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SUBJECT: INTERNET USAGE
POLICY NUMBER: 18-01
EFFECTIVE DATE: TBD

1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline appropriate use of the internet resources available to Gadsden County staff and the public. Access to the internet through the County's network is a privilege and carries responsibilities reflecting responsible and ethical use. The County supports internet use that enables County workforce members to perform their job faster and smarter, and encourages its end users to develop Internet skills and knowledge.

The County also provides Public WiFi access, to enable better public access to government services and information.

The facilities that provide internet access represent a considerable commitment of resources for data networking, digital virus protection, internet fire-walling and internet bandwidth. This Internet Usage Policy is designed to help County staff understand the limitations for use of those resources. Inappropriate use exposes the County to risks, including: virus attacks, internet bandwidth saturation, negative publicity, and potential legal liabilities.

This policy is intended to comply with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

2. Policy Scope

As custodians of resources entrusted to us by the public, we should always be mindful of how we utilize these resources. We should also be mindful of our responsibility to act so that others are not deprived of access to useful resources as they perform their duties. This policy applies to all County staff, including all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy applies to all equipment that is owned or leased by the County and all connections to the County network.

3. Policy Description

The County has implemented the necessary network infrastructure to provide Internet access across the County's Wide Area Network. The County has other policies that address technology-specific areas including policies on information security, e-mail and portable computing. Departments may have internal policies that also address these issues. These policies are cumulative and in the event of conflict, the policies providing the County with the greatest level of security apply.

The County recognizes that use of the County's internet access resources for personal use may be necessary, just as personal telephone calls from the office may be necessary, and may be more efficient than leaving the office to conduct personal business. Personal use of the County's Internet access resources is permitted subject to this policy. Users should not expect that transmissions made through the County network are confidential.

The use of the County's Internet resources and services for non-work purposes is permitted only in compliance with the following criteria:

- The cost (in time spent using the Internet for non-work activities) to the County must be negligible.
- The use must not hinder productivity or interfere with a County staff member's obligation to carry out their duties in a timely and effective manner.
- Time spent engaged in the non-work use of County internet resources is not considered to be County work time and should be consistent with work breaks.
- The use must in no way undermine the use of County resources and services for official purposes.
- The use neither expresses nor implies sponsorship or endorsement by the County. Any posting to public forums such as newsgroups, or any transmittal of electronic mail through the internet for personal use must include a disclaimer that the views are those of the County staff member and not Offices of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners. Forums should be used with care and not cause any adverse publicity or embarrassment to the County.
- The use must be consistent with local, state and federal laws regarding obscenity, libel, fraud, piracy (software, film or music) or the like, and state and federal laws and County policies regarding political activity, the marketing of products or services, or other inappropriate activities.

Examples of Acceptable Use of the County's Resources:

The list below is not exhaustive, but is an attempt to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of acceptable use.

- Obtaining information regarding County business (i.e. policy, legislation, public meetings, technical research, etc.).
- Transmitting or receiving a file or document (in conjunction with email) that does not fall into the category of unacceptable use.
- Providing information regarding County business to the public (i.e. meeting agendas, key points of contact, etc.).
- Delivery of County services.
- Incidental use of the internet (i.e. less than 10 minutes at a time, for the purpose of checking bank balances, map sites for directions, personal research, etc.).

Examples of Unacceptable Use of the County's Resources:

Illegal activities under local, state, federal, or international laws are strictly prohibited. In applying these guidelines, each case will depend upon the particular circumstances and other important factors such as materiality or reasonableness. The ultimate control, therefore, lies with each County staff's supervisor, as that person should have direct knowledge of the behaviors and needs of the individual County staff member.

County workforce members should consult with their supervisors in advance if they have any questions about appropriateness of certain practices. A supervisor's decision cannot, however, circumvent other policies and procedures of the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners that may restrict personal use beyond the limitations cited in these guidelines.

The list below is not exhaustive but attempt to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of unacceptable use.

- Accessing any kind of website to view images or documents that are in violation of our Equal Employment Opportunity policy on discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. In addition, such material, including sexually explicit images and documents may not be viewed, archived, stored, distributed, edited or recorded using our network or computing resources.
- Downloading software from the Internet without prior written approval of the IT Department.
- Introducing malicious software onto the County network and/or jeopardizing the security of the County's electronic communications systems.
- Downloading of any executable files or programs which change the configuration of your system by anyone other than Information Systems personnel is prohibited.

- Installing or running any programs or services that provide ongoing communications with the internet which have not been approved by the IT Department, including but not limited to non-County instant messengers, screen savers, peer-to-peer communications (e.g., FaceTime, Skype, Social Media Messaging, etc.), or other on-line services to access the internet on County computers which do not fulfill legitimate job functions.
- Accessing any online gambling websites (e.g., casino.com, gambling via social media sites, etc.)
- Accessing any non-work related, time-consuming internet sites, including but not limited to on-line gaming or on-line auctions (e.g., gamezilla.com, mpog.com, eBay, gaming via social media sites, etc.)
- Accessing any streaming media sites which do not fulfill legitimate job functions (e.g., viewing episodes of network television shows, movies, etc.)
- Accessing chat groups, sites designed to discriminate/spread hate, online dating, or any Conduct Unbecoming of a County employee, as outlined in the HR policy.
- Usage resulting in personal gain, (e.g., outside business activities, operating a personal business, items for sale, etc.).
- Conducting any non-County business activity for longer than 10 minutes during a work day.

4. Management and Administration

The County has software and systems in place that can monitor and record all internet usage. All sites and downloads are monitored and may be blocked if they are deemed to be harmful to the County network. County staff members shall have no right or expectation of privacy in any internet activity using County equipment or networks.

Supervisors and Managers shall have the right to review any internet activity of any County workforce supervised by them at any time and for any reason. If the activity to be reviewed goes beyond the department, other Department systems and records may be searched with the approval of the Director, Assistant County Administrator or County Administrator.

The County may monitor and report on internet use by County staff members. Managers may restrict internet use by anyone supervised by them at any time and for any reason. The County may restrict access to internet sites whose content appears to have no purpose related to the business of the County.

5. Retention of Websites and Social Networking Sites

All posts to websites and social networking sites (e.g, facebook, twitter, youtube, linkedin, etc.) which are related to County business are public records and shall be maintained in accordance with the law and the County's records retention schedule. The County does not have access to personal websites and social networking sites and accounts, so all posts on personal websites and social networking sites which are related to County business must be retained by County employees and officers in

accordance with law and the County's records retention schedule and provided to the County.

6. Enforcement and Application

Violators of this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including employment termination, termination of agreements, denial of service, and/or legal penalties, both criminal and civil.

This policy applies to all County employees as well as temporary workers, contractors, consultants, vendors, volunteers, business affiliates or other persons who conduct county business or who may, during their association with the County, utilize County internet services on behalf of the County or operate computer equipment that remotely accesses the County's internal network.

7. Revision History

This policy was adopted on

Effective Date: