

City of Marion, NC Computer Use and Internet Policy

This policy is to be used in conjunction with Article VI Section 19 of the City of Marion Personnel Policy.

Purpose: This policy sets forth guidelines for computer and internet use.

Applicability: This policy applies to all employees, contract personnel, or anyone utilizing City of Marion computers and/or Internet/Intranet (referred to collectively as “employees”.)

Policy: Usage of City computers for personal communications and internet connections or email for personal reasons should be brief. The City’s computers and internet service may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or which are derogatory to any individual or group, obscene, pornographic or X-rated, or defamatory or threatening in nature or for “chain letters” or any other purpose which is illegal or against City policy or contrary to the City’s interest.

Computers and Peripherals, Hardware, Software, and the Network (Internet and Intranet) are provided to employees of the City of Marion to assist them in performing their jobs. The Network can be a valuable source of information and research. In addition, the Network can provide an excellent means of communicating with other employees, professional peers, citizens and other businesses. Use of the network, however, must be tempered with common sense and good judgment. The network systems are the property of the City of Marion and have been provided for use in conducting business. All communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are considered data, and the property of the City of Marion. Employees have no right of personal privacy or any expectation of privacy in any matter stored in, created, received, or sent over these systems. Employees should be aware that deletion of any E-mail messages, files, or data may not truly eliminate the data from the system. All data is accessible by the City of Marion at any time. Anyone receiving inappropriate information or data should contact the IT Department immediately. Under no circumstances, should any hardware or software be removed, changed, or installed without approval from the IT Department. Any security issues or damages to the network as a result of unapproved uses of hardware and software may result in disciplinary action including termination. Although the City of Marion does not make a practice of continuously monitoring these systems, the IT Department may conduct random and requested audits and reserves the right to retrieve the contents for legitimate reasons, such as to find lost messages, to comply with investigations of wrongful acts, to comply with requests as required under public records law or to recover from system failure. Use of City of Marion technology resources constitutes consent to such monitoring and access. Loss or theft of computers/peripherals/hardware or City issued cell phones must be reported to the IT Department immediately.

Personal use of technology resources should not interfere with or conflict with business use. Personal use of City of Marion resources by an employee neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by the City of Marion. Employees should exercise good judgment

regarding the reasonableness of personal use. Personal use should only occur during allowable break times. Any security issues or damages to the network as a result of personal usage of the internet may result in disciplinary action including termination.

Password requirements are necessary to keep the security of the Network intact. Employees are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and their passwords. Passwords should be changed when prompted by the system, the IT Department or, when it is suspected that the password has been compromised. Employees shall follow password policies as established by the IT Department. Passwords are not to be shared with anyone for any reason.

The City of Marion's policies against sexual or other harassment apply fully to the e-mail system, voicemail system, and all technology resources. Any violation of these policies is grounds for discipline. Therefore, no communication should be created, sent, or forwarded that contains intimidating, hostile, or offensive material concerning race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability or any other classification protected by law. Anyone receiving inappropriate information should contact the IT department immediately. Examples of misuse include the following: obscene, profane, or offensive material transmitted over any of these communication systems. This includes, for example, messages, jokes, or forms that violate the City of Marion harassment policy or create an intimidating or hostile work environment. Use of these systems to set up personal businesses or send chain letters is prohibited. Accessing copyrighted information in a way that violates the copyright is prohibited. Breaking into the system or unauthorized use of a password, file, or data is prohibited. Broadcasting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious or other nonbusiness related matters is prohibited. City issued email addresses are only to be used for business purposes and are not to be used as a user ID or contact address for any type of personal account which includes, but is not limited to, any social media accounts, on line purchasing accounts, etc.

Electronic mail or "E-Mail" is simply a method of communicating information and does not constitute a public record in and of itself. However, the information transmitted through the use of E-Mail may become a public record if it meets the definition of N.C.G.S. § 132-1. If information transmitted by E-Mail meets the definition of "public record," then it may not be deleted or otherwise disposed of except in accordance with a records retention schedule approved by the State Division of Archives and History. The content of the E-Mail message determines the retention requirement.

The individual to whom the message is addressed becomes the legal "custodian" once the message is received and is the person responsible for ensuring compliance with the Public Records Act. Although the City of Marion may periodically back-up information residing on system hard drives, this is not done for archival purposes or in order to meet the requirements of the Public Records Act. The IT Department is not the legal custodian of messages that may be included in such back up files. Employees are responsible for purging E-mail messages stored on the system according to public records requirements and imposed storage limits.

The City of Marion realizes that many employees may participate in social media as a way to share their life experiences and thoughts with family, friends and colleagues. Employees shall

not participate in social media while at work unless it is during a designated break time. Any personal use of the City's computer or communications equipment to participate in social media must be minimal and shall not be at the expense of an employee's job performance or interfere in any way with the needs and operations of the City. Any security issues or damages to the network as a result of personal use of social media may result in disciplinary action including termination. Employees shall not use the City's email address to register on any social media website for personal use.

If the City is a subject of social media content an employee is creating, the employee must be clear and open about the fact that s/he is an employee and her/his views do not represent those of the City. At all times, Article VI Section 6 of the City's Personnel Policy regarding political activity must be followed. Employees are also prohibited from using or disclosing any personal identifiable information about any individual who has received services from the City. Following the end of the employment relationship with the City, employees shall take prompt steps to ensure that no personal or other social media websites represent them as current City employees.

No employee may create an official City social media account or change a password without the explicit authorization of the City Manager.

Any employee found to be abusing the privilege of City computers or facilitated access to the Internet will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Marion this the 16th day of August, 2016

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