

**TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES  
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

ADOPTED July 28, 2003

**I. Introduction.**

The Town provides information technology resources (“ITR”) including, but not limited to computers, laptops, printers and other peripherals, programs, data, fax machines, local and wide area networks, email, the internet, palm pilots, and mobile phones, to employees and other authorized users working in the Town (herein collectively referred to as “employees”) to more efficiently provide Town services. All employees using the Town’s ITR have an obligation to use the Town’s ITR in a responsible manner, conforming to network etiquette, customs, and courtesies and in compliance with this policy. The Town determines which, if any, ITR are appropriate for each position and provides ITR to employees where appropriate at the Town’s discretion. Use of the Town’s ITR is a privilege which may be revoked at any time for conduct which violates this policy.

**II. Amendment of Prior Policy.**

This policy replaces the Town’s INTERNET/EMAIL USAGE POLICY which was adopted by the Board of Selectmen on November 17, 1997. Use of the Town’s ITR by an employee shall constitute acceptance of the terms of this policy by such employee. In addition to this policy, which may be amended from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Selectman, individual Department Heads may adopt additional guidelines consistent with this policy governing the use of the Town’s ITR by employees under their supervision.

**III. Compliance with Policy.**

- A. Employee Responsibilities.** Every employee who is authorized to use Town ITR will be provided with a copy of this policy. It is the responsibility of an employee using the Town’s ITR to read, understand, and adhere to this policy. Any employee with questions regarding the application or meaning of this policy should seek clarification from his/her supervisor or from the Town’s Director of Information Technology at (781) 316-3337. Failure to comply with this policy may result in suspension or termination of the employee’s ITR privileges and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- B. Prohibited Conduct.** The use of the Town’s ITR for inappropriate or prohibited conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment. It is not possible to list all of the circumstances which may constitute inappropriate use of the Town’s ITR; however, employees are prohibited from using the Town’s ITR:
- (1) in furtherance of any illegal act, including violations of any state or federal criminal or civil laws or regulations;

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- (2) to access, display, or share sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials, messages, or images;
- (3) to send or display threatening or harassing messages, materials, or images, including, but not limited to, messages, materials or images of a sexual nature, racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, or gender-based slurs, or messages or images that offensively address someone's age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability or political beliefs.
- (4) to access, display, or disseminate material that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (hate literature);
- (5) for any commercial purpose, including, but not limited to, the offering, providing, leasing, or purchasing of products or services;
- (6) to gain, or attempt to gain, unauthorized access to any computer or network;
- (7) to intercept or attempt to intercept communications intended for other persons;
- (8) to misrepresent either the Town or the employee's role at the Town;
- (9) for any political purpose (subject to the exceptions set forth in Section VII below) or to make solicitations in violation of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 55;
- (10) to libel or otherwise defame any person;
- (11) to download and/or install non-Town supported and licensed software applications or programs;
- (12) to violate any copyright laws or to infringe on any intellectual property rights;
- (13) to distribute chain letters;
- (14) to access online gambling sites;
- (15) to connect unauthorized or unapproved computers, printers or peripherals to the Town's network;
- (16) to develop or use programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer, computing system or network and/or damage or alter the software components of a computer, computing system or network;
- (17) to establish unauthorized connections which create routing patterns that are inconsistent with the effective and shared use of the Town's network;
- (18) for any use that causes interference with or disruption of the Town's ITR;

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- (19) for any use that causes interference with or disruption of the Town's network users or resources; or
- (20) for any use which violates other Town policies, including, but not limited to, the Town's policy against sexual harassment.
- (21) To modify or access any town records unless same are within the employees scope of responsibility.

The above list of prohibited conduct is not all inclusive; employees who are uncertain as to the appropriateness of any action or conduct being contemplated should consult their supervisors or the Town's Information Technology Director for guidance.

