



HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

DATE: 02/20/2018

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The County policies and procedures for acceptable use of electronic communications systems are intended for proper use by employees, independent contractors, agents and other computer users authorized by the County. The policies and procedures guidelines are to ensure systems reliability for users and to prevent misuse. They are also intended to minimize the burden of administering the systems, so that more time is spent enhancing services.

I. POLICY

Hidalgo County's Information Resources (IR) that encompass computer equipment, phone, network infrastructure, data, mobile access, mobile devices, wireless connectivity, copier multifunctional devices and related peripheral devices and any other technological equipment provided by the County to support the services provided to Hidalgo County constituents. The use of Hidalgo County's IR is not a right and any violation to of Acceptable Use may be cause for disciplinary action or termination. All activity of the Hidalgo County IR is subject to monitoring at all times, notice or warning will not be provided. This policy must be signed by all users and placed in their personnel file.

II. PROCEDURE

A. ACCEPTABLE USE

1. Achieving productivity through IR to meet your duties and responsibilities at Hidalgo County.
2. Communication with professional associations, governments, universities, business and/or individuals associated with the facilitation of County business, research and education efforts as authorized by the Department Head/ Elected Official.
3. Distribution of information to the general public whereby such information is made available under the county guidelines and policies for the release of information and the Freedom of Information Act.
4. IR use is for Hidalgo County business purposes; other than for occasional "de minimis personal use" – (i.e., use that has insufficient significance to warrant administrative action) – that does not interfere with job performance or task would not ordinarily be considered a violation. [Example: making an occasional telephone call of short duration to let another person know when you will be home.]
5. Incidental communication among Hidalgo County authorized users and professional colleagues which facilitates work assignments and professional development or debate in a work related field of knowledge.
6. Reporting all suspicious activity of IR use and/or suspicious email immediately to immediate supervisor and Information Technology Department at helpdesk@co.hidalgo.tx.us.
7. Only the following Internet protocols are permitted:
 - http (World Wide Web)
 - https (Secured World Wide Web)
 - ftp (File Transfer Protocol)



Additional protocols will be permitted if approved by the department head or elected official and the Chief Information Officer.

B. UNACCEPTABLE USE

1. Personal and/or entertainment use by any user or any organizations as set forth in agreements and contracts with Hidalgo County.
2. Gain unlawful access to password, information, computer and/or any county resources.
3. Intentional introduction of, or experimentation with, malicious code such as computer worms or viruses.
4. Illegal, fraudulent or malicious activity; political activity; religious promotion; or activity on behalf of organizations or individuals having no affiliation with Hidalgo County.
5. Transmission, copying of material, including music, movies and software, in violation of applicable copyright laws or patents.
6. Intentional sending of messages that are likely to result in the loss of recipient's work or system and any other types of use which could cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others.
7. Generation, storage, transmission or other use of data or other matter which is abusive, profane, or offensive to a reasonable person.
8. Passwords used to gain access to non-County Internet sites must not be the same passwords used on any Hidalgo County computer system.
9. Sharing of names, passwords, files, setting a boot-up password and allowing access to a third party with user credentials.
10. Intentionally erasing work related files upon termination of employment or before retention date expiration.
11. To erase, rename, copy any other user(s)' files, emails, programs, or storage media.
12. Access and/or use IR to for harassment, offensive, obscene or sexually related materials.
13. Installing software, applications, setting up computer equipment, unless written authorization by Chief Information Officer.
14. Signing up to personal accounts using your assigned county email address.

C. VIOLATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

Violations of the Hidalgo County Internet Policy will be reported to the Elected Official/Department Head, Information Technology Department, Commissioners Court, and the Hidalgo County District Attorney as appropriate. Any lawful use of County Internet or use in violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including dismissal. Unlawful use may result in referral for criminal prosecution.

NOTE: All IR activity considered to be public. All users do not have a personal privacy right in matters received by, created in, sent or stored in the Hidalgo County's IR.



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***No policy, including this policy, is able to address every possible misuse of Hidalgo County's IR. Therefore, every user granted permission to use the IR shall be expected to and shall use reasonable and prudent care in such use and shall make reasonable and prudent efforts to ensure that the IR is properly used, using a so-called "Reasonable Person" test – that is, by determining what a reasonable and prudent person would or would not have done under the same or similar circumstances. All users of the Hidalgo County's IR shall be judged in accordance with that test.

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE

EMPLOYEE NUMBER / DATE