



**Town of Westford, MA
Information Technology
Acceptable Use Policy
Draft 5/21/2008**

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1. DEFINITION

The acceptable use of Information Technology is a vital concern for all employees and elected, appointed and other officials of the Town of Westford. Information Technology is defined as:

- *Computers* (including servers, workstations, laptops, handheld devices and related components housed within these systems)
- *Computer-Related Hardware* (peripherals including printers, plotters, fax machines, scanners, cameras and other special devices)
- *Software* (including operating systems, applications, utilities and databases)
- *Network - Intranet and Internet* (includes all devices and software that allow for internal, external and remote access)
- *Telephones, Mobile Phones, Pagers and Modems*

Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure therefore includes all of the elements outlined in section 1. Together these comprise a technology foundation intended to provide efficient and effective services to Westford residents.

2. SCOPE

This policy is an overall guideline for technology use. Additional documents that address specific issues such as Email use are addressed in separate policies.

3. PURPOSE

Information Technology should be used primarily for official Town of Westford purposes related to the conduct of Town government. Other uses, such as commercial or political use, are expressly prohibited.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 APPROPRIATE USE

Information Technology used for any official Town government purpose is considered appropriate use. Care should be taken to use technology in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Appropriate use of the Internet is a major concern. Examples of job-related use of the Internet include but are not limited to:

- Accessing external websites to obtain reference information or conduct research for official purposes
- Using Email to communicate with residents, Town Departments and other parties in order to conduct Town business (also refer to Westford's Email Policy)
- Posting information on the official Town Website

4.2 INAPPROPRIATE USE

Inappropriate use of technology includes any activity that is illegal, such as the creation or distribution of pornography, and activities such as political lobbying, or personal or business use to benefit those other than the Town of Westford government. Inappropriate use also includes the use of technology to violate any other established Town policies. Examples of inappropriate use include but are not limited to:

- Activities that could cause congestion or disruption of the network
- Use of abusive or objectionable language
- Use of technology to harass or create a hostile work environment
- Misrepresentation of oneself or the Town of Westford
- Lobbying Town Boards or elected officials to advocate for personal or extradepartmental issues
- Sending chain letters
- Using official dissemination tools to distribute personal information

4.3 INCIDENTAL USE

Incidental personal use of technology such as Email is permitted but subject to monitoring. Costs incurred in the personal use of technology (such as long distance charges for telephone calls) may be periodically assessed and billed to the user. All data existing within the Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure is considered property of the Town of Westford and no assumption of privacy can be made.

Employees who use the Town's technology on personal time can enhance their knowledge of electronic information resources and sharpen information technology skills. Personal time includes breaks, lunchtime and the time before and after scheduled work hours. By allowing use on personal time, the Town of Westford builds a pool of computer literate employees who can guide and encourage other employees. All incidental use must comply with section 4.2. Employees performing job-related use will always have priority over those desiring access to resources for personal use.

5. PRIVACY

All data contained within the Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure is considered property of the Town. Most items are considered Public Record and may be requested in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Town of Westford Information Technology shall not be used to infringe on the privacy of others.

6. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY

6.1 SYSTEM ACCESS

Users must be authorized to access any Town system that requires a password. Users are prohibited from trying to gain access to unauthorized systems. This includes the unauthorized use of another user's password. Users are required to maintain the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing, sharing or discussing passwords. Should a user suspect that their password or access has been observed or compromised, the user shall immediately notify the Technology Department to request a new password.

6.2 SOFTWARE INSTALLATION

In order to maintain compliance to licensing and copyright law, and to increase security and reliability of systems, software installation is allowed only within the following parameters:

- The software is licensed to the Town of Westford
- The person installing the software is expressly authorized to do so by the Technology Director

6.3 HARDWARE & PERIPHERAL INSTALLATION

In order to maintain a secure, stable and operational network, hardware and peripheral installation is allowed only within the following parameters:

- The equipment is owned by the Town of Westford and has been accepted for use by the Technology Director
- The person installing the equipment is expressly authorized to do so by the Technology Director
- Since all data within the Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure is subject to monitoring and is considered public information, attaching personal equipment (such as a laptop) to the Town of Westford IT Infrastructure is not permitted unless expressly authorized by the Technology Director.

6.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Computer users are expected to use hardware and software in a manner that enables its ongoing operation. Care should be taken to use technology in the most efficient and effective manner possible. If a piece of equipment or software malfunctions or is damaged or broken, the user is to notify the Technology Department in a timely manner so that the equipment may be assessed for damage and replaced or repaired and to prevent the loss of critical data.

6.5 DATA SECURITY

Each user is the custodian of their data and must not share passwords or other restricted information with unauthorized users. Users also must not intentionally delete town-owned data, particularly Email, documents and other items considered Public Record.

The Technology Department will ensure all critical systems are backed-up on a daily basis. Backups will be stored in redundant offsite locations. The Technology Department will provide users access to secure network storage that is included in the daily backups. It is the user's responsibility to store critical data on these backed-up locations and not on their local hard drives.

All data received from sources outside the Town of Westford including the Internet, Email, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, Flash Memory (Thumb Drives), Floppy Disks, Zip Disks, Tapes and other sources are to be scanned for viruses. If any source is questionable, the Technology Director should be consulted prior to downloading or uploading data to Town of Westford computers or other devices. All external data must comply with section 6.2.

7. THE PURCHASE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

All procurement of Information Technology (as defined in section 1) shall be made through the Technology Department. The Technology Director is responsible for approving all Information Technology requests and purchases.

8 ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT/SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read the Town of Westford Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy and understand its terms and conditions.

I have been given a copy of this policy and I agree to abide by this policy. I understand that my failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my employment and or fines to recoup losses incurred by my abuse of this policy.

Employee: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Department Head: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____