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County Clerk, Hunt County, TX  
By [Signature]

**SUBJECT: GENERAL GUIDELINES**

**TITLE: COMPUTER POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the acceptable use of computer equipment at all Hunt County facilities. The rules described in this policy are in place to protect Hunt County. Inappropriate use exposes Hunt County to unnecessary risks, which include but are not limited to virus attacks, compromised network systems and services, and legal issues.

**II. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees, vendors, contractors, consultants, temporary employees, and all other workers at Hunt County. This policy applies to all personnel affiliated with third parties. This policy applies to all equipment owned or leased by Hunt County.

**III. BACKGROUND**

The Information Technology Department's intention for publishing this policy is not to impose restrictions that are contrary to Hunt County's established culture of trust and integrity. The Hunt County Information Technology Department is committed to protecting the county, its employees, and our partners from illegal or damaging actions by individuals, either knowingly or unknowingly.

Effective security is a team effort involving the participation and support of every Hunt County employee and affiliate who deals with information and/or information systems. It is the responsibility of every computer user to know these guidelines and to conduct their activities accordingly.

**IV. POLICY**

**General Policy**

It is the responsibility of the individual employee to read, understand, and abide by this and other policies in regards to the usage of Hunt County Information Technology systems.

While Hunt County Information Technology Department desires to provide a reasonable level of privacy, users should be aware that the data they create on Hunt County systems remains the property of Hunt County. Because of the need to manage and protect the county's systems and network, Information Technology cannot guarantee the confidentiality of the information stored on any network device belonging to the county. Additionally, all county data may be subject to open records request including personal data that is stored on county systems.

For security and network maintenance purposes, authorized individuals within Hunt County may monitor equipment, systems and network traffic at any time.

The use of Hunt County automation systems including computers, fax machines, servers, databases and all forms of Internet/intranet access is strictly for authorized county business and purposes only.

The same standards of decorum, respect, and professionalism that guide us in the office environment apply to electronic communications with third parties. Important, confidential, and proprietary information is stored on county computer systems, thus only Hunt County personnel are allowed access to the county's computer systems.

All computer information is considered confidential unless otherwise specified. Accessing or attempting to access confidential data is strictly prohibited unless you have been specifically granted access to view it. Confidential information shall only be used for its intended purpose.

All information on user computers, network shares, databases, and other storage locations is considered Hunt County property. Deleting, altering, or sharing any confidential or proprietary information upon termination is a violation of state law and will be investigated and prosecuted.

Users of the email system are personally responsible, with guidance and training from your supervisor and Information Technology staff, to manage email messages as well as other electronic documents according to the county's retention policy and schedule. It is the responsibility of the email message sender, within the county's email system and recipients of messages from outside the county, to retain the messages for the approved retention period. Names of the sender, recipient, date/time of the message, as well as any attachments must be retained with the message.

Use of county computers, networks, and Internet access is a privilege and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct carried out on such systems, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Leaving passwords visible to anyone other than yourself or deliberately sharing your passwords, whether on paper, computer, or mobile device.
2. Sending chain letters or participating in any way in the creation or transmission of unsolicited commercial email ("spam") that is unrelated to legitimate county purposes.
3. Engaging in private or personal business activities, including excessive personal use of Hunt County email.
4. Using someone else's credentials to access CJI data, networks, servers, drives, folders, or files to which the employee has not been granted access or authorization.
5. Making unauthorized copies of county data.

