

MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY #58	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY ACCEPTABLE USE
ADOPTED:	ADOPTED BY:

1. **Overview:**

This policy outlines the acceptable use of County of Mendocino information technology (IT) resources by authorized users and aims to ensure the proper use of IT resources and minimize risks to the County's systems and data.

2. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees, contractors, and authorized users understand their responsibilities when using County IT resources, establish appropriate use standards for IT resources, and to minimize the risks of security incidents, data loss, or other harm to County IT systems and data.

3. **Scope:**

This policy applies to all County Government employees, contractors, and authorized users who access or use County IT resources, including but not limited to computers, mobile devices, network systems, software, social media, and data.

4. **Policy:**

4.1 **Ownership**

- 4.1.1 All County of Mendocino information technology resources, including hardware, software, and data, are the sole property of the County.
- 4.1.2 Authorized users have no expectation of privacy when using County IT resources, and all data and communications transmitted, received, or stored on County resources may be monitored or audited by authorized personnel.
- 4.1.3 Authorized users must return and/or relinquish all County IT resources to the County upon termination of employment or contract.

4.2 **General Use**

- 4.2.1 Authorized users must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies related to information technology.
- 4.2.2 Authorized users are responsible for protecting County IT resources from theft, damage, or unauthorized access.

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4.2.3 Authorized users may access, use, or share County information only to the extent it is authorized and necessary to fulfill assigned job duties.

4.2.4 Authorized users are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use of County IT resources.

4.2.5 Authorized users are responsible for reporting breaches of this policy to IT and their supervisor immediately upon awareness of such breaches.

4.2.6 Department guidelines concerning personal use of County IT resources will serve as supplementary to County guidelines and will not supersede or replace the provisions of this policy or associated guidelines and/or procedures.

4.3 Security

4.3.1 Authorized users are responsible for safeguarding the security of County IT resources by following County password guidelines.

4.3.2 Providing access to passwords or access credentials to another individual, either deliberately or through failure to secure access, is strictly prohibited.

4.3.3 All computers and mobile devices that connect to County network infrastructure or resources are subject to all County policies, guidelines, and procedures.

4.4 Unacceptable Use

The following activities are, in general, prohibited subject to exceptions listed in Section 6. Policy Compliance. They are not exhaustive but attempt to provide a framework for activities which fall into the category of unacceptable use.

4.4.1 Engaging in any activity that violated County, State, or Federal laws or regulations, or any activity that could result in criminal or civil liability for the County.

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- 4.4.2 Attempting to gain unauthorized access to County IT resources or systems or attempting to exploit any security vulnerabilities or weaknesses.
- 4.4.3 Engaging in any activity that disrupts or interferes with County IT resources or related work of others.
- 4.4.4 Accessing, downloading, or transmitting any unauthorized or illegal material, including but not limited to copyrighted material, sexually explicit material, or material that promotes violence, harassment, or discrimination.
- 4.4.5 Installing or use of any software or applications that are not authorized by the County.
- 4.4.6 Engaging in any form of hacking, cracking, or penetration testing of County IT resources or systems by unauthorized personnel.
- 4.4.7 Intentionally introducing malware, viruses, or other harmful software into County IT resources or systems.
- 4.4.8 Providing access to passwords or access credentials to another individual, either deliberately or through failure to secure access.

5. **Policy Maintenance:**

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the County of Mendocino Executive Office – Information Technology Division and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology or regulatory requirements.

6. **Policy Compliance:**

- 6.1 For security and maintenance purposes, authorized individuals may monitor equipment, systems, and network traffic at any time, unless prohibited by State and Federal law.
- 6.2 Exceptions to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the County Executive Office – Information Technology Division Manager or designee, as needed to accommodate legitimate business needs or to comply with regulatory requirements.

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6.2.1 Mendocino County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is authorized to use County Government IT resources as necessary for law enforcement purposes and has sole authority over the monitoring and maintenance of MCSO specific IT resources.

6.2.2 MCSO must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies related to the use of IT resources, including but not limited to Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy.

6.2.3 MCSO may have access to confidential or sensitive information that is protected by state or federal law. MCSO must ensure that this information is accessed, used, and shared in accordance with applicable laws and policies.

6.3 Any authorized user found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract in accordance with applicable MOU provisions and subject to the authority of the Department, Office, or County operation.

7. **Definitions:**

7.1 Authorized User: Any employee, contractor, volunteer, intern, or other individual who has been granted access to County of Mendocino information technology resources.

7.2 Security Incident: Any suspected or actual event that could compromise the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of County information technology resources.

7.3 Application: A program that provides a level of functionality for a specific task. Common examples are spreadsheets (Excel), presentation (Power Point), and word processing (Word) programs.

7.4 IT Resource(s): County-owned, -leased, or -controlled IT equipment, including computers, centralized systems, servers, laptops, wireless devices, local area networks, and wide area network equipment

8. **Revision History**

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Date	Responsible Party	Summary of Change
05-01-2023	EO-IT Division	Initial policy creation