

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Personal computers (PCs), data terminals, telephonic equipment, and electronic communications systems are tools provided to assist employees in performing their assigned job activities. The term electronic communications systems includes, but is not limited to, voice mail, e-mail, Internet and Intranet, cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDA'S), or handheld computers. Improper use of the County's electronic information systems or its data files (including, but not limited to, the items listed below) is a serious offense.

1. When the equipment, system, or networks are used, all personnel must use their own sign-on and password security codes. System passwords and access codes should be secured and protected to ensure that County data is not compromised.
2. Those data/record and system functions that are accessible in the employee's day-to-day assigned activities shall not be used for purposes outside of one's specific and assigned job and/or related activity. Exceptions to such may be permitted by a supervisor or a member of management.
3. Data/records that may be considered "public information" can be used or released only by those designated to provide such information. When data/records are used or released by an employee, this action is subject to the same guidelines associated with all sanctioned releases. Furthermore, certain electronic communications, such as e-mail and computer files, may exist on backup tapes after they are deleted from a computer. Documents and communications created on or communicated via County owned systems are considered business records and as such may be subject to review by third parties, particularly in relation to litigation.
4. Entering or threatening to enter unauthorized information, computer programs, or files into the County's electronic information processing machines or those attached to its networks is forbidden. In addition, willfully injecting or threatening to inject programs or other data that alters or destroys the County's computer-based data (a "virus") via any means is a violation of state and/or federal law and subject to prosecution under those provisions of the law.
5. Copying or installing computer software from or to County systems is prohibited without the expressed and written approval of the Director of Information Services. Use of illegal software is prohibited. Federal copyright laws and related software license agreements govern this issue.
6. All computers and electronic /telephonic communications equipment are the property of Kenosha County and are to be used for business purposes only unless otherwise approved by a supervisor. Communications via the County's systems are not considered private. Any use of the County's equipment is considered consent by the user to have such use monitored by the County at its sole

discretion with or without prior notice to user. This includes messages sent from personal e-mail accounts on workplace computers. The use of private passwords or access codes shall not be considered a user's withdrawal of consent to such monitoring. The County reserves and intends to exercise the right to periodically review, audit, access, and disclose all electronic communications or files created, received, or sent over the electronic communications to ensure appropriate use in accordance with this and other related policies. Such audits of personal computers will be performed by Information Services staff. Violations will be turned over to the department head and/or Personnel Office.

7. The electronic mail system may not be used to solicit or promote commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or any other non-job-related solicitations.
8. The electronic communications systems are not to be used to create any defamatory, obscene, profane, or otherwise offensive or disruptive messages or to access any information that is not required during the normal course of business. Electronic communications which are considered offensive include, but are not limited to, any messages which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments that offensively address someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.
9. The County shall be the owner of all work product developed while working for Kenosha County. Such work product includes, but is not limited to, all property, programs, systems, devices, patents, applications, hardware, products, and all other things tangible or intangible which are created, made, enhanced, modified, or improved by employees during employment. Employees may not transfer, sell, lease, license, patent, use, franchise, or gift such work product and shall not permit any other party to obtain the beneficial use of such work product without the expressed and written permission of the County, signed by the County Executive.
10. Communications devices and/or software, including, but not limited to, phones, PDAs, PCs, or switches, must not be connected/loaded to County equipment or County network without expressed and written approval of the Director of Information Services.
11. All authorized equipment attached to the Kenosha County network must have anti-virus software and security patches loaded and maintained with the most current release.

Any employee who has been found to be in violation of the County's Electronic Communications policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

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