


<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWNSHIP OF VERONA</b> <b>COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</i></p>	Policy Title:	Information System Use
	Policy Reference No:	8-9
	Release Date:	17 February 2023
	Approved By:	Joseph D'Arco Township Manager
	Authority:	§ 36-1 (C)
	Revision History:	1
	No. of Pages:	5
	Applicability:	All Employees

This policy applies to all employees of the Township, both permanent and temporary, and to any non-employee authorized to use Township telephones, computers, printers, software, network connections, or data. Use of the Township's information and communications equipment constitutes consent to all of the terms set forth herein.

*Confidentiality, Privacy, Security and Monitoring*

All computer and phone systems, including email, voicemail and internet connections (herein referred to as "equipment"), are the property of the Township. All documents, information, and data created, stored, and/or copied to the Township's computer and/or phone systems are the property of the Township and may not be copied or in any form transmitted to any third party other than in the ordinary course of business on behalf of the Township.

The Township respects the individual privacy of its employees. However, employee communications transmitted by the Township's equipment are not private to the individual. All communications and stored information transmitted, received, or contained in or through such Township equipment may be monitored by the Township. The Township reserves the absolute right to access, review, audit, and disclose all matters entered into, sent over, and/or placed in storage in the Township's equipment. By using the Township's equipment employees consent to have such use monitored at any time, with or without notice, by Township personnel. The existence of passwords does not restrict or eliminate the Township's ability or right to access electronic communications. However, pursuant to New Jersey law, the Township cannot require the employee to provide the password(s) to his/her personal account(s).

The Township has the right to access, monitor and disclose the contents of any file, email or voice mail message composed, sent, received or viewed on any Township equipment system for any business purpose, including but not limited to breaches of security, violations of Township policy or other computer system, email or voicemail misuse. All communications, including text and images, may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver, if a violation of this policy is suspected. Any information considered sensitive such as human resource, finance, and utility account information shall be secured against unauthorized access through the use of appropriate hardware and software systems. Access shall be restricted to persons designated by the Township Manager.

*Harassment*

The Township's policies against harassment and discrimination apply fully to the use of the equipment. Employees are expressly prohibited from using Township equipment or customer

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information to distribute electronic communications containing offensive, harassing or defamatory language, or any communication containing ethnic slurs, racial epithets or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their sex, sexual or affectional orientation, gender or gender identity or expression, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or political status, atypical hereditary or cellular blood trait, disability or handicap, domestic partnership or civil union status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, childbirth, medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth, genetic information or refusal to submit to a genetic test, or any other class protected by federal, state or local laws or regulations. Employees are further prohibited from using the Township's equipment to display or transmit sexually explicit images, messages or cartoons, or any electronic communication that is political or religious, or any potentially offensive communication. Use of the Township's equipment or customer information for any other illegal purpose not spelled out in the manual is strictly prohibited. Further, discriminatory remarks, harassment, bullying, threats of violence and similar behavior that is not tolerated in the workplace are also not acceptable through computer or phone systems, whether same is performed on the Township's equipment or on the employee's own personal equipment.

*Acceptable Use*

Access to phone and computer systems including but not limited to email, voicemail and the Internet has been provided to Township employees for the benefit of the Township and its residents. Every employee has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the Township's public image and to use the Township's equipment in a productive manner. To ensure that all employees are responsible, productive users and are protecting the Township's public image, the following guidelines have been established for using these systems.

*Telephone Policy*

Township telephones and cell phones are for official business. Personal calls are prohibited on Township equipment. Personal cell phones must be shut off or put on silent during working hours and employees are prohibited from using personal cell phones or other personal devices while working except in emergencies. Any employee seen using a personal cell phone or other personal device while on work time shall be disciplined. Personal cell phones or other personal devices may only be used during break times or lunch, outside of the view of the public. Abuse of any Township phone will be subject to disciplinary action. Charges for all other personal calls must be reimbursed to the Township and employees may be disciplined for violation of this rule. The use of personal cell phones while driving Township vehicles or while on Township business is prohibited.

Employees may not take cell phone pictures of any resident or member of the public while at work or any co-worker while at work. Employees may not access internet sites, including Facebook and other social media, and other sites from their personal phones or other personal devices while on working time.

Violations of this policy shall subject the employee to discipline.

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*Internet and Email Policy*

Township email accounts and internet access, where provided, are to be used for Township business only. No Exceptions to this policy are allowed.

