

# City of New Haven

## Electronic Mail and Internet Access Policy

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**Purpose:** This statement defines and describes the City's policy regarding acceptable usage of the Internet and the City's electronic mail system by City employees other than Board of Education employees who are governed by policies issued by the BOE. The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Communicate the legal requirements regarding the use of the Internet and electronic mail facilities.
- b) Minimize exposure to computer viruses and reduce system security risks.
- c) Minimize legal liability to the City.

**Issuing Authority:** The Controller is the issuing authority for this policy.

**Enforcement Authority:** Daily administration is the responsibility of all Coordinators and Department Heads. The Information Technology (IT) Department is responsible for insuring compliance with the requirement to provide notice according to Connecticut Public Act 98-142.

**Notice:** *This policy serves as the notice required by Connecticut Public Act 98-142, that the City reserves the right to monitor communications on its electronic communications systems, to obtain information stored or otherwise contained in any such systems, and to access all files and remove unauthorized data files and software programs.*

### Policy

1. Violations of this policy must be reported by Department Heads to the IT Manager. The IT Manager shall log all reported violations with Internal Audit. Actions which may violate federal, state or local law shall be reported to law enforcement officials. Any person found in violation shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to warnings, suspensions or termination.
2. All messages created, sent or retrieved over the E-mail or the Internet are the property of the City of New Haven and as such, considered public information; and therefore subject to review by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). E-mail messages sent or received by public officials are public records pursuant to CGS §1-18A. These records are therefore subject to State record retention requirements administered on behalf of the City by the Controller's office. The City reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system. **E-mail and Internet messages are public communications and are not private.** All communications, including text and images, may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.
3. E-mail and Internet access must be used exclusively for official City business. The electronic mail system may be used to notify employees of events officially sponsored by the City of New Haven. Prior approval must be received by the IT Manager for any E-mail where citywide distribution is planned. E-mail regarding personal events are strictly prohibited (e.g. selling personal merchandise, notifying employees of tag sales, etc.). The E-mail and Internet access shall not be used to:
  - a) transact personal business
  - b) for personal gain

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- c) to advance a person's individual beliefs
4. Users are prohibited from publishing information over the E-mail or the Internet which may infringe on the rights of others.
  5. When using E-mail or the Internet, employees are acting as representatives of the City of New Haven and are therefore responsible to use the Internet ethically and lawfully.
  6. All transmissions over E-mail or the Internet must have the employee's name attached. Harassing, fraudulent or obscene messages and offensive language are strictly prohibited. Specifically, the City prohibits harassment based on race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, religious beliefs or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.
  7. Internet relay chat channels may only be used to conduct official City business. Permitted activities include gaining technical or analytical advice, and accessing databases for information required to conduct City business.
  8. Users of E-mail or the Internet must not disrupt the operation of the City network or the networks of other users.
  9. To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the system, no employee shall download or install software without obtaining prior permission from the IT Department. ***All software downloads must be done by the City's IT Department.***
  10. No employee shall transmit or access any files or records which breach the confidentiality of information regulations which are protected pursuant to confidentiality requirements under the Municipal Employees Relations Act or State Personnel Statutes. ***All questions about protected information should be directed to the Office of Human Resources or the Office of Corporation Counsel.***

### Definitions

**E-mail:** Electronic-mail (E-mail) refers to messages transmitted by computer technology. E-mail systems include messages, calendars, directories, distribution lists, attachments such as word-processing documents, and communications generated on external systems (e.g. the Internet). E-mail provides instant communications, allowing the transmittal of up-to-date information. Like postal or interoffice mail, E-mail messages can be stored on electronic media, and are retrievable at a future date.

Issuing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date: 12-18-09

Previously Revised: Date 12/09 \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of this policy is available for review at the Office of Human Resources. It is also available on the City's computer network at N:\POLICIES or the City's website at <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/HumanResources/Policies.asp>