



# TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH

## PERSONNEL POLICY

POLICY 210

LAST REVISED 8/1/08

### **SUBJECT: INTERNET POLICY**

**PURPOSE:** To establish an Internet Policy consistent with the Town's Electronic Communications Usage Policy, accepted business practices and the California Public Records Act; and to protect the computer system's security and the Town's property rights.

### **STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

All Internet connections to web sites are Town of Hillsborough records and are the property of the Town. The Town reserves the right to access and disclose all messages received over the system(s) for any purpose. Internet access is not confidential, therefore employees shall have no expectation of privacy in anything that is reviewed, viewed or downloaded from the Town's network.

### *Provisions*

1. All connections over the Town's Internet connection are Town business activities and the viewing, reviewing, printing or saving of information received from the Internet should follow all Town business administration rules or practices.
2. Employees are permitted to use the Internet during their rest breaks and meal periods, consistent with the provisions below, for occasional and incidental non-business purposes. Non-business uses should not involve significant use of the Town's electronic resources, such as others' work time, computer time, or bandwidth. Non-business use is subject to the following:
  - a. All non-business communications are subject to this policy in its entirety and to all other Town policies. All non-business communications may be monitored at any time in accordance with this policy.
  - b. You should not use the Town's Internet for communications that you wish to keep private, such as communications with a physician or your personal attorney.
  - c. Non-business uses should be made during rest breaks or lunch periods. Consistent with the Town's policies regarding rest breaks and meal periods, employees are authorized to not be interrupted during such breaks. If an employee decides to use the Internet for during his/her rest break and/or meal period, the employee is not to perform any work during

- this period, including responding to work related e-mails, telephone calls, etc.
- d. Non-business uses do not preempt any business activity and must not interfere with the user's or others' productivity.
  - e. Employees' access to personal e-mail accounts is subject to all of the requirements contained in this policy.
3. Periodically, Town management will review Internet connections made by employees to ensure this policy is followed.
  4. All users must utilize a password-protected connection, provide the appropriate designated supervisor with any personal passwords and notify the Administrator of any changes when made.
  5. The Town has access to internet connection database systems and may exercise that access at any time, for any reason, including:
    - a. Investigation of actual or suspected impropriety or violation of Town policy
    - b. Legal requirements
    - c. Investigation of actual or suspected criminal activities
    - d. Breach of security
    - e. To review individuals use of the internet or
    - f. Performance of routine maintenance
  6. For purposes of inspecting, investigating, or searching employee's files or documents, the Town may override any applicable passwords, codes, or locks in accordance with the best interests of the Town, its employees, or its clients or visitors.
  7. The Town may review and disclose the contents of Internet connections without employee permission or knowledge.
  8. The Town has unlimited access to protect its system security or the Town's property rights. To that end, the Town reserves the right, at all times and without prior notice, to inspect and search its computers, networks, and systems, for the purpose of determining whether this policy or any other policy of the Town has been violated, or when an inspection and investigation is necessary for purposes of promoting safety in the workplace or compliance with state and federal laws. These inspections may be conducted during or after business hours and in the presence or absence of the employee.

Employees are required to follow this Internet connection policy. Further restriction of use shall be in accordance with departmental policy.

### *Confidentiality*

Employees should understand that confidentiality is not provided within the Internet system and all information distributed or received are the property of the Town.

It is a violation of this policy for any employee, including system administrators, supervisors or programmers to use the computer systems for purposes of satisfying idle curiosity about the affairs of others, with no substantial business purpose for obtaining access to the files or communications of others.

### *Etiquette*

Employees should use common sense and manners when using the Internet. Periodically, due to the nature of the web and its interconnection (links) to other sites, employees may be placed in a position of violation of this policy. It is your responsibility to not linger and move to an appropriate site.

### *Training*

Training on Internet use may be provided through scheduled workshops, as access to the network becomes available. Employees may arrange for training on an as-needed basis. It is the responsibility of the employee to be properly trained on the use of the Internet system.

### *Typical Use*

1. Appropriate uses of the Internet services would be for day-to-day activity researching information for a department/division or using web sites to purchase goods and services from Town vendors.
2. Inappropriate uses are websites deemed offensive, subversive, immoral, and pornographic and that in general are in bad taste. A general guideline for use would be to consider if a supervisor or department manager would approve of an employee's actions.
3. The Town cannot assist employees with any private profit making activity utilizing a website. Therefore, private, for sale and want ads will not be allowed.
4. Correspondence to or with a website of a political nature is prohibited. (See Town political activity policy for additional information.)
5. Correspondence to or with a website of a religious nature or the promoting or opposing of religious beliefs is prohibited.
6. Users should also be aware that any connection over the Internet is never really erased.

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