



Internet, Social Media, and Electronic Mail Acceptable Use Policy



Policy A-IC-24

December 12, 2008
Revised September 24, 2014
Revised September 30, 2016

Purpose: To define and outline acceptable use of the Internet, social media, and electronic mail (e-mail).

Policy: The Internet, social media, and e-mail usage is an essential means of communication and will be utilized as necessary. All employees have access to computers and will use them as necessary for business purposes. The following rules and guidelines are in place to protect both the user and the health department. This policy requires all employees to comply with the acceptable use provisions.

Procedure:

I. Definition of Social Media

- A. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board, chat room, or any other form of electronic communication whether or not associated or affiliated with Three Rivers District Health Department (TRDHD).

II. Applicability

- A. This policy is to be adhered to by all health department employees, contractors, consultants, temporaries, volunteers, and other workers within the health department. This policy applies to all resources and information technology equipment owned or leased by the health department regardless of the time of day, location or method of access.

III. Employee/User Responsibilities for Compliance

- A. Read, acknowledge, and sign an agency acceptable use policy statement (A-IC-24 (A)) before using these resources.
- B. Read the Ethics, and Nondiscrimination/Anti-harassment policies to ensure your communication is compliant. Intentional, inappropriate user conduct will not be tolerated and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- C. Use access to the Internet, social media, and e-mail in a responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs, courtesies, and any or all applicable laws or regulations. As with other forms of publications, copyright restrictions/regulations must be observed.
- D. E-mail containing sensitive or confidential information should, at a minimum, contain a confidentiality statement. Employees who choose to use e-mail to transmit sensitive or confidential information should encrypt such communications using the Entrust Encryption and approved product for secure electronic messaging services. Patient information sent using email **must** be encrypted.
- E. Employees shall be aware that their conduct or the information they publish could reflect on the reputation of the health department. Therefore, professionalism in all communications is of the utmost importance. Employees shall represent themselves, the agency, or any other state agency accurately and honestly through electronic information or service content. The employee is solely responsible for what he/she posts online. Employees will not post to social media on behalf of Three Rivers unless specified by their position description.
- F. Failure to comply may result in additional service charges (which the employee may be responsible for) to the agency for Commonwealth Office of Technology's (COT) efforts to remedy inappropriate usage. **The District Director and COT have the right to monitor Internet, social media, and/or e-mail usage at any time without notice to the employee.**

IV. Supervisor Responsibilities

- A. Supervisors are required to identify Internet and e-mail training needs and resources, to encourage use of the Internet, social media, and e-mail to improve job performance, to support staff attendance at training sessions, and to permit use of official time for maintaining skills, as appropriate.
- B. TRDHD prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action.

V. Agency Responsibilities

- A. TRDHD is responsible for assuring that employees and users under its authority have been made aware of the provisions of this policy, that compliance by the employee is expected, and that intentional, inappropriate use of Internet, social media, and e-mail may result in disciplinary action.
- B. Agencies are responsible for the content of their published information and for the actions of their employees, including the proper retention and disposal of e-mail records. Enterprise Standard 4060: Recordkeeping – Electronic Mail (<http://kdla.ky.gov/records/Documents/EmailGuidelines.pdf>) should be observed.