- C. Town Business Use.** The Town's ITR, including, but not limited to, the Town's Email and other online services, are the property of the Town of Arlington, and should be used only for business purposes associated with the Town. The Town's ITR may, however, be used for incidental and occasional personal purposes provided that, in addition to the foregoing prohibited conduct, constraints and conditions, such use does not: (i) directly or indirectly interfere with the Town's operation of computing facilities or electronic mail services; (ii) burden the Town with noticeable incremental cost; or (iii) interfere with the employee's work, performance, duties, responsibilities or with any other of the employee's obligations to the Town. Personal use will be acceptable only as described herein and only on the employee's own time, which includes break time, lunch time, and before or after normal working hours and only as is acceptable with the employee's supervisor. Excessive or non-incidental personal use of ITR or any other misuse of ITR may result in serious disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Use of the Town's ITR is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct.

**IV. Public Records.**

Email messages are considered public records, are subject to disclosure and record retention requirements of law, and are discoverable. Employees should not expect that email messages (such as those marked "personal" and/or "confidential") are private or confidential. Employees shall not read email received by another employee when there is no business purpose for doing so. Employees shall not send email or access the Internet under another employee's name without authorization. No employee shall change any portion of a previously sent email message without authorization. All employees with a Town assigned Email account (Email address) must conduct any Town related Email business via that account; unless unavailable due to the employee being offsite.

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**V. Monitoring and No Expectation of Privacy.**

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in any use of the Town's Information Technology Resources (ITR).

The Town's computer system automatically stores and/or records information transmitted on the system including password-protected materials, data, information, email communications and web sites viewed. The Town may monitor employee use of ITR, including, but not limited to, computer equipment, email, the internet, web sites visited, and files downloaded by the employee. Therefore, employees should not consider ITR and any communications, transmissions, web sites viewed, and email sent or received, to be private or confidential. The mere deletion of messages, data, or files may not eliminate them from the system. All use of the Town's ITR is subject to monitoring by the Town, at anytime without notice and notwithstanding any password(s), including, but not limited to data, incoming and outgoing email communications and attachments, web sites visited or viewed and files downloaded. Use of the Town's ITR system constitutes consent to monitoring and is conditioned upon strict adherence to this policy.

**VI. Precautions Against Computer Viruses.**

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 the Data Processing Department has authorized them and they have been subjected to virus detection procedures approved by the Data Processing Department. The Data Processing Department may, from time to time, impose additional restrictions or regulations on the importing of remote files, and such restrictions or regulations shall be considered part of this policy.

**VII. Political Activities and Conflicts of Interest.**

An employee's use of the Town's ITR must not conflict with the State's Conflict of Interest Laws (M.G.L. c. 268A) or Campaign Finance Laws (M.G.L. c. 55). Notwithstanding the provisions of Section III. B. (9) above, political activities may be permitted to the extent that such activities are a part of the official responsibilities of an employee, provided that such activities relate to political issues rather than specific political candidates or parties and provided further that such conduct does not violate any applicable laws. For further clarification please see bulletin OCPF-IB-92-01 issued in June of 1992 and revised in October of 1996 by the Office of Campaign and Political Finance: *The Application of the Campaign Finance Laws to Public Employees and Political Solicitation*, a copy of which is available at the Arlington Town Counsel's office at 50 Pleasant Street in Arlington, or contact Arlington's Town Counsel, at (781) 316-3151.

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**VIII. Additional Responsibilities of  
Department Heads, Managers, and Supervisors.**

Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all employees under their supervision using any of the Town’s ITR have read this Policy and understand its applicability to their activities.

The Department Head is responsible for insuring that any employee who will be given any access to the Town’s ITR has read and signed a copy of this policy. The Data Processing Department will not give access to an employee unless it receives a copy of this policy signed by the employee and the Department Head. A signed copy will be placed in the employee’s personnel file.

The Town’s ITR are work tools. The appointing authority and or Department Head shall deem who appropriately can utilize such tools to better perform their job duties.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND CONSENT TO THE MONITORING DESCRIBED ABOVE.

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check appropriate level of access:

- \_\_\_\_\_ This employee is approved for Intranet mail only
- \_\_\_\_\_ This employee is approved for Internet mail only
- \_\_\_\_\_ This employee is approved for Internet and Intranet access and mail