



LAC LA BICHE COUNTY PROCEDURE

TITLE: Internet and Email Use Standard Operating Procedure PROCEDURE NO: CS-03-015-12

SPECIAL NOTES/CROSS REFERENCE: POLICY CS-03-015 AMENDMENT DATE:

1.0 Specific Objectives

This SOP will outline Internet and E-mail access and acceptable use for the following users:

- Full-time, part-time and casual employees;
- Contractors and temporary workers authorized to access the Internet;
- Volunteers, interns, summer students, and other non-paid workers.

2.0 General Guidelines

2.1 Internet Accounts

With respect to account setup and network administration, department managers and/or supervisors are responsible for identifying and recommending Internet access levels for staff members in their department and for forwarding that information to the IT department.

All user names and passwords for County owned and operated devices must be supplied to the IT department. In the event that an employee loses, forgets, or believes that his/her password has become compromised, the employee must inform the IT department immediately. The IT department shall confirm the username, reset the password, and inform the employee of changes made and the procedures for changing the password.

2.2 Internet Usage

a) Acceptable Use

Employees may only use the Internet to complete their job duties. Permissible, acceptable, and appropriate Internet-related work activities include:

- Researching, accumulating, and disseminating any information related to the accomplishment of the user's assigned responsibilities, during working hours or overtime.
- Collaborating and communicating with other employees, business partners, and customers, according to the individual's assigned job duties and responsibilities.
- Conducting professional development activities (e.g. news groups, chat sessions, discussion groups, posting to bulletin boards, Web seminars, etc.) as they relate to meeting the user's job requirements. In instances where the personal opinions of the user are expressed, a disclaimer must be included asserting that such opinions are not necessarily those of the County.

b) Unacceptable Use

Internet use shall comply with all Federal and Provincial laws, and will not violate the County's other policies. Inappropriate and unacceptable Internet use includes, but is not limited to:

- Usage for illegal or potentially illegal purposes, such as theft, fraud, slander, libel, defamation of character, harassment (sexual and non-sexual), stalking, identity theft, online gambling, spreading viruses, spamming, impersonation, intimidation, and plagiarism/copyright infringement.
- Any usage that conflicts with existing County policies and procedures (e.g. bandwidth limitations, network storage, etc.) and/or any usage that conflicts with the County's mission, goals, and reputation.
- Copying, destroying or altering any data, documentation, or other information that belongs to the County or any other business entity without authorization.
- Downloading unreasonably large files that may hinder network performance. All users shall use the Internet in such a way that they do not interfere with others' usage.
- Accessing, downloading, or printing any content that exceeds the bounds of good taste and moral values (e.g. pornography or anything that contravenes human rights legislation).
- Engaging in any other activity which would in any way bring discredit, disrepute, or litigation upon the County.
- Engaging in personal online commercial activities, including offering services or products for sale or soliciting services or products from online providers.
- Engaging in any activity that could compromise the security of the County's host servers or computers. Any and all passwords shall not be disclosed to, or shared with other users.
- Engaging in any fundraising activity, endorsing any products or services, or participating in any political activity, unless authorized to do so as part of completing one's assigned job duties and responsibilities.
- Any individual Internet usage that violates any of the policies and procedures of the accessed information's source network.
- Accessing social media forums during work time, including but not limited to; chat lines, Facebook, texting, tweeting, MSN and personal emails.
- Allowing unauthorized or third parties to access the County's network and resources.

2.3 Security

No passwords shall be disclosed to, or shared with, other users or third parties. Any and all Internet accounts are to be accessed only by their assigned users for legitimate business purposes. Users shall not attempt to obtain anyone else's account password. If a user has

reason to believe his/her password has been compromised, the user must inform the IT department immediately. Users are required to take all necessary precautions to prevent unauthorized access to Internet services or County databases.

