

# AGO POLICY

## II.08

# INTERNET SERVICES USE

**Contact:** Information Services Division  
Director

**Cross References:** Ch. 40.14 RCW; RCW 42.52.160; *Discrimination Complaint Policy & Procedure; Electronic Mail Use Policy; Records Retention Policy and General Retention Schedule; Sexual Harassment Policy; Software Policy; Use of State Resources Policy*

**Approved:** 12/19/05 (rev. 06/15/06)

### I. POLICY STATEMENT:

**The AGO will maximize internet services to make work more efficient while ensuring appropriate use and security of state resources.**

#### A. Overview:

The Internet is available for use in support of the goals, objectives and operation of the AGO. Its use is subject to the restrictions set out in the *Electronic Mail Use, Software Use* and *Use of State Resources* policies, including applicable ethical standards. It should not reflect poorly on the Office of the Attorney General nor should it interfere with job performance.

The Internet is a state resource, and as such, its use will be governed by existing office policies and applicable state laws and regulations dealing with the appropriate and ethical use of state resources. De minimis use will be governed by the *Use of State Resources Policy*, in addition to this policy.

Unless necessary to conduct official business, the Internet will not be used to transmit information or knowingly connect to sites for an unlawful or prohibited purpose, including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- Discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, sensory, mental, or physical disability, sexual orientation or veteran status;
- Sexual harassment or sites containing sexual content;
- Transmission of obscene materials;
- Infringement on any copyright;
- Expression of any campaign, political or religious beliefs;
- The conduct of a personal, outside business, or other financial benefit or gain;

Agency management has the authority to monitor employee use of the Internet to ensure appropriate use.

Failure to abide by policies established for use of the Internet or participation in any activity deemed inappropriate may result in the loss of access privileges. As with any policy, violation may also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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**B. Privacy:**

The Internet is an unsecured publicly accessible network. Employees and volunteers should have no expectation of privacy in the use of Internet resources. Owners of Internet sites commonly monitor usage activity and those activities may be disclosed to any number of parties.

The AGO reserves the right to monitor Internet usage at such times and in such circumstances as appropriate.

The Internet shall not be used to distribute attorney-client privileged material beyond the intended recipients.

**C. Electronic Mail:**

Employees and volunteers sending e-mail over the Internet shall do so in compliance with the *Electronic Mail Use* policy. There is a risk of interception of Internet e-mail and caution should be used in deciding whether or not to send extremely sensitive information by Internet e-mail.

Employees shall use caution when attachments are included in messages received over the Internet. Any attachments containing executable programs (files with extensions ".EXE", ".COM", or ".BAT") shall not be opened or saved to a hard drive without prior approval from ISD. See the *Software Use Policy*.

**D. Security:**

Employees and volunteers shall not attempt to illegally access other networks or systems through the Internet (hacking) nor shall they visit "hacker" web sites. Employees and volunteers who may inadvertently access a prohibited site or a site operated by those with known malicious intent shall notify the ISD Customer Support Center at 1-800-275-4473 or (360) 586-1200 so subsequent tracking logs and/or preventive measures can be taken.

All employees and volunteers shall ensure that their use of the Internet does not compromise the security and integrity of the state's information infrastructure or information technology, networks and computer equipment, whether by allowing intruders into the networks or by introducing viruses or other threats.

An employee shall not use another employee's network account to gain access to the Internet. An employee shall not permit another employee or person to access the Internet using her or his own network account.

**E. Software:**

Employees and volunteers shall download software only from an Internet site when approved by ISD. While software is available to install from the Internet, it is subject to the *Software Use Policy*. Downloading and installing unauthorized software from the Internet, including "plug-ins," updates to existing software, "shareware," "freeware" or "alpha/beta" versions of programs, is a violation of this policy.

The Information Services Director will maintain and publish a list of "ISD Approved Software." Staff may contact ISD Customer Support for a list of currently approved software.

Employees shall not upload or e-mail files or programs that can cause harm to other networks or systems ("viruses", "bombs", "worms", etc.).

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Employees must observe copyright laws and license agreements.

#### **F. AGO World Wide Web Site:**

Updates to the AGO home page will be coordinated through the AGO Communications Director or the Web Content Editor. Divisions desiring the ability to maintain their portion of the AGO home page will coordinate through the AGO Communications Director per the *Website Policy*.

#### **G. Other Services:**

There are goods and services available for purchase on the Internet. Purchase of such goods or services is subject to the same request and approval procedures as any other purchases of similar goods or services by the office. Staff should contact the Purchasing Office for information.

Requests for paid on-line information services shall be submitted to the AGO library manager for approval and processing.

#### **H. Other Problematic Uses:**

In accordance with WAC 292-110-010, AGO employees and volunteers may make limited personal use of the Internet as long as such use supports organizational effectiveness and does not undermine public trust and confidence. AGO employees and volunteers may make occasional and limited personal use of Internet services. All personal Internet use is subject to the *Electronic Mail Use Policy*, the *Software Use Policy* and the *Use of State Resources Policy*.

The following are examples of permissible and impermissible personal uses of the AGO network and state information infrastructure to access Internet services; this list is by way of example and is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive. An employee or volunteer may visit World Wide Web (WWW) sites but it is impermissible to visit a site that is known to be operated or frequented by those with known malicious intent such as known "hacker web sites" or sites incongruent with policy. An employee may briefly and infrequently view audio/video feeds (streaming media). Prolonged activity consumes computer network resources (bandwidth) and continuous access is costly. Internet radio transmissions present a similar problem.

The following are examples of impermissible uses:

- Use of instant messaging or chat services that require installation of additional software because the software is not approved for use by the AGO. (An example of permissible use would include those sites with "built in" chat services such as the NAAG web site).
- Use of external Internet (WWW) based e-mail systems because doing so bypasses AGO virus detection software, may compromise AGO work product, and violates the AGO *Electronic Mail Use* policy.

## **II. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

*All employees* shall understand and follow the guidelines contained in this policy. If a *supervisor* believes that there is a need to access the employee's Internet access history, he or she shall submit a written request (memo or e-mail) to the Division Chief for approval with copies to the appropriate Deputy Attorney General and the personnel office. The *supervisor* shall notify the employee within 48 hours after access to his or her Internet access history, unless there is a need for security because of a criminal investigation. The *Division Chief* shall provide a copy of the request to the *Information Services Director* who makes arrangements for viewing of the employee's Internet access history by the supervisor and notifies the Chief of Staff.

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The *Library Manager* shall manage and maintain on-line subscriptions made available through the Internet.

*/s/ Rob McKenna*

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