6. Destroying, deleting, erasing, concealing county data, or otherwise making files or data unavailable/inaccessible to the county or to other authorized users of county systems.
7. Violating the laws and regulations of the United States or any other nation or any state, city, province, or other local jurisdiction in any way.
8. Engaging in unlawful or malicious activities.
9. Deliberately propagating any virus, worm, Trojan horse, trap-door program code, or other code/file designed to disrupt, disable, impair, or otherwise harm Hunt County's network or computer systems.
10. Using abusive, profane, threatening, racist, sexist, or otherwise objectionable language in either public or private messages.
11. Sending, receiving, or accessing pornographic materials.
12. Causing congestion, disruption, disablement, alteration, or impairment of Hunt County networks or systems.
13. Failing to log off any computer or any other form of electronic data system to which you are assigned, if you leave such computer or system unattended.
14. Defeating or attempting to defeat security restrictions on Hunt County systems and applications.
15. Installing third party software, regardless if it is vendor supplied or personal, on Hunt County systems without authorization from the Information Technology Department.
16. Removing any Hunt County computer systems off county premises, unless authorized by the Hunt County Information Technology Director and the proper paperwork is completed, *with the exception of mobile systems that are issued to employees to utilize outside the normal operating hours.*

### **Internet and Intranet**

The internet is to be used to further Hunt County's mission, to provide effective service of the highest quality to the county's citizens and staff, and to support other direct job-related purposes. Supervisors should work with employees to determine the appropriateness of using the internet for professional activities and career development. The various modes of internet/intranet access are county resources, and are provided as business tools to employees who may use them for research, professional development, and work-related communications. Limited personal use of Internet resources is a special exception to the general prohibition against the personal use of computer equipment and software.

Hunt County systems are allowed to access the Internet only through county approved and secured Internet accounts. Employees are strictly accountable for the content of their internet usage history and messages. Individuals shall in no way attempt to circumvent filters and other security measures restricting access to files, data, or networks.

Brief and occasional personal use of the electronic mail system or the Internet is acceptable as long as it is not excessive or inappropriate, occurs during personal time (lunch or other breaks), and does not result in expense or harm to the county or otherwise violate this policy.

Use is defined as "excessive" if it interferes with normal job functions, responsiveness, or the ability to perform daily job activities. Electronic communication should not be used to solicit or sell products or services that are unrelated to the county business; distract, intimidate, or harass coworkers or third parties; or disrupt the workplace.

All information created via email, network, or other means of official communication is the property of Hunt County. ***Employees ~~should do~~ not have any expectation of privacy regarding such information.*** This includes all email messages and electronic files. Hunt County reserves the right to at any time and without notice access, read, monitor and copy all messages and files on county computer system, as it deems necessary. When it believes necessary, Hunt County may disclose text or images to law enforcement or other third parties without the employee's consent.

To minimize vulnerabilities on Hunt County computer systems, all downloaded files will be scanned with virus detection software before viewed or opened.

Employees may not use Hunt County systems or network for any of the following reasons:

1. Downloading of any software without the prior approval of Hunt County's Information Technology Department.
2. Dissemination or printing of copyrighted materials, including articles and software, in violation of copyright laws.
3. Operating a business, usurping business opportunities, soliciting money for personal gain, or searching for jobs ~~outside~~ (excluding searching for other jobs within Hunt County offices or departments, which is permitted).
4. Offensive, harassing statements or language including disparagement of others based on their race, color, religion, national origin, veteran status, ancestry, disability, age, sex, or sexual orientation.
5. Sending or soliciting sexually oriented messages or images.
6. Visiting sites featuring pornography, terrorism, espionage, theft or drugs. ***Exceptions for criminal investigation purposes only.***
7. Gambling or engaging in any other activity in violation of local, state or federal law.
8. Unethical activities or content, or activities or content that could damage Hunt County's professional reputation.
9. ***Exceptions to the above conditions will apply to the departments that require full access to the Internet for job related reasons. A request to gain access to other Internet sites must be provided from the department head or elected official.***

The Hunt County website is a useful tool that provides a means for departments to communicate and provide services to the citizens of our county. Departments have the opportunity to establish and maintain a department webpage within the county web site. Departments are responsible for ensuring that the content will be reviewed, approved and published to the production web site by the Information Technology Department.

## Network and Systems Authentication

In order to maintain the security of Hunt County's network infrastructure, the Information Technology Department provides every employee with a unique user name and password for email, domain computers, courts and justice software, and various other network and software applications.

