



**Town of Westford, MA  
Information Technology  
Acceptable Use Policy  
5/21/2012**

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## 1. DEFINITION

The correct use of Town of Westford Information Technology (“Information Technology”) is a concern for all employees and officials of the Town of Westford. Information Technology in this context is defined as items belonging to and/or provided by the Town of Westford such as:

- *Computers* (including servers, workstations, laptops, and related components housed within these systems)
- *Computer-Related Hardware* (peripherals including printers, plotters, scanners, cameras and other special devices)
- *Office equipment* (fax machines, copiers, mailing machines)
- *Software* (including operating systems, applications, utilities and databases)
- *Network - Intranet and Internet* (includes all devices and software that allow for internal, external and remote access)
- *Telephones, Mobile Phones, tablets and other portable devices.*

Together these comprise a technology platform that is essential to providing efficient and effective services to Westford residents.

Use of Information Technology by any employee, contractor, consultant, and/or volunteer (“user”) shall constitute acceptance of the terms of this Policy and any such additional related policies that may be issued by the Town.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy is an general guideline for technology use. Additional policies that address specific issues such as social media should be referred to for more information.

All existing state, federal, and local laws and Town policies apply to users of Information Technology, particularly those that govern intellectual property protection, sexual or other harassment, misuse of Town resources, privacy rights, and confidentiality.

This policy applies to the use of Information Technology whether it

is being used during work hours or outside of those hours.

### **3. PURPOSE**

Information Technology has only two sanctioned uses:

- The conduct of Town government for the Town of Westford
- Incidental personal use (see subsequent section)

Other uses, such as commercial or political use, are expressly prohibited and are considered inappropriate use.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **4.1. APPROPRIATE USE**

Use of Information Technology in the conduct of Town government for the Town of Westford is considered appropriate use. Care should be taken to use technology in an efficient and effective manner to avoid wasting resources.

The appropriate use of the Internet is a major concern. Examples of job-related use of the Internet include but are not limited to:

- Accessing websites to obtain reference information or conduct research for official purposes
- Accessing the websites of vendors or organizations with which the town has official dealings, in relation to those dealings
- Using Email to communicate with residents, Town Departments and other parties in order to conduct Town business (also refer to Westford's Email Policy)
- Posting information on the official Town Website

Even appropriate uses of Information Technology must comply with other Town policies, such as respectful treatment of others and civility.

#### **4.2. INCIDENTAL USE**

Incidental personal use of technology such as Email or web browsing is permitted but subject to monitoring. Costs incurred in the personal use of technology (such as long distance charges for telephone calls) may be periodically assessed and billed to

the user.

Remember that all data created or held within the Town of Westford's Information Technology infrastructure (including logs and activity records) is considered the property of the Town of Westford and may also be considered Public Record. No assumption of privacy can be made.

#### **4.3. INAPPROPRIATE USE**

Inappropriate use of technology includes any activity that is illegal, such as the creation or distribution of pornography, and activities such as political lobbying, or personal or business use to benefit those other than the Town of Westford government.

Inappropriate use also includes the use of technology to violate any other established Town policies.

Examples of inappropriate use include but are not limited to:

- Activities that could cause disruption to the Information Technology infrastructure
- Use of abusive or objectionable language
- Use of technology to harass or create a hostile work environment
- Misrepresentation of oneself or the Town of Westford
- Lobbying Town Boards or elected officials to advocate for personal or extradepartmental issues
- Sending chain letters
- Using official dissemination tools to distribute personal information
- Commercial operations

If you are unsure whether some particular activity constitutes appropriate use, refer the question to the Technology Director.

## **5. PRIVACY**

All data contained within the Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure is considered property of the Town. Most items are considered Public Record and may be requested in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Town of Westford Information Technology shall not be used to infringe on the privacy of others.

Users should not expect any right of privacy for any activity conducted on Information Technology, including communications and stored data. Users should also be aware that appropriately-authorized network administrators may monitor network traffic, and/or access all files, including e-mail files and Internet use history, stored on any equipment.

## **6. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY**

### **6.1. SYSTEM ACCESS**

Most Town systems require that users are authorized. Users are prohibited from trying to gain unauthorized access to systems. This includes the unauthorized use of another user's password. Users are required to maintain the privacy of passwords and are prohibited from publishing, sharing or discussing passwords. Should a user suspect that their password or access has been observed or compromised, the user shall immediately notify the Technology Department to request a new password.

### **6.2. SOFTWARE INSTALLATION**

In order to maintain compliance to licensing and copyright law, and to increase security and reliability of systems, software installation is allowed only within the following parameters:

- The software is licensed to the Town of Westford
- The person installing the software is expressly authorized to do so by the Technology Director

### **6.3. HARDWARE & PERIPHERAL INSTALLATION**

In order to maintain a secure, stable and operational network, hardware and peripheral installation is allowed only within the following parameters:

- The equipment is owned by the Town of Westford and has been accepted for use by the Technology Director
- The person installing the equipment is expressly authorized to do so by the Technology Director
- Since all data within the Town of Westford Information Technology infrastructure is subject to monitoring and is considered public information, attaching personal equipment (such as a laptop) to the Town of Westford IT Infrastructure is not permitted unless expressly authorized

by the Technology Director.

#### **6.4. DATA SECURITY**

Each user is the custodian of their data and must not share passwords or other restricted information with unauthorized users. Users also must not intentionally delete town-owned data, particularly Email, documents and other items considered Public Record. Consult the Information Security Policy for more information.

The Technology Department will ensure all critical systems are backed-up on a daily basis. Backups will be stored in redundant offsite locations. The Technology Department will provide users access to secure network storage that is included in the daily backups. It is the user's responsibility to store critical data on these backed-up locations and not on their local hard drives.

All data received from sources outside the Town of Westford including the Internet, Email, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, Flash Memory (Thumb Drives), Floppy Disks, Zip Disks, Tapes and other sources are to be scanned for viruses. If any source is questionable, the Technology Director should be consulted prior to downloading or uploading data to Town of Westford computers or other devices.

Users must cooperate with the Technology Department in their attempts to keep the systems free from malware (e.g. viruses, worms, Trojans etc) by observing safe Internet use habits. A guide to such habits may be found at [OnGuardOnline.gov](http://OnGuardOnline.gov), the federal government's website to "help you be safe, secure and responsible online". If users suspect that their equipment or systems have become infected or had their security compromised, they should report it immediately to the Technology Department.

### **7. THE PURCHASE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

All procurement of Information Technology (as defined in section 1) shall be made through the Technology Department. The Technology Director is responsible for approving all Information Technology requests and purchases.

### **8. SUSTAINABILITY**

Computer users are expected to use hardware and software in a

manner that enables its ongoing operation. Care should be taken to use technology in an efficient and effective manner. If a piece of equipment or software malfunctions or is damaged or broken, the user is to notify the Technology Department in a timely manner so that the equipment may be assessed and replaced or repaired to prevent the loss of critical data.

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**9. ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT/SIGNATURE PAGE**

I have read the Town of Westford Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy and understand its terms and conditions.

I have been given a copy of this policy and I agree to abide by this policy. I understand that my failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my employment and or fines to recoup losses incurred by my abuse of this policy.

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