VI. Policy

- A. As provisioned, Internet, social media and e-mail resources, services, and accounts are the property of the health department. These resources are to be used for health department business purposes in serving the interests of local government, citizens, and customers in the course of normal business operations. This policy represents a set of rules and guidelines to be followed when using the Kentucky Information Highway (KIH) or any other network that is used as a result of its KIH connection, including Internet, social media and e-mail.
- B. Health department employees should use the Internet, e-mail, and social media, when appropriate, to accomplish job responsibilities more effectively and to enrich their performance skills. In compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth and this policy, employees of the Commonwealth of Kentucky are encouraged to use the Internet, social media, and e-mail to their fullest potential to:
 - 1. Further the health department's mission
 - 2. Provide service of the highest quality to its citizens
 - 3. Discover new ways to use resources to enhance service, and
 - 4. Promote staff development
- C. The acceptable use of Internet, social media, and e-mail represents the proper management of a local business resource. The ability to connect with a specific Internet site does not in itself imply that an employee is permitted to visit that site. Monitoring tools are in place to supervise employees' use of e-mail and the Internet. Employees shall have no expectation of privacy associated with e-mail transmissions and the information they publish, store or access on the Internet using the health department's resources.
- D. Incidental personal uses of Internet, social media, and e-mail resources are permissible, but not encouraged. Excessive personal use shall lead to loss of the resource privileges and may result in disciplinary action. Employees are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding incidental personal use. Any incidental personal use of Internet, social media, or e-mail resources must adhere to the following limitations:
 - 1. Must not cause additional expense to Three Rivers
 - 2. Must be infrequent and brief
 - 3. Must not have any negative impact on the employee's overall productivity
 - 4. Must not interfere with the normal operation of the employee's agency or work unit
 - 5. Must not compromise Three Rivers in any way
 - 6. Must be ethical and responsible

VII Prohibited and Unacceptable Uses

- A. Use of Internet, social media, and e-mail resources is a privilege that be revoked at any time for unacceptable use or inappropriate conduct. Any abuse of acceptable use may result in revocation of access and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- B. Violations of the rights of any person or company protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, including but not limited

to, the downloading, installation or distribution of pirated software, digital music and video files are prohibited. Using the Internet, social media, and e-mail for personal business activities in a commercial manner such as buying or selling of commodities or services with a profit motive is prohibited. Soliciting money for religious or political causes, advocating religious or political opinions, or endorsing political candidates is prohibited.

C. Using an employer-issued e-mail address to register for personal social media sites is strictly prohibited.

D. Engaging in illegal activities or using the Internet, social media, or e-mail for any illegal purposes, including initiating or receiving communications that violate any state, federal or local laws and regulations, including KRS 434.840-434.860 (Unlawful Access to a Computer) and KRS 512.020 (Criminal Damage to Property Law) is prohibited. This includes malicious use, spreading of viruses, and hacking.

E. Using resources to actively engage in procuring or transmitting material that is in violation of sexual harassment or hostile workplace laws, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages is prohibited. This includes statements, language, images, e-mail signatures or other materials that are reasonably likely to be perceived as offensive or disparaging of others based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, and disability, religious or political beliefs. Using abusive or objectionable language in either public or private messages is prohibited. Knowingly accessing pornographic sites on the Internet and disseminating, soliciting, or storing sexually oriented messages or images is prohibited.

F. Misrepresenting, obscuring, suppressing, forging or replacing a user's identity on the Internet, on social media, or via e-mail is prohibited. This includes the use of false or misleading subject headers and presentation of information in the distribution of e-mail is prohibited. Employees are not permitted to use the e-mail account of another employee without receiving written authorization or delegated permission to do so.

G. Any non-business related activities that will cause congestion, disruption of networks or systems including, but not limited to, Internet games, online gaming, chain letters, jokes, unnecessary List serve subscriptions, investing, stock trading, EBay, and unnecessary-mail attachments are prohibited.

H. Employees shall not use technology to circumvent auditing and monitoring of the state network, including (but not limited to): proxy servers, anonymizers, alternate DNS servers, or unauthorized Virtual Private Networks.

Reference:

KRS 434.840-434.860, Unlawful Access to a Computer
<http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/KRS/434-00/840.PDF>

District Director

Date

Chairperson, Three Rivers District Board of Health

Date



**Internet and Electronic Mail Acceptable Use Policy
Policy A-IC-24 (Form A)**

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand this policy.

I further understand that any abuse of acceptable use may result in revocation of access **and** disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Employee Signature

Supervisor Signature