Each computer user is granted distinct permissions based on the requirements of their specific position in Hunt County. If a user cannot access specific data on a computer, server, or courts and justice software, that user's supervisor must request access on their behalf via the correct form provided by the Information Technology Department.

A Hunt County computer user's password must meet a minimum password requirement as detailed in the **U.S. Department of Justice Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy (Version 5.8 CJISD-ITS-DOC-08140-5.8)**. They must also meet the Microsoft Windows 10 domain password complexity requirements.

Minimum password complexity requirements:

1. Not contain the user's account name or parts of the user's full name that exceed two consecutive characters.
2. Be at least eight characters in length.
3. Contain characters from three of the following four categories:
  - a. English uppercase characters (A through Z)
  - b. English lowercase characters (a through z)
  - c. Base 10 digits (0 through 9)
  - d. Non-alphabetic characters (for example, !, \$, #, %)

## Security Awareness Training

Hunt County requires all new employees to complete the provided cyber security course within 24 hours of gaining access to the Hunt County computer network system, *exceptions for employees that will never use a computer in the course of their employment*. Individuals that will access Hunt County's courts and justice software may be subject to completing CJIS Security Awareness Training as detailed in the **U.S. Department of Justice Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy (Version 5.9 CJISD-ITS-DOC-08140-5.9)**. Access may be revoked for failure to complete the required training.

## Personal Electronic Equipment

Hunt County prohibits the use ~~or possession in the workplace~~ of any type of camera phone, cell phone camera, digital camera, video camera, or other form of image- or voice-recording device without the management permission to record, photograph or download

~~any file, software, confidential information, or County-owned information. and of each person whose image and/or voice is recorded. Employees with such devices should avoid possessing them in the workplace unless expressly permitted by their management to do otherwise.~~ This provision does not apply to designated county personnel who must use such devices in executing their duties of their positions.

Employees should not bring personal computers or data storage devices (such as floppy disks, CDs/DVDs, external hard drives, flash drives, iPads, or other data storage media) to the workplace or connect them to county electronic systems unless expressly permitted to do so by management. Any employee bringing a personal computing device, data storage device, or image-recording device onto county premises thereby gives permission to the county to inspect the personal device at any time with personnel of the county's choosing, and to analyze any files, other data, or data storage devices or media that may be within or connectable to the personal device in question. Employees who do not wish such inspections to be done on their personal computers, data storage devices, or imaging devices should not bring such items into workplace.

## **Licenses**

Hunt County does not condone the illegal duplication of software or other copyrighted material.

Hunt County purchases or licenses the use of computer software from a variety of outside companies. Hunt County does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation, and unless authorized by the software developer, does not have the right to reproduce it for use on more than one computer. With regard to the use on local area networks or on multiple machines, employees shall use software only in accordance with the license agreement.

Hunt County software licenses shall not be used for personal use on non-county computer equipment.

Software licenses purchased or received by employees for personal use is prohibited on Hunt County equipment.

Hunt County Information Technology Department is authorized to conduct random software license audits of its network and systems. Information Technology personnel shall install and/or relocate all computer equipment and software unless the employee is specifically authorized.

According to the U.S. Copyright Law, persons responsible for illegal reproduction of software can be subject to civil damages up to \$100,000 per work copied and criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment. County employees who make, acquire, or use unauthorized copies of software will be subject to the above law.

## **User Responsibilities**

Computer users are responsible for the appropriate use of Hunt County computers and for taking reasonable precautions to secure the information and equipment entrusted to them. Employees are responsible for reporting inappropriate use of Hunt County computers and breaches of computer security and assisting in resolving such matters.

Any employee who learns of a violation of this policy should notify the appropriate Hunt County elected official, department head, or the Information Technology Department.

Again, it is the responsibility of the individual employee to read, understand, and abide by this and other policies in regards to the usage of Hunt County Information Technology systems.

## **History**

Created 07/07/2020