

ATTACHMENT J
TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY

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The foregoing Policy is hereby adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Williston of Williston, Vermont, this day 21st day of September and is effective as of this date until amended or repealed.

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1. PURPOSE

This document is intended to establish the policies governing the use of various types of computer, Internet, and communication technology by employees of the town of Williston. Information Technology should be used during working hours, primarily for official Town of Williston purposes related to the conduct of Town government, to accomplish job responsibilities more effectively.

2. DEFINITIONS

The acceptable use of information technology is an important concern for all employees and elected and appointed officials of the Town of Williston. Information Technology is defined as:

- Computers (including servers, workstations, laptops and handheld devices)
- Computer-related hardware (including printers, scanners, special devices)
- Software (including networks and the Internet)
- Telephones, Modems & Handheld devices (including smart phones)
- Town of Williston Information Technology infrastructure includes all networks, computers, modems, hubs, software and data.

3. SCOPE

This policy is an overall guideline for all technology use. Individual departments may adopt additional policies that address specific issues in the departments, subject to review by the Town Manager. All town employees and departments are expected to meet these expectations but may exceed them as each department sees fit.

4. PHONE USE

Personal use of telephones for communication by town employees shall be limited during work hours, with exception of lunch or break periods. Employees may make personal calls during the work shift for the purpose of making calls to children, baby sitters, day care providers, teachers, and family members to inform them of schedule changes and other essential business, as long as it does not interfere with job duties and is kept to a minimum.

Cell phone cameras and video functions may not be used during an employee's work shift unless authorized by the department head or work related.

Any audio or video recording devices may not be used during the employee's work shift unless authorized by the department head or work related.

Cell phones owned by the town and issued to employees may be used for business purposes only, except in the event of an emergency.

Any costs incurred to the town from personal use of landlines will be the responsibility of the employee.

To the extent it is possible, Town employees should avoid the use of cell phones or undertake other activities that might distract attention from the road while driving town vehicles or a

personal vehicle on town business. If it becomes necessary to use a cell phone, employees must use a “hands-free” feature of the phone while driving.

5. USE OF TOWN COMPUTER SYSTEM

The town computer system, town computer equipment, and/or computer networks including both email and Internet, is to be used by employees for the purpose of conducting town business. Occasional, brief, and appropriate personal use of the town computer system is permitted, provided it is consistent with this policy, does not interfere with an employee’s job duties and responsibilities, or the system is used during break or lunch periods.

Use of personal laptops, which are plugged into the town computer system and are used for work related purposes, must also adhere to this policy.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy regarding anything created, sent or received on the town computer system, including work related items sent on the town computer system through personal laptops.

The Town may monitor any and all computer transactions, communications and transmissions to ensure compliance with this policy and to evaluate the use of its computer system.

All files, documents, data and other electronic messages created, received or stored on the Town computer system are open to review and regulation by the Town and may be subject to the provisions of Vermont’s Public Records Law.

Employees may not introduce software from any outside source on the Town’s computer system without explicit prior authorization from the Town Manager or designee. Employees may be held responsible for any damages caused by using unauthorized software or viruses they introduce into the Town computer system.

Transmission of electronic messages on the Town computer system shall be treated with the same degree of propriety, professionalism, and confidentiality as written correspondence. The following are examples of uses of the Town computer system which are prohibited:

- Any illegal purpose;
- Transmitting threatening, obscene, or harassing materials or messages;
- Distributing confidential town data and information;
- Interfering with or disrupting network users, services, or equipment;
- Private purposes, such as marketing or business transactions;
- Installing copyrighted software or computer files illegally;
- Promoting religious causes;
- Unauthorized not-for-profit business activities;
- Private advertising of products or services;
- Modifying, obtaining, or seeking information about files or data belonging to other users, without explicit permission to do so;
- Communications that in any way may be construed by others as disruptive, offensive, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, or threatening;

- Communications or viewing of sexually explicit images, videos or messages; or
- Any other use that may compromise the integrity of the Town and its business in any way.
- Engage in political activity as defined in the Town's Personnel Policy;

Email messages that are intended to be temporary, non-substantive communications, such as communications to schedule meetings, may be routinely discarded. However employees must recognize that emails sent, received, or stored on the Town computer system are subject to Vermont's Public Records Law and may be covered by the State of Vermont's retention schedule for municipal records.

Privacy of other individuals should be kept in mind when corresponding with multiple people, including other town employees and the public. Employees should make use of the blind copy function in emails and other forms of communication.

For purposes of this section, computer system means all computer-related components and equipment including, but not limited to, host computers, file servers, workstation terminals, laptops (including personal laptops used for work purposes), software, internal or external communication networks, the world wide web (www), the Internet, commercial online services, bulletin board systems, back up systems and the internal and external e-mail systems accessed via the Town's computer equipment.

6. SOCIAL NETWORKING

If an employee chooses to identify himself or herself as an employee of the town of Williston on Internet venues, some readers of such Web sites or blogs may view the employee as a representative or spokesperson of the town. In light of this possibility, the town requires that employees observe the following guidelines when referring to the town, its programs or activities, other employees, and the public, in a blog or on a Web site:

- a) Employees must be respectful in all communications and blogs related to or referencing the town, its employees, and/or other public officials.
- b) Employees must not use obscenities, profanity, or vulgar language.
- c) Employees must not use blogs or personal Web sites to disparage the town, employees/officials of the town, or the public.
- d) Employees must not use blogs or personal Web sites to harass, bully, or intimidate other employees. Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another employee or member of the public.
- e) Employees must not use blogs or personal Web sites to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by town, state, or federal policies, including, but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, and bullying.
- f) Employees must not post pictures or video obtained through employment, including pictures or videos of other employees or members of the public on a

- g) Web site without obtaining written permission from the identifiable persons and the department head.

7. ENFORCING APPROPRIATE USE

The town will address instances of technology misuse through disciplinary action up to and including termination, if appropriate. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to the appropriate authorities. The town manager and/or an individual designated by the town manager will review alleged violations of this policy on a case-by-case basis.

Town employees should keep in mind the public respect clause of the personnel policy when using technology. As stated in the respect clause, “because the town must maintain public confidence, its work force is composed of responsible and professional individuals, no employee should engage in any public or private conduct, which if publicly disclosed, would have the effect of impairing the employer’s reputation for reliability, trustworthiness, and efficiency.”