



Village of Menands

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Computer and Internet Policy.

A. General principles.

- (1) Use of the Internet on Village computers is a privilege; exercise good judgment as you use it. Failure to adhere to these rules may result in suspending or revoking the offender's privilege of Internet access and subject the offender to disciplinary actions.
- (2) It is the responsibility of each Internet user to ensure compliance with all Village computer policies.
- (3) Treat the Internet as a formal communications tool just as you would the telephone, e-mail and written communications. You are responsible and accountable for your communication.
- (4) Employees are encouraged to use all forms of electronic communication as necessary to perform their jobs and/or enhance effectiveness.
- (5) The Internet is intended to facilitate Village-related business communications and research and shall be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the Village.
- (6) Internet access on Village computers will be logged. If any supervisor suspects excessive or inappropriate use, logs can be reviewed at any time.
- (7) Use of the Internet should not impact work performance in any way.
- (8) When in doubt, use common sense or ask a supervisor before proceeding.

B. Security issues.

- (1) Downloading of software products from Internet sites is not permitted without the prior approval of the Village Administration. Any software that is downloaded must comply with all licensing and copyright laws. The Village Administrator will

maintain and publish a list of approved software for installation/downloading. Furthermore, Village employees should not access, download, scan or install software unrelated to the employee's Village tasks.

- (2) Do not share your network passwords or otherwise breach the security of the Internet/ network accounts.
- (3) Computers or terminals shall not be left unattended in an insecure state. This allows for inappropriate access to records of the Village, allows unauthorized users access to the Internet, intranet, and Village network, and severely compromises security.
- (4) Village employees shall not tamper with anti-virus software installed on any Village computer.

C. Inappropriate use.

- (1) Messages transferred via the Internet are public information. If you desire to transmit confidential communications or sensitive information, do not use the Internet.
- (2) The use of racially or sexually derogatory or offensive language in your communications is prohibited. This concept extends to e-mail messages, jokes, screen savers, Web sites visited, and any information accessed by the computer.
- (3) Using the network for personal use, personal business, personal financial gain, or for any commercial or illegal activity is prohibited.

Rules for use of e-mail and instant messaging.

E-mail or electronic mail is an important communication tool for our organization. The use of e-mail needs to be encouraged and controlled. Instant messaging is a form of computer communications growing in popularity. All the policies for e-mail apply to instant messaging.

- A. E-mail on Village machines, or on Village time, should be limited to Village business.
- B. Personal use will be acceptable only under the following circumstances: If you receive a personal e-mail, you can briefly read the message just as you might receive a personal phone call while on the job. A very brief reply will also be acceptable. However, drafting lengthy replies, receiving numerous personal messages, or drafting numerous personal messages must be done on your own time. This means during your break time, lunchtime, or before or after normal working hours as is acceptable with your supervisor. Excessive forwarding of jokes, trivial messages, and chain messages is also prohibited.
- C. You may access and use the Village e-mail from home or outside the office to the extent authorized by the Village Administrator. However, use of the Village e-mail from home or outside the office is to be done only in accordance with these policies.
- D. The following personal e-mail uses are strictly forbidden on the Village e-mail system at all times:
 - (1) Private business.

- (2) Profit-making activities, including the sale of personal items.
- (3) Mass mailings.
- (4) Any other organizational or agency mailings not directly related to Village business.
- E. E-mail is not a private and confidential form of communication; the Internet is not a secure medium of communication. Messages can be intercepted by internal or external sources. If you desire to transmit confidential communications or sensitive information, do not use the Internet or e-mail.
- F. Any information residing on a Village computer is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- G. If you do not recognize the name of an e-mail sender, use caution; be suspicious of unsolicited messages. Call or e-mail the Village Administrator or your supervisor if you have questions. If you do not know the source of the e-mail:
 - (1) Don't open unsolicited attachments or those received from strangers.
 - (2) Don't launch (click on) URLs provided from unsolicited e-mails.
 - (3) Don't download executable files from unknown sources (for example, *.exe).
 - (4) Don't forward chain letters.

Prohibited uses.

The following are prohibited uses:

- A. Intentionally downloading, accessing, viewing, posting, or transmitting information that is abusive, offensive, harassing, threatens violence, or that discriminates on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.
- B. Intentionally accessing, viewing, posting, or transmitting sexually explicit material from the Internet. Sexually explicit material includes any description of or any picture, photograph, drawing, motion-picture film, digital image, or similar visual representation depicting nudity, sexual excitement, or sexual conduct of any kind.
- C. Operating a business, soliciting money, product advertising, or conducting transactions for personal gain or profit, or gambling.
- D. Arranging for the sale or purchase of illegal drugs, alcohol, or firearms.
- E. Communication with elected representatives or public or political organizations to express opinions on political issues outside of work-related communications. This can be misinterpreted as an official Village opinion on such issues.
- F. Solicitation for non-Village-sponsored organizations or functions.
- G. Violation of copyright laws.
- H. Confidential information such as criminal records, juvenile records, personnel records, etc.

- I. Intentionally creating a computer virus.
- J. Unauthorized hacking or fraudulent activities.

Disciplinary actions.

- A. In the event of violations of Village policy, the possible disciplinary actions are:
 - (1) Warning.
 - (2) Monitoring of activities.
 - (3) Suspension of access to e-mail and/or Internet services.
 - (4) Suspension from employment, without pay.
 - (5) Restitution for hours used for unauthorized use of a Village computer or e-mail.
 - (6) Termination of employment.
- B. In most cases, the appropriate disciplinary action will be determined by the Village, as provided by law, based upon the circumstances of the particular matter. However, in some matters, such as sexually explicit material violations, or crime related to or committed with Village computer equipment, the initial disciplinary action may be termination of employment.