2.4 Access, Monitoring & Filtering

Lac La Biche County reserves the right to access, monitor, search, review and track any Internet activity or other information that is stored on any work issued computers, laptops and other devices. Specifically, the County:

- Utilizes monitoring software for the purpose of enforcing acceptable use policies. Monitoring software blocks access to certain web sites for which access is deemed to be a contravention of these policies;
- Utilizes filtering software to restrict access to web sites deemed unsuitable for business use. Where activities that conflict with the law or this SOP are discovered, Internet usage records may be retrieved and used to document any wrongdoing;
- Reports any unlawful use to the police and take appropriate action up to and including termination if a violation of the SOP policy is found;
- May review, or have security personnel review, any activities using the County's hardware, software, equipment, and accounts to access the internet. Use of the County's internet resources implies the users consent to web monitoring for security purposes. All users covered by this SOP and related policy should have no expectation of privacy in their Internet sessions.

2.5 Email

All employees will be required to adhere to the Internet and E-Mail Acceptable Use Policy and this SOP when communicating with customers, clients, or any third party on behalf of the organization via email.

Employees are expected to ensure that all communications sent on behalf of the County will be created using a consistently high level of professionalism and attention to detail.

General guidelines:

- Email communications must be polite, and begin with an appropriate greeting (e.g. Hello, Dear, or Good Morning, etc.), and maintain an appropriate tone throughout.
- Ensure that all messages use appropriate language. Inappropriate language found in County communications may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- Proofread your emails before sending them. Use the Spell Check function for each email to ensure that the message is free of unnecessary spelling errors.

Where an email sent on behalf of the County includes grammatical or spelling errors, we risk the chance of being viewed as unprofessional and could potentially affect our reputation or lose business.

- Ensure the accuracy of all content sent in email messages. Where a discrepancy occurs, it could harm our reputation and we run the risk of losing business.
- Use an appropriate and professional tone in the creation of email messages. It is often very difficult to determine when a person is using humour, sarcasm, or irony in an email. Please note that emails that include humour may be misunderstood and the effects could negatively impact our business.
- At all times, please avoid the use of the “All Caps” function, as messages sent in using all CAPITALS is the e-mail version of screaming, and may be taken as offensive.
- Keep messages short, simple, clear and concise. Emails should be sent only to those that require the information and you should refrain from sending unnecessary emails or mass emails.
- Remember that when you send an email, it creates a permanent electronic record. Whatever is written in your email, including content and form will be on the record for all time. Ensure that all messages sent are appropriate, and accurate in their content.
- While it's common to use short-hand for personal notes, it is unacceptable for business communication. Standard abbreviations (including: e.g., Mrs., Mr., etc.) will continue to be acceptable, however, the use of popular abbreviations and emoticons (LOL, ROFL, TTYL, BRB, smiley faces, etc.) is unacceptable.
- Ensure that all messages are sent only to the intended recipients. Avoid sending messages to parties that are not directly affected by the contents of the message.
- Ensure that all messages include a completed, appropriate and accurate “Subject” line. Ensure that the subject line is relevant to the topic, clearly stating the purpose of the email.
- Avoid sending confidential information via email and ensure that all emails are appropriately encrypted.
- Avoid using e-mail to send large attachments and only open attachments from known senders.
- Check your email frequently. In the event that any emails are missed, there is the potential for lost business, miscommunications, or failure to complete required job duties.

- Archive all messages that are older than 3 months. All County mailboxes have a space of 2GB. If employee mailboxes become full, it is the responsibility of the employee reducing the space used.

2.6 Social Networking Sites and Blogs

The use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, My Space, Friendster, etc. and personal Blogs / Twitter has been deemed UNACCEPTABLE during work time. The uses of these sites are only permissible during scheduled BREAKS. The use of social networking sites and blogs are subject to the same limitations and acceptable use regulations provided for under this SOP. The abuse of personal internet use on these sites using either County owned and operated equipment or personal internet access devices during normal working hours will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The County reserves the right to deny access or usage of any of these social networking sites if it is deemed that employees are not abiding by this SOP.

3.0 Business Information

Lac La Biche County retains ownership rights to all information created for our business purposes, regardless of the media used to create it, or the location of said information. Similarly, the organization retains ownership rights to all forms of intellectual property created by employees while under the employ of Lac La Biche County, regardless of the time, intent or location of its creation.

