

Internet Access Policy

#IT03-02

Date of Adoption: July 9, 2003

Date of Amendments: 7/25/2003, 5/13/2009

Purpose

To establish the proper use of Internet access and Electronic Mail (E-mail) provided to employees for use in their jobs by Lenawee County.

Ownership

Internet access and E-mail is provided for the purpose of conducting county business. All electronic communications generated by employees while using this access are the property of Lenawee County and, therefore, are not considered private. Employees must have their Department Head's approval to request Internet and/or an E-mail address.

Employee Responsibilities

The county imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on employees while using Internet access and E-mail provided by the county. The following serves as a guide for employees when using the Internet:

- Employees are expected to protect their individual user Id and passwords from unauthorized use. User Id's and passwords are not to be shared with any other person.
- Employees should be aware that the Internet is not a secure method for transmitting confidential information. Any message sent across the Internet may potentially be accessed by other individuals. Thus, in some cases, e-mail may not be the proper means of communication.
- Employees are expected to demonstrate the same high standards that apply to other forms of county communications. Please note that e-mails may be subject to disclosure under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. Employees are expected to demonstrate courtesy and good judgment in their use of the Internet. Employees are prohibited from sending messages containing offensive, abusive, threatening, or other inappropriate language.
- Employees are prohibited from creating a Hostile Work Environment. The "Hostile Environment" occurs when the conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This is an environment where speech, communications or conduct is "severe or pervasive" enough to create a "hostile or abusive work environment" based on race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, citizenship status, marital status, or personal appearance, based on the judgment of a reasonable person.
- Employees should be mindful of the record retention requirements under state law.
- Employees are expected to respect the legal protection provided to programs and data by copyright and license.

Monitoring Use

Lenawee County retains the right to review and monitor usage of Internet access and E-mail that it provides for use by county employees. Department Heads are responsible to monitor their employees' use of Internet access.

Violations by Employees

Perceived violations of this policy may be reported to the Director of Information Technology. The Director of Information Technology will, at his/her discretion and, if necessary, with the assistance of the Board of Commissioners' legal counsel, refer any violation to the appropriate authority for action or remedy. Any violation of this policy may subject the employee to disciplinary action as outlined in the Personnel Handbook or judicial proceeding as the indicated by the severity of the violation.

Appointee Responsibilities

Acceptance of an appointment by the Lenawee County Board of Commissioners imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on appointees while using Internet access and E-mail in fulfillment of their appointment. The following serves as a guide for appointees when using the Internet and E-mail communications for county purposes or in communications with other appointees, county officials or county employees:

- Appointees are expected to protect their individual user Id and passwords from unauthorized use. User Id's and passwords are not to be shared with any other person.
- Appointees should be aware that the Internet is not a secure method for transmitting confidential information. Any message sent across the Internet may potentially be accessed by other individuals. Thus, in some cases, e-mail may not be the proper means of communication.
- Appointees are expected to demonstrate the same high standards that apply to other forms of county communications. Please note that e-mails may be subject to disclosure under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. Appointees are expected to demonstrate courtesy and good judgment in their use of the Internet. Appointees are prohibited from sending messages containing offensive, abusive, threatening, or other inappropriate language.
- Appointees are prohibited from creating a Hostile Work Environment. The "Hostile Environment" occurs when the conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. This is an environment where speech, communications or conduct is "severe or pervasive" enough to create a "hostile or abusive work environment" based on race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, citizenship status, marital status, or personal appearance, based on the judgment of a reasonable person.

- Appointees' responsibilities as specified herein are applicable to appointees communicating with, through, or to any county employee, appointee, or official, regardless of whether the appointee is using county internet, e-mail, or county computer equipment or software.

Monitoring Use

Lenawee County retains the right to review and monitor usage of Internet access and E-mail that it provides for county purposes and all communications that pass through county access portals.

Violations by Appointees

Perceived violations of this policy may be reported to the Director of Information Technology. The Director of Information Technology will, at his/her discretion and, if necessary, with the assistance of the Board of Commissioners' legal counsel, refer any violation to the appropriate authority for action or remedy. Any violation of this policy may subject the appointee to disciplinary action as outlined in the Board of Commissioners rules or judicial proceeding as the indicated by the severity of the violation.