

## **City of Venice Information Technology Usage Policy**

The City of Venice considers information technology (IT) resources to be city resources. It shall be the policy of the city to maintain these resources in a consistent, predictable, and reliable manner to serve the city as business communications tools. All users of these IT resources are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible, efficient, professional, ethical manner and in accordance with city policies, as well as federal, state and local laws.

### **1. Purpose.**

The purpose of this policy is to define the appropriate use of the City of Venice computer and network resources. They apply to access to the internet, the city network and the use of computer resources at any location, from any device. The city authorizes the use of computing and network resources by city employees in connection with the transaction of official business of the city. All use must be consistent with the intent and requirements of all city policies and must be carried out in an ethical, legal, and responsible manner.

Users of city IT resources should have no expectation of privacy while using city-owned or city-leased equipment. Information passing through or stored on city equipment can and will be monitored.

The city purchases and licenses the use of various computer software for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. Unless authorized by the software developer, the city does not have the right to reproduce such software for use beyond the licenses purchased by the city.

Employees may only use software on local area networks or on multiple machines according to the software license agreement. The city prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

### **2. Establishing and Maintaining the Internet**

The Information Systems Department (IS) will arrange for city-wide connection to the internet. The IS staff will maintain and administer the link to the internet and the internet client software. They will also monitor the connection, traffic levels, illegitimate access attempts, and response times to optimize performance and notify management of problems requiring attention. The City of Venice will not provide computer assistance with your home computer.

### **3. Internet/Intranet Usage**

City employees requesting internet access must do so via an internet agreement form. The request must be signed by the department director of that employee. An account will be established and activated when the form has been completed and received by the Information Systems Department. The employee can request internet training which the Information Systems

Department can provide at the training room located in the IS office. At the end of the training, users may be required to demonstrate their proficiency.

#### **4. Prohibitions**

- a. Electronic communication resources are limited. Employees should conserve these resources and must not deliberately perform actions that waste resources or monopolize them to the exclusion of other employees. This includes subscribing to list servers or web sites not directly related to job responsibilities, spending extensive time on the Internet, downloading nonwork files and streaming audio and/or video.
- b. Staff must presuppose that all materials on the internet are copyrighted and/or patented unless specific notices state otherwise. Downloading and storing copyright material on city equipment is prohibited.
- c. The use of technology resources for conducting personal business, consulting, commercial activities, religious causes, solicitations, political activity, or any activities not directly in connection with the transaction of official business of the city are prohibited.
- d. Internet usage will conform to all city policies and work rules, intentionally visiting “adult” or sexually-oriented web sites, sites associated with hate crimes, violence or others that create discomfort or harassment in the workplace and have no legitimate business value are prohibited.
- e. Access or attempting access to the computer-based records or services that an official or employee does not have explicit authorization to utilize is prohibited.
- f. The use of technology resources for illegal or illicit activities is a violation of this policy.
- g. A violation of any software license agreement is prohibited.
- h. Downloading and/or installing software is prohibited, unless specifically authorized in writing by the Information Systems Director. Any downloaded software must only be used under the terms of its license. Furthermore, any material installed on computers must be scanned for viruses or other destructive code.
- i. City employees or any other persons may not install hardware or software that was not purchased by the city on city-owned computers.
- j. The city has designed internet access in such a way as to try to assure the safety and security of the city’s network. Any attempt to circumvent, disable, destroy or defeat any city security feature is a violation of this policy. Any employee other than Information Systems employees, disabling anti-virus, security, or remote access applications on any PC will be subject to a minimum of suspension and up to and including termination.

## **5. Passwords**

Regardless of the circumstances, individual passwords must never be shared or revealed to anyone besides the authorized user. To this end passwords must not be documented or stored in a manner which can be accessed by others. Sharing your password with others may create a liability to you if anything detrimental happens under your sign on with access to the city network.

Information Systems has implemented a secure password initiative in which they will generate a password change periodically.

## **6. Electronic Mail (E-mail)**

E-mail is the electronic transfer of information, typically in the form of electronic messages, memoranda, and attached documents, from a sending party to one or more receiving parties by means of an intermediate telecommunications system. When creating email messages, refrain from using caps, bold, underline as this has been interpreted by the courts as being “reckless use”.

E-mail which is created or received by a city employee, council member, or members of advisory boards, committees and task forces (hereinafter referred to as “Users”) in connection with the transaction of official business of the city may be considered a public record and is subject to inspection and/or copying in accordance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and is subject to applicable state retention laws and regulations, unless expressly exempted by law. Users must use city e-mail accounts in connection with the transaction of official business of the city. Users are prohibited from using personal e-mail accounts in connection with the transaction of official business of the city. Any e-mail received by a user in their personal e-mail account in connection with the transaction of official business of the city shall be forwarded to their city e-mail account.