The Township Manager shall monitor email and internet usage and will limit times, circumstances, and web addresses in order to protect the Township and its computer network from any physical risks of infection by malicious software and to regulate content appropriate material as deemed by the Township Manager. Under no circumstances are users allowed to create, configure, or access personal email or password-protected or other internet accounts on Township computers. The internet shall not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. Solicitation of non-Township business or any use of Township email accounts or internet access for personal gain is strictly prohibited. Users are not permitted to download any data, software, or entertainment media unrelated to legitimate Township business. The downloading of business related media shall only be permitted with the knowledge and approval of the appropriate supervisor and the Township Manager. Individual users are responsible for the content of emails and attachments sent or forwarded by them and shall always include the name of the sender, title, and contact telephone numbers. The use of abusive, profane, or offensive language is not permitted.

Notwithstanding the Township’s right to read and retrieve any email messages sent to or transmitted from Township computers, such messages shall be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval from the appropriate supervisor or the Township Manager.

*Social Media Policy*

Use of social media sites on the Township’s internet is prohibited unless used for business reasons within the employee’s job description or with advance supervisor approval of use and content. The Township shall monitor internet use for compliance with this policy.

Under state law, the Township is prohibited from requiring employees to provide login information or allow access to their personal accounts on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. State law also prohibits the Township from retaliating or discriminating against employees for refusing to provide their social media credentials or reporting alleged violations of this law. Notwithstanding these laws, employees are strictly prohibited from using social media sites to discuss confidential Township business or reference their status as a Township employee when making comments.

The Township may access any publicly available information on any social medium; accordingly, the Township may have access to the things employees say on social media sites. The Township may also be provided with access to statements made and pictures shared on social media sites or on the internet in general by other employees and/or by members of the public voluntarily without the employee’s consent or knowledge. Employees should therefore exercise caution and good judgment in posting any material to any social medium sites or on the internet. Employees

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are prohibited from representing themselves as agents of the Township on any personal social media site and may be subject to discipline for information shared on or statements or pictures posted on social media sites or the internet.

The Township may conduct investigations into social media use if it receives specific information about workplace misconduct or the unauthorized transfer of the Township's proprietary or confidential information. Under no circumstances shall any employee post any comments or photographs pertaining to the Township that are not known to the general public, that relate to any resident, resident information or any other confidential MUNICIPAL information on any social medium (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.) Such violations of confidentiality will not be tolerated, and employees violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If the Township is made aware that any employee has posted information on any social medium that would cause an employee to be disciplined if the employee used the same language in the workplace, such employee may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Nothing in these policies is designed to interfere with, restrain, or prevent social media communications by employees engaging in protected concerted activities regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment pursuant to the National Labor Relations Act. All Township employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

#### *Network Policy*

Township computers may only be used by employees specifically granted permission by their supervisor. Non-employees performing work for the Township must do so under the supervision of a supervisor or designee. Each computer user so authorized will be issued a user log on name and password by the Township Manager. The user shall change the password on the first use and continue to change the password periodically. Each user shall log on to the computer he or she is using with the permanent user log on name and current valid password and shall be responsible for all operations on that computer until he or she logs off. Users shall use password protection of files only upon the approval of the appropriate supervisor. Passwords for such files must be given to the supervisor shall keep secure records of these passwords. Users shall not install or cause to be installed, delete or caused to be deleted, any software unless approved by the Township Manager. Users are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, and/or delete information or programs belonging to other users unless given express permission to do so by the owner. Modems shall only be used in applications where they are necessary and their installation and use must be approved by the Township Manager.

#### *Access and Auditing*

Access to Township equipment and data shall be authorized and controlled by the Township Manager.

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The Township Manager is authorized to audit computer, internet and intranet use as needed to ensure adherence to all policies in the handbook, this document, and any and all attachments. If auditing uncovers a violation of established policies, the Township Manager may take appropriate action.

*Compliance with Law*

Use of the Township’s equipment must be in accordance with the law. This equipment shall not be used to send or receive copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or any similar materials without prior authorization. No software licensed to the Township shall be copied, loaned, or otherwise duplicated without the express written permission of the Township. Violations of applicable laws may result in civil or criminal prosecution, and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

*Reporting Incidents and Violations*

Any employee who observes or becomes aware of a violation of any guidelines or policies listed in this document shall report the violation to the appropriate supervisor and/or the Township Manager. Although employees are encouraged to report the violation to their supervisor, the employee may report the violation to a different Supervisor or other individual as needed, including if the employee feels no action is being taken to address the violation. Any violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. If necessary, the Township will advise appropriate legal officials of any violation.

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Revision No.	Revision Date	Nature of Revision	Approved By
1	17-Feb-23	Changed approver from Cavallo to D’Arco	JD