

Pierce County

Policy on Computer Use and Information Systems

Pierce County provides a variety of information technology resources such as computers, software, printers, scanners, copiers, electronic mail and Internet access for employees in an effort to allow them to be more productive and have the information necessary to do their jobs. These resources and the information they contain are the property of Pierce County and are to be used for business purposes. Communications via these media are not considered private. Any use of the County's equipment is considered consent by the user to have such use monitored by the County at its sole discretion with or without prior notice to the user. The use of private passwords or access codes shall not be considered a user's withdrawal of consent to such monitors.

The guidelines and prohibitions established in this policy are meant to protect Pierce County's computer equipment, software and data from damage caused by the unauthorized use of the computer network by Pierce County employees or unauthorized access by third parties to the network. This policy is also intended to protect Pierce County employees from harm that may result from the improper use of the computer network by other Pierce County employees or unauthorized third parties.

Additional restrictions may be imposed at the departmental level.

1. Security

- A. Passwords must be kept secret. Do not share your password with unauthorized personnel. Passwords should not be written down where someone can easily find them.
- B. If you feel that your password has been compromised, contact the Pierce County Information Services Director immediately.
- C. It is your responsibility to change your password when required by the system. If you are locked out of your account due to difficulties in doing so, contact Information Services to regain access.
- D. You shall not use login IDs and passwords belonging to others to seek information, hide your identity or misrepresent someone else.
- E. To protect the integrity of your County credentials, you shall lock your workstation when it is unattended. This applies to any device on which you access County applications.
- F. Users who access the Pierce County network must be authenticated with Multi-factor Authentication prior to establishing a network connection.
- G. Anyone with a County network account or a County email address will complete an annual online Security Awareness Training every six (6) months. All newly hired

employees must complete the Security Awareness Training within the first 30 days from the hire date. Additional Security Awareness Training may be required at the discretion of the IT Director based on industry standards/best practices.

- H. It is the responsibility of the supervisor of an employee upon termination of employment with Pierce County to notify Information Services to revoke the terminated employee's access to the county network, county systems and e-mail.
- I. Third party vendor access will only be granted through the Information Services department in compliance with Pierce County security policies.
- J. All employees and officers of the County are responsible for ensuring that all reasonable safety precautions are taken, and that any confidential electronic data, (hereinafter `confidential information`), kept on removable storage devices (e.g. USB drives, optical media, laptops, removable hard drives, smartphones, etc.) removed from County property is kept securely, and shall be kept safe from unauthorized access, accidental loss or destruction. All smartphones set up to accept county e-mail, or used to send or receive county confidential information (e.g. text messages) shall be password protected. Additionally, such confidential information shall not be disclosed, accidentally or otherwise, to any unauthorized third party. Care should be taken that only the minimum amount of confidential information is removed from County property as is necessary to perform job functions.

2. Software

- A. All software on Pierce County computers shall be legally licensed, purchased and installed through the Information Services department unless otherwise authorized by the Director of Information Services. Running software that is not licensed is illegal and can subject the user and Pierce County to substantial penalties under the law. Violations of any software or license agreements or information services contracts by the unauthorized duplication of software, files, operating instructions or reference manuals are strictly prohibited. Employees may not run any program without the prior approval of the Information Services department. Installation of demonstration software needs prior approval from Information Services and an agreement for removal of this software will be recorded within the Information Services department.
- B. Pierce County will monitor software use by employees for licensing purposes, to protect against threats and other unauthorized use of Pierce County's servers or workstations by third parties, and to prevent operating system and application instability. Unauthorized software will be deleted upon discovery with or without prior notice to the end user.
- C. Any media (such as tapes, optical media, USB storage media) received from another department or agency shall be scanned before the media is put into use. The media for all software will be retained by Information Services.

3. E-Mail and Internet

- A. The Internet and other electronic communication tools are to be used for business purposes that increase timely and effective business communications of Pierce County. Except as otherwise prohibited by this or another Pierce County policy, limited and reasonable use of these tools for occasional employee personal purpose that does not result in any additional cost from loss of time or diversion of resources from their intended business purpose is permitted. However, no employee shall have the expectation of privacy concerning any information or data on or transmitted through County computer equipment. The use of information technology resources for limited personal use is a **privilege** which may be revoked at any time by Pierce County management if use is deemed inappropriate. You must log out of (not just minimize) any social media or similar web applications that you accessed during a break for personal use. Minimizing allows things to continue running and uses computer resources.

- B. Physical security of messages cannot be guaranteed in most E-mail systems. Confidential information that is required to be sent over the Internet must be done so in secure and encrypted environments. Employees shall not use public WiFi to access or transact sensitive or confidential county business. E-mail messages constitute the property of Pierce County. Access to the Internet is intended for official purposes associated with the performance of governmental or proprietary functions in the name of and on behalf of Pierce County. Correspondingly, all data and information received and/or transmitted shall be and shall remain the property of Pierce County and shall not belong to the individual employee or officer. All e-mails sent and received will be archived for a minimum of seven (7) years.

- C. The use of Pierce County's access to the Internet shall constitute a privilege afforded to the individual officer or employee to the County in question, to facilitate greater efficiency and performance, economies of scale and to promote the timeliness of performance on the County's behalf. As a privilege, access to the Internet may be revoked with respect to any employee or officer who abuses his/her privilege, at any time, without prior notice and without the right to or expectation of any form of pre or post deprivation hearing or other accommodations. The County has the capability, reserves the right, and intends to use the right, to monitor and review use of E-mail, Internet resources, and other information stored on County computing resources, without prior notification, at any time when deemed necessary for County business purposes to ensure that public resources are not being wasted or misused and to ensure that the County's information systems are operating as efficiently as possible. Employees who have been denied access to the Internet through Pierce County shall be expected, notwithstanding the loss of such privilege, to perform their jobs on a timely basis and in an efficient manner. Anyone using Pierce County's access to the Internet by connecting to the Public wireless network will need to accept the Pierce County Public Wireless Terms of Service and Acceptable Use Policy each time they use it and are then bound to it.

