

# ***POLICY AND PROCEDURE***

**POLICY NUMBER: 210-1000-002**

**POLICY TITLE: Internet Policy**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/99 REVISION DATE**

**APPROVED BY:**

**MAYOR CITY MANAGER**

**Confirmed by Council of The Columbus Consolidated Government, Resolution No. 244-99**

**dated the 1st. day of June, 1999.**

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

The Internet provides a source of information that can benefit every professional discipline represented in the Columbus Consolidated Government (CCG). It is the policy of the CCG that employees whose job performance can be enhanced through use of the Internet be provided access and become proficient in its capabilities. This policy document delineates acceptable use of the Internet by CCG employees, volunteers, and contractors while using Government-owned or -leased equipment, facilities, Internet addresses, or domain names registered to the CCG.

## **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to Internet access only. It does not cover the requirements, standards, and procedures for the development and implementation of CCG information sites on the Internet or Intranet.

The following CCG Internet users are covered by this policy:  
1. Full or part-time employees of the CCG or others authorized by the City Manager or his designee.

This policy applies to Internet access when using Government equipment and facilities, and performed using Internet Protocol addresses and domain names registered to the CCG. The Internet is comprised of thousands of interconnected networks which provide digital pathways to millions of information sites. Because these networks subscribe to a common set of standards and protocols, users have worldwide access to Internet hosts and their associated applications and databases. Electronic search and retrieval tools permit users to gather information and data from a multitude of sources and to communicate with other Internet users who have related interests.

Access to the Internet provides government agencies with the opportunity to locate and use current and historical data from multiple sources worldwide in their decision-making processes. Employees and authorized volunteers and contractors of the CCG are encouraged to develop the skills necessary to effectively utilize these tools in the performance of their jobs.

### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

It is the responsibility of the Information Technology (I T) Department to monitor Internet activities via system monitoring software. It is also the responsibility of management and supervisory staff of the CCG to assure compliance with the provisions of this policy within their departments or work areas. It is the responsibility of employees to adhere to all policy requirements regarding the use of the Internet.

### **PROCEDURE:**

The CCG promotes Internet use that enables employees to perform CCG missions and encourages its employees, volunteers, and contractor personnel to develop Internet skills and knowledge. Employees who do not require access to the Internet as part of their official duties, may not access the Internet using CCG facilities under any circumstances. It is expected that employees will use the Internet to improve their job knowledge; to access scientific, technical, and other information on topics which have relevance to the CCG; and to communicate with their peers in other Government agencies, academia, and industry.

Users should be aware that when access is accomplished using Internet addresses and domain names registered to the CCG, they may be perceived by others to represent the CCG and should conduct themselves accordingly. Users are advised not to use the Internet for any purpose which would reflect negatively on the CCG or its employees. CCG computer systems are for Government use and not for personal use. CCG employees are permitted to engage in the following activities.

1. <sup>ab</sup> During working hours, access job-related information, as needed, to meet the requirements of their jobs.
2. <sup>ab</sup> During working hours, participate in news groups, chat sessions, and E-mail discussion groups (list servers), **provided these sessions have a direct relationship to the user's job with the CCG.** If personal opinions are expressed, a disclaimer should be included stating that this is not an official position of the CCG. Such disclaimer should read as follows: "The opinions or comments expressed here are and should be understood to be my own, \_\_\_\_\_, (fill in your name or other identification) and not necessarily those of the CCG, its affiliates, employees, or citizens of Columbus, Georgia."
3. Employees are prohibited from initiating non-work-related Internet sessions using CCG information resources from remote locations. That is, employees shall not dial into CCG resources from home or other non-CCG locations for the purpose of participating in

non job- related Internet activities. It is suggested that employees purchase an individual Internet service account for this purpose.

