Computer Use

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy 100.0195
Effective Date: October 20, 2011 ***Version: 1***

The Department of Children, Youth and Families provides staff with access to computers and software applications for work related activities. Because protecting the confidentiality of the children, youth and families served by the Department is of paramount importance, all state and federal law and policies regarding confidentiality are fully applicable to use of Departmental commuters and information systems, paper or electronic.

Software applications include the Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST), office automation tools (such as Microsoft Word) and electronic mail. The Management Information Systems (MIS) Division purchases, maintains, issues, supports and upgrades computers, hardware and software authorized for Department staff use. The Department strictly adheres to software license agreements; the MIS division conducts an annual audit to ensure compliance. Staff use of the Internet is monitored and logged. Logs contain information relating to each user, such as which web sites the staff person visited and when he or she visited each site. This information is provided to the supervisor of a staff member upon the supervisor's request. The MIS Division also reviews these logs on a regular basis for network planning and troubleshooting.

Related Procedure

Computer Use

Related Procedure

Code of Ethics
Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST)
Access to Computerized Information Maintained by the Department

Procedure from Policy 100.0190: Computer Use

A. Only hardware issued by the Department of Children, Youth and Families Management Information Division (MIS) may be installed or connected to Department computers.

1. A supervisor or administrator requests additional hardware required for specific job-related duties of his or her staff. If the Agency Information Technology Manager approves the request, MIS will evaluate, purchase, install and support the item.
2. Staff do not open or move the computers.
3. Staff do not add or remove any components from the computers.
4. Food, beverages and plants are kept away from the computers.
5. Staff may not bring their own laptop or desktop computers into the office.
6. Short-term contractors, who are not supplied a Department computer, may bring in personal laptops, but may not connect these computers to the Department network.

B. Only software issued by the MIS Division is installed on Department computers. Other staff may not install any software on Department computers.

1. Copies of software are not provided for staff to install on home computers or other non-Departmental computers.
2. A supervisor or administrator requests any additional software required for specific job-related duties of his or her staff. If the Agency Information Technology Manager approves the request, MIS will evaluate, purchase, install and support the item.

C. Access to the Internet is provided for staff solely for work-related usage.

1. Acceptable uses of the Internet are:
    a. To communicate with other state agencies and business partners of state agencies.
    b. To exchange professional knowledge and information and to keep current on or debate issues in a field of knowledge.
    c. To participate in professional society or equivalent activity related to the user's professional/vocational discipline.
    d. To conduct research into best practices related to the worker's field of knowledge.
    e. To apply for or administer grants or contracts for work-related applications.
    f. To use any other administrative communications or activities in direct support of work-related functions.
    g. To distribute a work related all staff electronic message with the permission of an administrator.
2. Unacceptable uses of the Internet are:
    a. To use for recreational purposes.
    b. To use for illegal or malicious purposes.
        1. Network use must be consistent with guiding ethical statements listed in section 3, below, the **DCYF Policy 100.0160, Code of Ethics** and accepted community standards.
        2. The network must not be used in ways that violate applicable laws or regulations, such as use of the network to transmit or solicit threatening, obscene, or harassing materials.
        3. The network or any attached network (e.g., LAN or WAN) must not be used in a manner that precludes or significantly hampers its use by others.

c. To establish connections to create routing patterns inconsistent with the effective and shared use of the network.
d. To use for unsolicited commercial advertising.
e. To use for revenue generating activities, unless stated as a specifically acceptable use.
f. To use for private or personal business activities, as defined in a commercial sense, such as the buying and selling of commodities or services with a profit motive.
g. To solicit information with the intent of using such information to cause personal harm or bodily injury.
h. To interfere with or disrupt network users, services, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to:
    1. To distribute unsolicited advertising.
    2. To propagate computer worms or viruses.
    3. To make unauthorized entry into any other machine accessible via the network.
    4. To send bulk mailings or chain letters via electronic mail.

3. Staff must adhere to the following ethical behaviors:
    a. Respect the privacy of other users.
    b. Never intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or represent himself or herself as another user.
    c. Respect the legal protection provided by copyright and licensing laws to programs and data.
    d. Respect the integrity of computing systems.
    e. Never intentionally develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage or alter the software components of a computer or computing system.

D. All utilization of Department hardware and software conforms with **DCYF Policy 100.0015, Access to Computerized Information Maintained by the Department**. All laws and policies regarding confidentiality are fully applicable to use of Departmental computers and information systems, paper or electronic.

E. Staff use of computers is consistent with the State of RI, Department of Administration, Division of Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy which is available at http/www.doit.ri.gov/policy/.