

COUNTY OF CHATHAM

Res. #98-28

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Resolution Adopting the Chatham County Technology Appropriate Use Policy

WHEREAS, from time to time it is necessary to establish policies for clarification or to better meet the needs of the employees and the County; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to establish a policy to cover the use of all technology resources belonging to the County; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to establish a policy to define the general guidelines for the appropriate use of technology resources'

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County, that the Technology Appropriate Use Policy be established as follows:

TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE USE POLICY

PURPOSE: This policy covers the use of all technology resources belonging to Chatham County. It includes, but is not limited to pagers, radios, all computer systems of any size and function and their attached peripherals, phones, cellular phones, faxes, voice mail systems, e-mail systems, network resources and Internet resources. All technology resources owned by Chatham County are in place to enable the County to provide its services in a timely and efficient manner. This is the primary function of these resources and any activity or action that interferes with this purpose is strictly prohibited. Chatham County requires its employees to use a common sense approach to the rules set forth below, complying not only with the letter, but also the spirit, of this policy.

DEFINITIONS:

E-mail: The distribution of messages, documents, files, software, or images by electronic means over a phone line or a network connection. This includes internal e-mail, external e-mail, and Internet e-mail.

Employee: Includes all paid personnel, contract personnel and volunteers.

Internet and the World Wide Web: A worldwide network of computer servers connected by phone lines that allow access to the public through a special language (HyperText Markup Language or HTML) and a special protocol (HyperText Transfer Protocol or HTTP)

POLICY:

Information Access and Ownership: All technology resources and all information transmitted by, received from, or stored on Chatham County systems are the property of Chatham County and as such, are public record. These records are subject to inspection. The County reserves the right for business purposes to enter, review and monitor the information on all systems, including voice mail, electronic mail and information stored on computer systems or media, without advance notice. This right include, but not limited to, investigating theft, unauthorized disclosure of confidential business or proprietary information, personal abuse of the system or monitoring workflow and productivity.

Anytime information is transmitted through electronic media; there is the possibility that it could be intercepted. Therefore, no confidential County information may be transmitted electronically without the prior approval of the County Manager. If the employee is uncertain whether information is confidential, err on the side of caution and obtain approval before transmitting.

If Chatham County determines that an employee has used technology resources in a manner that violates this policy or other County policies, the County will take appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Personal Use: Personal use of a County owned technology resource by County employees is allowed with the following restrictions.

1. Employees should be aware that personal use of a County owned technology resource is still subject to all of the rules in this policy including inspection and monitoring.
2. The direct measurable cost to the county is none or is negligible.
3. Use must be conducted on an employee's own time. However, personal telephone calls on non-cellular phones or personal use of e-mail on an occasional basis may be permitted providing that they do not interfere with a County employee's obligation to carry out County duties in a timely and efficient manner.
4. Use must not interfere with other employees performing their jobs or undermine the use of County resources for official purposes.
5. Use of the County's technology resources for operating a personal business or soliciting of any kind is prohibited.
6. Some technology resources such as cellular phones are billed from the first minute of use (both local and long distance) and are not allowed to be used for personal use except in an emergency. In the event of emergency use the employee is expected to reimburse any charges to the County.

7. Individuals who are not employees of Chatham County (including an employee's family or friends) are not allowed to use the County's technology resources.
8. Personal use of County resources by an employee neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by Chatham County.

Security: Each employee is responsible for all actions taken while using his/her user profile, password, or access code. Therefore, none of these are allowed to be shared with anyone else (including other employees of Chatham County), at any time. They must not be written down and stored, posted anywhere, programmed into a macro or stored on the computer system in an unencrypted form. Employees are discouraged from selecting easy to guess passwords such as nicknames, names of children, names of spouses or significant others, the word "password", or birthdates. The Information Technology Department encourages users to use secure passwords such as random combinations of letters and numbers that are not real words. Always make a reasonable attempt to complete the logoff or other termination procedure when finished using a remote system or resource. This will help prevent potential breaches of security and corruption of files.

Keep in mind that all portable resources such as computers, digital cameras, pagers, and cellular phones are your responsibility on and off County property.

Except as provided elsewhere in this policy the examination, modification, copying, or deletion of files and/or data stored on computers assigned to other employees without their prior consent is prohibited.

Any file, program, or document received on media (diskettes, CD-ROM or tapes); through the Internet (including e-mail) or through file transfer must be virus checked immediately. This is to prevent viruses from infecting the County's entire network. Each individual employee is responsible for the prevention of the spread of viruses. Keep in mind that computer viruses can spread through e-mail. The Internet provides easy access to software distributed by companies on a trial basis. Under U.S. law, copyright infringement is a strict liability offense, an infringer is liable whether there was any intent or knowledge of the infringement, which may leave the County held liable if employees download copyrighted materials on the County's computer systems. The free access does not indicate that the software is free or that it may be distributed freely. Applicable software copyright laws must be followed. In addition software may not be loaded onto any Chatham County computer system, through any of the above methods, without prior approval of Chatham County Information Technology Department. This includes shareware, freeware, personal software or Internet distributed programs.

Appropriate Use: At all times when an employee is using Chatham County technology resources, he or she is representing the County. Use the same good judgment in all resource use that you would use in written correspondence or in determining appropriate conduct. Appropriate use of a particular resource will be discussed as a part of the training for its use.

While in the performance of work-related functions, while on the job, or while using

publicly owned or publicly provided technology resources, Chatham County employees are expected to use them responsibly and professionally. They shall make no intentional use of these resources in an illegal, malicious, inappropriate or obscene manner. The Internet is not to be used for the following:

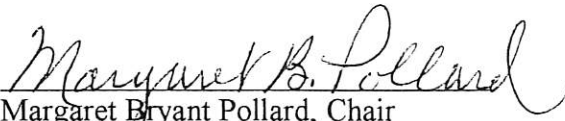
- Private business, including but not limited to commercial advertising.
- Access to any obscene, harassing, racist, inflammatory, malicious, fraudulent, or libelous images.
- Access to and distribution of computer games that have no bearing on the agency's mission.
- Political activities.

Each Internet capable workstation will be configured to allow the screening and review of sites visited on the Internet. Keep in mind that Internet use can and will be monitored at any time.


When sending or forwarding E-mail, either internally or externally, all employees shall identify themselves clearly and accurately. Anonymous or pseudonymous posting is expressly forbidden. Users should avoid being drawn into discussions where disclaimers like "this represents my personal opinion and not that of the department or Chatham County" need to be used. When using Internet services provided by the County, users need to remember that they are representing Chatham County. Use of County e-mail systems from remote locations may create records of County activities that are not stored on equipment owned by the County.

Chatham County employees have a responsibility to make sure that all public information disseminated via the Internet is accurate. Employees shall provide, in association with such information, its source and the date at which it was current and an electronic mail address allowing the recipient to contact the staff responsible for making the information available in its current form.

Adopted this, the 3rd day of August 1998.


Margaret Bryant Pollard, Chair
Chatham County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:


Sandra B. Lee, Clerk to the Board
Chatham County