The following uses of the Internet using CCG equipment or facilities, are not allowed:

1. Access, retrieve, or print text and graphics information which exceeds the bounds of generally accepted standards of good taste and ethics.
2. Engage in any unlawful activities or any other activities which would in any way bring discredit on the CCG.
3. Engage in personal commercial activities on the Internet, including offering services or merchandise for sale or ordering services or merchandise from on-line vendors.
4. Engage in any activity which would compromise the security of any Government host computer. **Host log-in passwords will not be disclosed or shared with other users.**
5. Engage in any fund raising activity, endorse any product or services, or engage in any active political campaign activity.

#### Supervisory Responsibility

Department Directors of CCG employees, volunteers, and contractors will have the final authority in determining whether an employee requires Internet access skills to accomplish their assigned duties. Supervisors have the responsibility for:

1. Acquiring Internet access for their employees who need it to conduct the official business of the CCG.
2. <sup>ab</sup> Review the Internet access policy and witness the signature of the employees acknowledgment of understanding of Internet access policy.
3. Advising their employees regarding the restriction against personal use of CCG Internet access.
4. Assuming the responsibility for making the final determination as to the appropriateness of their employee's use of the Internet, when questions arise. This shall include the acceptability of Internet sites visited.
5. <sup>ab</sup> Notifying the I T Department Director immediately upon the separation of an employee with Internet access.

#### User Responsibilities

In order to avoid capacity problems and to reduce the susceptibility of CCG information technology resources to computer viruses, Internet users will comply with the following guidelines:

1. Personal files obtained via the Internet may not be stored on individual PC hard drives or on local area network (LAN) file servers.
2. Official video and voice files should not be downloaded from the Internet except when they will be used to serve an approved CCG function.
3. Following existing security policies and procedures in their use of Internet services and will refrain from any practices which might jeopardize the CCG's computer systems and data files, including but not limited to virus attacks, when downloading files from the Internet.
4. Learning about Internet etiquette, customs, and courtesies, including those procedures and guidelines to be followed when using remote computer services and transferring files from other computers.
5. Familiarizing themselves with any special requirements for accessing, protecting, and utilizing data, including Privacy Act materials, copyrighted materials, and procurement- sensitive data.
6. Conducting themselves in a way that reflects positively on the CCG, since they are identified as CCG employees and may be perceived to represent the Consolidated Government on the Internet.

Individuals using Government equipment to access the Internet are subject to having activities monitored by system or security personnel. **Use of this system constitutes consent to security monitoring, and employees should remember that Internet activity is not private.**

#### **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions in accordance with CCG Disciplinary Policies, termination of system access privileges and/or criminal prosecution, if appropriate.

**For information regarding this policy document contact the Director of Information Technology at 653-4045.**

#### Internet Acceptable Use Policy – Access Authority Form

1. Do not access pornographic or other sites of questionable taste.
2. Do not access, retrieve, or print text and graphics information which exceeds the bounds of generally accepted standards of good taste and ethics.

3. Do not download video and sound files except for specific work functions because of their impact on network performance.

4. Do not engage in any unlawful activities or any other activities which would in any way bring discredit on the CCG.

5. Do not engage in personal commercial activities on the Internet, including offering services or merchandise for sale or ordering services or merchandise from on-line vendors.

6. Do not engage in any activity which would compromise the security of any Government host computer. Host log-in passwords will not be disclosed or shared with other users.

7 Do not engage in any fund raising activity, endorse any product or services, participate in any political campaigning.

8. Do not use the Internet to conduct any outside business.

9. Do not access sites for gambling or game playing.

Users should be aware that Internet activity may be monitored by system or security personnel. Nothing in this policy, or the attachments should be construed to permit the personal use of the Internet facilities of the CCG.

**It is important to note that disciplinary action can be taken against an employee who misuses government property or official time.**

If you have any questions concerning what can be accessed, please contact your department director or division manager.

If your question refers to computer security, contact: Cheryl Tate/I.T. Department.

*I have read and understand the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. My signature below demonstrates my agreement to comply with the intent of the policy as contained in the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.*

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee or other Printed Name Here