



**DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

Title: Use of Electronic Media	Number: 5.9.1
Contact Person's Title: Human Resources Director	Sponsoring Division: Human Resources Division
Phone Number: (360) 725-7500	References: RCW 42.52 WAC 292-110-010 WAC 458-276 Executive Order 91-10 CBA Non-Discrimination Article CBA Employee Activity & Privacy Article CBA Use of State Facilities, Resources, & Equipment Article Administrative Policy 2.1.2 (Conflict of Interest) Administrative Policy 6.4.1 (Information Technology Security Program)
Effective Date: April 1, 2011	
Approved: Suzan DelBene, Director	
Applies to: Represented and Non-Represented Employees	

Purpose Electronic media is available for conducting official state business.

Occasional, but limited, personal use is allowed under conditions outlined in this policy. Certain uses are prohibited by the State Ethics law and this policy.

Definitions Electronic media includes, but is not limited to:

- Telephones.
- Electronic mail systems (email).
- Internet.

Warning! Use of electronic media systems and equipment are not private. The Department monitors its use (without employee consent) and investigates possible policy violations. The Department may conduct periodic audits of employees' electronic media activity.

Public Disclosure All employee communications and records of telephone, Internet, email, and other electronic mediums created, sent, or received are the property of the Department and are considered a public record.

All communications, including text and graphic images, could be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

The Agency Public Records Officer is responsible for determining whether or not a message is subject to disclosure under the state public records laws.

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Email Security

Messages sent over electronic mail systems are not secured and cannot be protected from unauthorized access caused by user failure to maintain password security or by computing devices logged onto electronic mail systems but left unattended.

Messages sent by employees may be directed to the wrong recipient, printed in a location where individuals other than the intended receiver(s) may read the messages, or possibly intercepted and copied and/or modified in transit.

Internet Site Blocking

Certain Internet sites will be blocked when management determines they are inappropriate. Inappropriate sites include those that present security risks and those that fall within the Prohibited Uses category.

Requests to access a blocked site for business purposes are sent to the Information Services Division Helpdesk for further instructions. Blocked sites will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Prohibited Uses

The following uses of electronic media are prohibited:

1. Purchasing, ordering, or bidding for goods or services.
2. Discriminating on the basis of age, sex, marital status, race, creed, color, national origin, sensory, mental or physical disability or sexual orientation.
3. Viewing, storing, disseminating, or soliciting offensive or harassing materials, statements or images that:
 - o Degrade others based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, and religious or political beliefs.
 - o Incite violence.
 - o Describe or promote the use of weapons or devices associated with terrorist activities.
 - o Are sexually oriented.
4. Failing to honor copyright laws regarding protected commercial software and/or intellectual property.
5. Promoting any illegal or unlawful activity.
6. Promoting activities that are incompatible with a professional workplace, such as, but not limited to, gambling or other inappropriate use.
7. Unauthorized downloading of software including movies, music files, and computer games (please refer to policy 6.4.4, Computer Hardware and Software for additional information).
8. Advocating personal political beliefs including, but not limited to:
 - o Ballot propositions.
 - o Initiative campaigns.
 - o Political candidates.
 - o Other political activities or interests.
9. Conducting an outside business.
10. Supporting, promoting, or soliciting for an outside organization or group unless provided for by law or authorized by the Director.
11. Unauthorized access or use of federal, state, or agency systems. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - o Subscriptions to third party services (Accurint, Westlaw).
 - o Personnel and Payroll systems.

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- o Tandem.
- o Leave system.

Internal Messages

Employees may use electronic media systems to send messages internally that promote organizational effectiveness provided the messages are not prohibited under this policy.

The Department reserves the right to determine if the content of these types of messages supports organizational effectiveness.

Occasional De Minimis Personal Use

Occasional de minimis personal use is allowed only if each of the following conditions are met:

- There is little or no cost to the state.
 - It is infrequent and brief in duration.
 - There is no interference with the performance of the employee's official duties.
 - It does not disrupt or distract from the conduct of official state business due to volume or frequency.
 - It does not compromise the security, availability or integrity of state information, systems, or hardware.
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Examples of Permissible Internet Use

Examples of permissible Internet use are given on the Department's ethics website and Washington State Executive Ethics Board website: <http://www.ethics.wa.gov>, in the FAQ section under *Resources*.

Message Storage System Monitoring

Personal messages must not be stored on electronic mail or voice mail systems and must be deleted after message review. The Department will monitor Internet access and electronic mail for compliance with the Agency policy.

Department management reserves the right to disconnect or restrict user access when necessary to protect the integrity of the network and/or computing environment.

Discipline

Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The Department will advise appropriate legal officials of any violations as necessary.

Administrative Policy History

Revised October 20, 2008
Revised June 15, 1998
Revised May 21, 1997
Created June 1, 1993

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