

Harnett County Internet Policy

I. Policy

It is the policy of Harnett County that all use of the Internet is for acceptable and legitimate purposes. Any department employee eligible to use the Internet will be given access after agreeing in writing to the terms and conditions of this policy. Violation of the policy may be grounds for revoking access and/or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth certain parameters for employees who have access to the Internet and to place them on notice that misuse carries penalties.

III. Personnel Affected

This policy applies to all Harnett County employees.

IV. Scope

This policy includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. All Electronic Communications
- b. Public Networks

V. Ownership

Harnett County computers and all data stored in them are the property of Harnett County and may be accessed at any time by authorized officials of Harnett County. Harnett County employees cannot expect privacy in the use and storage of data using Harnett County computers or when using any other County provided equipment such as desks and/or storage space(s).

VI. Procedural Guidelines

The following is a guideline for users of Harnett County computers and will be observed while accessing public networks and the Internet using county resources:

- a. Use of county resources for accessing the Internet and other public networks is primarily for work-related purposes.

- b. Employees must act responsibly when participating in discussion groups on a public network.
- c. Employees will not use the public networks or the Internet improperly. You may be monitored and access may be revoked at any time for inappropriate use or conduct.
- d. Determine and abide by the policies and procedures of any external network you access.
- e. Do not download any software or screen savers from the Internet without prior approval from the MIS Department.
- f. Do not use Real Player or other software to listen to the radio over the Internet. This action results in unnecessary network traffic that causes slowness for all users.
- g. Do not use software that attempts to discover properties about the public network or computing resources connected to that network.
- h. The Internet shall be used in a responsible manner and there can be no use of the services in an illegal, malicious or obscene manner.
- i. Employees may not use County email to express his/her political opinions or other controversial issues or act in any way that would tend to reflect negatively on the County or that person.

VII. Responsibilities

- a. The following actions will not be allowed:

Sending or displaying obscene or disruptive messages, files or images; using obscene language; harassing, insulting or attacking others; violating copyright laws or software license restrictions. This means that the downloading of music and other similar materials is prohibited. (This includes single songs, titles, recordings, etc., whether in MP3, RMX, or other file format.) If an employee is in doubt about what is allowed, he/she should contact the MIS department for clarification.
- b. Violations of this policy may result in a loss of access to the Internet as well as appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action.
- c. All employees must read and abide by this policy. Before access is given to use any networking, software, storage, or support systems, employees must sign a copy of the enclosed policy statement. The statement will be

kept in the individual's personnel file located in the Personnel Department.

VIII. MONITORING:

- a. It shall be the responsibility of the Department Head to assure his/her employees are reminded on a timely basis of this policy and the importance of adherence to its provisions. In addition they shall stop any violators from continuing to abuse the privileges of Internet use and stop any known violations.
- b. The MIS Department shall monitor Internet traffic to assist Department Heads in the policing of this policy.
- c. Any significant violations of this policy noted by the MIS department will be reported to the appropriate Department Head for their corrective action and/or discipline up to and including termination.
- d. Department Heads will contact the Personnel Department for guidance on a contemplated disciplinary action.

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE:

All provisions of this policy shall be effective upon the approval of the County Manager.

X. APPROVAL:

This policy was approved on this 17th day of November, 2003.

Neil Emory, County Manager