

Policy No 1.03 **Personal Use of Town Property**
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Revision Date:

Personal Use of Town Property

The property of the Town is for the conduct of official Town business for the benefit of the Town residents. The personal use of Town equipment and facilities gives the appearance of favoritism and shortened the effective life of facilities and equipment.

- A. **Facilities and Equipment:** No public officer or employee shall use or permit the use of Town vehicles, equipment, materials or property for personal convenience or profit, except when such services are available to the public generally or are provided as Town policy for the use of such officer or employee in the conduct of official business, whereby, the primary purpose is on behalf of the Town, as authorized by the Town Board or by adopted ordinance, resolution, contract, agreement or policy. The use of Town facilities or equipment for the repair or maintenance of personal vehicles or equipment is prohibited. Employees shall report promptly accidents, breakdowns, malfunctions or thefts of any equipment in order that necessary repairs or investigations may be made.

- B. **Telephones:** Telephone lines are provided for official Town business only and are not to be used for personal business except in the case of an emergency.

- C. **Copiers:** Photocopying equipment shall be used for Town related business or as outlined in the fee schedule.

- D. **Postage:** Postage Machine equipment shall be used for town business and only by specifically assigned employees.

- E. **Internet Usage:**

It is the policy of the Town of Rome to provide Internet services for Town staff to enhance their professional activities, improve public communication, and provide superior customer service. Efficient use of the Internet for research and communication will improve the quality, productivity, and general cost effectiveness of Town functions. The services provided include accessing various information resources found on the world wide web and enabling staff to gain the level of expertise necessary to provide knowledgeable service to an increasingly sophisticated customer base. The Town's Internet access is a privilege and the Town encourages creative, professional use that enhances productivity. The following defines general guidelines for Internet use and access.

- (1) Internet access is provided as a business tool. When accessing the Internet using Town equipment and/or on Town property, employees shall limit all usage to job related purposes. Internet usage for personal reasons is allowed only when the facility in which the employee works is closed to the public, and shall not be accessed for ecommerce, gambling, to conduct a business, for any other personal or financial gain, or for offensive, disruptive or harmful data, which includes but is not limited to: pornographic or erotic images; sexual implications; racial slurs; derogatory gender-specific comments; information or instructions for procedures or devices designed to cause physical harm to another person; comments that offensively address a person's age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, national origin or disability; any comment which in any way defames another person; any comment intended to frighten, intimidate, threaten, abuse, annoy or harass another person; and/or data or activities which invade the privacy of another person . When using the Internet, employees are at all times expected to use it as a research tool. There will be no compensation for personal use of the Internet during non-working hours. The Town expects employees to conduct themselves honestly and appropriately. Employees shall not abuse this privilege.
- (2) A wide variety of information is available on the Internet, some uncensored and unrestricted. The Town does not permit access at any time to materials that may be found offensive or pornographic, nor, is the Town responsible for the content of any Internet site.
- (3) Persons accessing the Internet are representing the Town of Rome; therefore, all actions and communications shall be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the professional and courteous behavior that is expected of all employees of the Town of Rome.
- (4) The transfer of information via the Internet shall be in accordance with current accepted security measures.
- (5) Internet use and communication by Town employees on Town equipment at times is not confidential or private. The Town reserves the right to monitor Internet activity by Town employees without prior notification. Employees have no privacy with respect to their access or use of the Internet.
- (6) Under federal and state law, and Town policy email and electronic files obtained via the Internet are public records and subject at all times to inspection by the public and management in the same manner that paper documents of a similar nature are preserved and made available.

- (7) The safety and security of the Town's network and resources shall be considered paramount when using the Internet. User passwords are confidential. It is the user's responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of their passwords.
- (8) Employees shall abide at all times by all guidelines of this policy, and any amendments that may occur from time to time.
- (9) All use of the Internet shall be in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and policies, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to property protection, privacy, and misuse of Town resources, sexual harassment, information security, and confidentiality. Access to the Internet provided by the Town shall not be used for any illegal, improper, unprofessional, or illicit purpose or for personal or financial gain.
- (10) If applicable, in addition to the parameters outlined in this policy, employees shall use the Internet in accord with the direction of the employee's Department head or the Town Board.
- (11) The Town encourages Internet use to enhance one's job performance and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service. Therefore, the Information Technician will coordinate Internet access for employees.

F. Email Usage

- (1) It is the policy of the Town of Rome to provide email for employees as a communication tool in order to conduct Town business. Email refers to an electronic mail system that creates, stores and forwards information using telecommunication links between computer terminals, workstations, servers, or personal computers. This policy defines the parameters within which Town employees may use email in executing business activities.
- (2) Email accounts are provided for official Town business only and shall not be used for personal reasons except in the case of an emergency.
- (3) The email system is maintained by Town employees on Town equipment and all times is public and not confidential or private. The Town of Rome provides email as a business tool. Therefore, the Town reserves the right to monitor email messages without prior notification for the purpose of maintaining and supporting Town of Rome email systems. Employees have no privacy with respect to their access or use of the email system.

- (4) The use of email for any illegal or unethical activities, or activity, which could adversely affect the Town, is prohibited.
- (5) Use of email and construction of messages must be consistent with the professional and courteous behavior that is expected of employees of the Town of Rome. If participating in forums, postings or list serves employees must recognize their representation of the Town of Rome and the confidentiality of Town business.
- (6) No person without specific authorization shall read, alter or delete any other person's computer files or email.
- (7) Under federal law, email and electronic files obtained via the Internet are public records and subject at all times to inspection by the public and management in the same manner that paper documents of a similar nature are preserved and made available.
- (8) Email messages and the transfer of information are not secure. Confidential information shall not be transmitted through email and shall not be permitted.
- (9) Email attachments can be breeding grounds for computer viruses. Exercise caution when opening attachments and emails. Consult your supervisor if you have questions before opening any attachments or suspicious messages.