- D. Uses of the Internet which are prohibited by Pierce County and which may result in a loss of use privileges or job related discipline or both shall include but are not limited to:
- illegal activities, as defined in accord with State and Federal law or local ordinances;
 - wagering, betting or selling chances;
 - harassment;
 - commercial activities;
 - solicitation, except in relationship to County sanctioned activities;
 - promotion of political or private causes, positions or activities and/or undertaking activities deemed to be unethical;
 - advertising or promotions;
 - political activities as defined in §24-8 of the Pierce County Code;
 - receipt of or transmission of pornographic or other unacceptable materials;
 - allowing an individual access to Pierce County internet services when their privileges have been blocked, suspended or terminated;
 - uses contrary to express instructions of supervisor within Pierce County Hierarchy
- E. Additionally, should an employee or officer of the County engage in a use of the County's access to the Internet in a manner not consistent with this policy, the County reserves the right to contend, should a third party be injured as a result thereof, that the employee or officer in question was acting outside of the scope of his/her official responsibilities and, in the process, refuse to indemnify the employee or officer for damages and/or costs of defense should litigation ensue.
- F. In addition to the above described policy violations, because each Internet user's identification includes the suffix @co.pierce.wi.us, it is imperative that employees and officers not participate in news groups, chat groups or bulletin boards where the content is not clearly and appropriately related to his/her official responsibilities because messages conveyed might be construed as an official County or departmental position.
- G. In their use of E-mail, employees and officers shall use generally accepted standards of business conversation. They shall utilize good judgment in the type of messages created as well as the tone and content of those messages. Content shall always be construed as personal opinion unless it is specifically set forth as County or departmental position.
- H. Incoming E-mail messages containing attachments may imperil the County and its systems by importing viruses, worms, etc. All employees and officers shall routinely scan such attachments for viruses, worms, etc. prior to using or executing the attachments.
- I. It is the responsibility of each department head and/or work supervisor to oversee the use of the Internet by Pierce County employees and to determine if the Internet services are appropriate modes upon which an employee can perform his/her assigned work. Employees should understand that E-mail messages and Internet transactions, including those they delete or erase from their own files, may be

backed up or recorded and stored centrally for system security and investigative purposes. Furthermore, contents of E-mail messages may be subject to subpoenas and other process at all times.

- J. No employee shall use Pierce County's Internet or e-mail facilities to knowingly download and distribute pirated software or data. Unless specifically authorized by Information Services, employees shall not download software residing on the Internet or any other location. Downloading software presents a significant risk of license fee liability and infection from viruses, worms, etc.
- K. Users must understand that it is possible that they may be exposed to unsolicited, obscene or objectionable material while using e-mail or the Internet.
- L. To initiate a new internet or e-mail account the Department Head or someone authorized by them shall request one through the Director of Information Services. Only County authorized e-mail accounts shall be used for county business.
- M. Mass distributed e-mails that are sent to all Pierce County employees need to be approved by the County Board Chair or the Administrative Coordinator.
- N. All County sponsored Social Media Websites shall be reviewed by Corporation Counsel and the Information Services Director prior to their implementation. Refer to the Pierce County Policy for Social Media Websites for the conditions that need to be met to have a county sponsored social media website.

4. Computer Use

- A. Inappropriate use of computer equipment by an employee or Officer of the County which violates Department or Pierce County policy may be investigated and may result in employment related sanctions in accordance with existing policies.
- B. All data, on Pierce County hardware or media, is the property of Pierce County. It is against Pierce County policy for an employee to purposefully delete or modify the work product of another employee without the consent of the employee that created the work product, or that employee's supervisor.
- C. The Information Services department shall be responsible for disaster recovery and backup of all data saved on the Pierce County network, which includes servers, routers, and switches. Computer users are responsible for protecting and backing up data maintained locally at their workstations.
- D. The only instant messaging services allowed and supported for use by Pierce County employees are the UC Client through the NEC phone system and Google Chat.
- E. Pierce County Employees are prohibited from the following:
 - Accessing resources or altering data without explicit management authorization.
 - Intentionally introducing a computer virus, worm, etc.

- Attempting to evade, disable, or bypass any security provisions of systems or the network.
- Obtaining unauthorized access to any computer system.
- Using excessive bandwidth for things such as Internet radio and streaming video except for approved business applications. **No radio stations can be listened to VIA the internet for entertainment.**
- Using instant messaging except through the UC Client through the NEC phone system or Google Chat.
- Intentionally attempting to “crash” the Pierce County network or any programs accessed through it.
- Connecting to the Pierce County internal network with personal devices such as laptops, Chromebooks, iPads, smartphones, etc. These devices can connect to the internet using the Public wireless network.

F. No personal hardware, even if purchased by an employee specifically for his/her office computer, may be installed or connected without prior authorization of the Director of Information Services.

Last Revised November 2022

I, the undersigned, have been provided with and read the Pierce County Policy on Computer Use and Information Systems as revised November 2022 and agree to abide by it. I understand this signed original will become part of my personnel file. If I have any questions about this policy I will immediately contact the Pierce County Director of Information Services.

Signature: _____

Name (printed): _____

Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THE SIGNED ORIGINAL OF THIS ENTIRE PAGE TO THE PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT AND RETAIN A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.