- Does not generate a direct cost to the City.
- Does not interfere with or burden the e-mail or internet access systems.
- Is in compliance with all other sections of this policy.

Examples of acceptable personal use include:

- Personal conversation incident to a business-oriented e-mail message.
- Infrequent transmission of brief, personal e-mail messages.
- Infrequent access to a web-based e-mail service (e.g. AOL.com) to transmit personal e-mail messages.

Violations: The use of the City's e-mail and internet access systems is a privilege afforded to authorized users. This privilege may be revoked at any time for violations of this policy. The City Manager or a designee will evaluate violations of this policy on a case by case basis. Employees found to have violated this policy, or to have engaged in illegal or unethical practices, will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include termination of employment and criminal prosecution.

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CERTIFICATE OF RECEIPT

POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF THE E-MAIL & INTERNET ACCESS SYSTEMS

City of Urbandale, Iowa

You have been designated to be an authorized user of the City of Urbandale's e-mail and internet access systems. As an authorized user, you acknowledge that your use will be related to City business, except as provided in the "Policy Regarding the Use of the E-mail & Internet Access Systems." You further acknowledge that your e-mail and internet use may be monitored without prior notification. Your signature below certifies that you have read the policy and that you understand, accept and will abide by the provisions stated in it.

Employee Signature

Date

Print Name

Job Title

Department