Employees shall not divulge, disclose, provide or disseminate business information to any third party not employed by Lac La Biche County at any time, unless prior authorization is obtained. Furthermore, business information shall not be used for any purpose other than its reasonable use in the normal performance of employment duties for Lac La Biche County.

4.0 Lac La Biche County-Owned and Operated Property

All Lac La Biche County business is intended to be performed using County owned and operated property, including computers, telephones, BlackBerry devices, letterhead, notebooks, etc.

All information contained in, created or transmitted by County owned or County operated property is the property of Lac La Biche County and not the property of the user of the County owned or County operated property.

5.0 Employee-Owned Property

Employees are prohibited from using personally owned equipment or property for the creation, transmission or storage of Lac La Biche County business information, unless authorized to do so.

In the event that an employee creates, stores or transmits Lac La Biche County business information on personally owned property (including, but not limited to: laptop computers, desktop computers, mobile telephones, BlackBerry devices, memory cards, notebooks, PDAs, or

loose leaf paper, etc.), the business information will remain the express property of Lac La Biche County.

Lac La Biche County reserves the right to inspect and/or audit the property of employees on County premises, where it is either known that the employee uses personally owned property for the purposes of conducting Lac La Biche County business, or where it is reasonably suspected that such properties contain business information. These inspections / audits may be conducted at any time, with or without notice.

6.0 Retirement, Layoff or Termination

Upon retirement, layoff or termination of employment, employees shall promptly return (without duplicating or summarizing), any and all material in their possession pertaining to Lac La Biche County's business including, but not limited to: all customer lists, physical property, documents, keys, electronic information storage media, manuals, letters, notes and reports.

In the event that an employee terminates his/her employment with Lac La Biche County for any reason, Human Resources shall provide notification to the IT department immediately to ensure the removal of the former employee's access to Lac La Biche County email and Internet resources. This is an important measure in protecting the safety and integrity of our resources.

In the event that a device containing business information is password protected, the employee will be required to provide the correct username and password for the device.

7.0 Compliance

Employees will be expected to sign an Internet & Email Use Agreement as part of their employment orientation process.

Any violation of this SOP and any and all misconduct will be addressed according to established procedures. Violations of this SOP may result in one or more of the following:

- Temporary or permanent revoking of access to the County's Internet resources and/or other IT resources;
- Temporary or permanent revoking of County devices;
- Disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination of employment;
- Legal action according to Federal or Provincial laws.

8.0 Disclaimer

Lac La Biche County does not accept responsibility for any loss or damage suffered by employees as a result of employees using the County's Internet connection for personal use. Lac La Biche County is not responsible for the accuracy of information found on the Internet. Users are responsible for any material that they access, download, or share through the Internet.

9.0 Security

Users are required to take all necessary precautions to prevent unauthorized access to Internet services. Furthermore, all Internet users must comply with the following security guidelines, rules, and regulations:

- Personal files or data downloaded from the Internet may not be stored on the County's PC hard drives or network file servers.
- Video and sound files must not be downloaded from the Internet unless their use has been authorized for the purposes of conducting appropriate business on behalf of the County.
- Users must refrain from any online practices or procedures that would expose the network or resources to virus attacks, spyware, adware, malware, or hackers.
- Users are responsible for familiarizing themselves with procedures for downloading and protecting information in a secure manner, as well as for identifying and avoiding any online material deemed sensitive, private, and copyrighted.
- Employees utilizing the Internet must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, especially while participating in collaborative activities, and must not disclose confidential County information or intellectual capital to unauthorized third parties.

10.0 Client, Visitor and Employee Privacy

The following measures have been adopted to ensure the ongoing privacy of our clients, visitors and employees:

- Employees are strictly prohibited from posting sensitive, derogatory, malicious, inflammatory or personal information regarding our clients, visitors and employees on the County Intranet, social networking sites and/or the Internet in general on County or personal time.
- Employees are strictly prohibited from taking photographs of clients, visitors or employees on County premises for either personal or professional reasons, unless they have received prior authorization to do so. This authorization must be in writing.
- Employees are strictly prohibited from posting photographs of other employees, clients or visitors on the Internet, unless authorized to do so. This authorization must be in writing.

“Original Signed”
Chief Administrative Officer

November 8, 2013
Date