The Florida Statutes contain numerous specific exemptions to the access and inspection requirements of the Public Records Law. Users are responsible for ensuring that electronic public records which are exempt from access or inspection by statute are properly safeguarded. No exempt or confidential information will be transmitted by e-mail. The originator is responsible for advising the custodian that an e-mail may have confidential or exempt information (for e-mails prior to this policy being adopted.)

The city provides electronic mail services to Users. These systems are designed to facilitate communication with other employees and the public when such communication is part of a Users job. All electronic communication systems and all communications and stored information transmitted, received or contained in the city’s information systems are the property of the city.

Users have no right of personal privacy in any material created, stored in, received, or sent over the city’s e-mail system. The city reserves and may exercise the right, at any time and without prior notice or permission, to intercept, monitor, access, search, retrieve, record, copy, inspect, review, block, delete and/or disclose any material created, stored in, received, or sent

over the city's e-mail system for the purpose of protecting the system from unauthorized or improper use or criminal activity.

E-mail is for the use of Users in the performance of their jobs. However, it is recognized that occasional communications between Users within the city e-mail system for personal reasons under circumstances that do not take away from or interfere with their duties or the duties of those Users with whom they communicate, is not prohibited except the e-mail system shall not be used for any unauthorized purpose including but not limited to:

- (1) Sending solicitations including, but not limited to, the sale of goods or services or other commercial activities not in connection with the transaction of official business of the city.
- (2) Sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws or licensing agreements.
- (3) Sending information or material prohibited or restricted by government security laws or regulations.
- (4) Sending information or material which may reflect unfavorably on the city or adversely affect the city's ability to carry out its mission.
- (5) Sending information or material which may be perceived as representing the city's official position on any matter when authority to disseminate such information has not been expressly granted. When an employee sends a personal e-mail, especially if the content of the e-mail could be interpreted as an official agency statement, the employee should use the following disclaimer at the end of the message: *"This e-mail contains the thoughts and opinions of (employee name) and does not represent official City of Venice policy."*
- (6) Sending confidential or proprietary information or data to persons not authorized to receive such information, either within or outside the city.
- (7) Sending messages or requesting information or material that is fraudulent, harassing, obscene, offensive, discriminatory, lewd, sexually suggestive, sexually explicit, pornographic, intimidating, defamatory, derogatory, violent or which contains profanity or vulgarity, regardless of intent. Among those which are considered offensive include, but are not limited to, messages containing jokes, slurs, epithets, pictures, caricatures, or other material demonstrating animosity, hatred, disdain or contempt for a person or group of people because of race, color, age, national origin, gender, religious or political beliefs, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or any other classification protected by law.
- (8) Sending messages or requesting information reflecting or containing chain letters or any illegal activity including, but not limited to gambling.

- (9) Sending or requesting information or material that promotes a religious or political view, cause, position or action.
- (10) Sending or requesting personal outside email that is not in connection with the transaction of official business of the city to include, but not limited to, personal activities, automated email from non-city business entities, shopping, auction, personal pictures, etc... No personal email shall be sent from employees on the city email system. Any incoming personal email captured by network filters will be deleted.
- (11) Normally employees are not responsible for unsolicited offensive e-mails.

The use of e-mail is a privilege, not a right. As such, the privilege may be revoked at any time and for any reason. Abuse of the privilege may result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Electronic records (such as e-mail and computer stored documents) may be public records dependent upon Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, subject to access by the general public as well as the press in the same manner as physical documents. An electronic communication in connection with the transaction of official business of the city may not be deleted or destroyed except in compliance with the records retention schedule in Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. Unless it falls within one of the specific exemptions described in the public records statute, the e-mail message must be produced for any person upon request.

All e-mail and other public records in the city's custody are maintained for the required retention period(s). Weekly automatic backups are done under the city's disaster recovery plan.

Sorting e-mail into appropriate personal folders is a helpful way to manage these records and to ensure that they will be easier to locate if you need to refer back to them. E-mails will remain in individual "live" accounts for one year in order to maintain functionality and efficiency. Trash will be emptied automatically every 14 days.

Archived e-mails will be available for viewing or printing after the one year "live" mailbox limit. Once e-mail has met its retention in accordance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, it will be removed.

## **7. Policy Violations**

All Users should report any discovered unauthorized access attempts or other improper usage of City of Venice computers, networks, or other information processing equipment. If you observe, or have reported to you, a security or abuse problem, with any city computer or network facilities, including violations of this policy, you should notify the information systems director or the city's ethics compliance officer as appropriate.

Employees who violate these policies cost the city money, waste scarce resources, tarnish the image of the City of Venice, and may violate the law. Persons in violation of this policy are subject to the full range of sanctions, including the loss of computer or network access privileges

without notification, and disciplinary action pursuant to the City of Venice's Procedures and Rules, up to and including discharge. In the event an employee is suspected of violating federal, state or local laws, all relevant materials will be made available to the appropriate law enforcement department for investigation and possible criminal prosecution.