

Craven County Local Government E-Mail, Internet, & Computer Resources Policy

1. Purpose

This policy covers the use of electronic technology resources belonging to, or used by, Craven County. It includes, but is not limited to, all computer systems of any size and function and their attached peripherals, e-mail systems, software, network resources and Internet resources. All technology resources owned by Craven County are County property. These systems are in place to facilitate your ability to do your job efficiently and productively. To that end, these systems are for business purposes and any personal use is prohibited.

2. Definitions

Electronic technology resources include, but are not limited to, host computers, file servers, routers, switches, hubs, modems, workstations, standalone computers, laptops, printers, scanners, software, internal or external data communication networks.

Users, as used in this policy, refers to all employees, elected and appointed officials, independent contractors and other persons or entities accessing or using any of Craven County's electronic technology resources.

E-mail is the ability to compose and distribute messages, documents, files, software or images by electronic means over a phone line or network connection. This includes internal and external e-mail.

Software is the computer programs that reside on any type computer to perform a desired function. It encompasses programs provided by the manufacturer, a vendor or developed by in-house staff.

Network resources include the hardware and software necessary to connect computers and resources into a communication system.

Internet is the worldwide network of computer servers connected by phone lines that allow access to the public through the use of special languages.

3. Scope

This policy shall apply to all persons, whether employees, independent contractors or agents of the County, or otherwise, who use the County's electronic technology resources. All persons using Craven County's electronic technology resources must comply with all software licenses, copyright laws and

all other State and Federal laws governing intellectual properties. Authorization to use the County's e-mail systems and access the Internet will be granted by the County Manager, or his designee, on an as-needed basis.

4. Ownership and Privacy Expectations

All technology resources and all information transmitted by, received from and stored on Craven County systems are the property of Craven County and as such, are subject to inspection by County officials. Craven County has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of the County's electronic technology resources. Craven County reserves the right for business purposes to audit and monitor the information on all systems, electronic mail and information stored on computer systems or media, without advance notice. This might include investigation of theft, unauthorized disclosure of confidential business or proprietary information, personal abuse of the system or monitoring workflow and productivity.

Craven County will purge electronic mail from County computer systems. Any messages that may be needed beyond 14 days should be copied or moved to another storage location. E-mail messages that are public records should be printed and included in the subject file or be retained as word processing documents.

- a. E-mail created, sent or received through the use of any County owned resource is the property of Craven County, not its' employees.
- b. Users can have no expectations of privacy in anything they create, send, store or receive on any County owned electronic technology resources. The recipient of a message may forward it to any number of other parties. Messages could be sent to the wrong recipient. E-mail may become evidence in legal cases. A good rule is to compose e-mail with the expectation that it will become public.
- c. Do not use e-mail for legal lawyer-client confidential communications without approval by the County Manager.
- d. The County owns software which will be used to monitor Internet sites visited.
- e. County Data Processing personnel will be the System Administrator for all servers attached to the County Network.
- f. Because the Internet is used as a part of a work activity, the County's code of conduct applies to network activities as well. Therefore, the procedures in this policy are an extension of the County's Personnel Policies and employee handbooks.
- g. No employee shall have access to E-mail or world-wide web without having received appropriate training and a signed Craven County Electronic Technology Policy.

5. Policy Violations

The following are examples of violations of this policy for anyone using the County's electronic technology resources. It shall be deemed a violation of this policy to:

- a. use Electronic Technology Resources for any personal use;
- b. solicit or advertise for personal or commercial gain;
- c. solicit or advertise for outside organizations, religious, charitable or political causes;
- d. create, send or store messages that may reasonably be regarded as offensive, obscene, disruptive, illegal, fraudulent, profane, embarrassing or libelous. These include information that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age disability or religious or political beliefs. Users encountering or receiving such material should immediately report the incident to their Supervisor.
- e. to send or receive copyrighted materials, proprietary information or similar materials without express authorization from the author;
- f. send or forward e-mail, either internally or externally, without identifying themselves clearly and accurately. Anonymous or pseudonymous posting is expressly forbidden.
- g. attempt to access another employees e-mail without permission;
- h. use another employees access code to view, alter or distribute information without the express authorization of that employee;
- i. use County electronic technology resources to access and use sensitive or confidential information in a manner not originally intended;
- j. load employee owned or non-County purchased software on County electronic technology resources, whether intended for legitimate business matters, personal purposes or amusement; this includes shareware, freeware, personal software or Internet distributed programs.
- k. load County owned software on County electronic technology resources without clearance from the Data Processing Department; this includes shareware, freeware, personal software or Internet distributed programs.
- l. alter, add or remove any County Technology Resource without clearance and approval from the Data Processing Department;
- m. perform System Administrator functions on servers attached to the County network;
- n. download any files from any source without proper authorization from the Data Processing Department;
- o. download files from any source and not scan for viruses; this includes files obtained as e-mail attachments or by any other file transfer mechanism. It is the responsibility of County employees to prevent the introduction or propagation of viruses. Virus detection and inoculation software is available from Data Processing and should be present on every County personal computer and server.

- p. use County electronic technology resources to access user personal e-mail or internet accounts without prior approval from the Data Processing Department;
- q. use electronic resources in any illegal, malicious or inappropriate manner;
- r. transmit confidential personnel information using E-mail systems;

If Craven County determines that an employee has used electronic technology resources in a manner that violates this policy or any other State or Federal law, the violation may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. Appropriate Use

At all times when an employee is using Craven County electronic technology resources, he or she is representing the County. Use the same good judgment in all resource use that you would use in written correspondence or in determining the “appropriate conduct”. Craven County employees are expected to use County provided electronic resources responsibly and professionally.

Craven County employees have a responsibility to make sure that all information disseminated through e-mail or internet is accurate. Employees shall provide, in association with such information, its' source and the date at which time it was current and either an e-mail address or phone number that allows the recipient to contact the staff responsible for the making the information available.

Craven County is not responsible for the actions of individual users. This policy may be amended or revised periodically as the need arises.

I understand that violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or legal action.

Your consent to the County’s Electronic Technology Resource Policy is necessary to continued employment.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

****Employee is to insert the above policy into their Craven County Handbook & Benefits Book at the end of the section labeled Handbook.**

Amendment to Article X. Conditions of Employment, Section Z. E-Mail, Internet and Computer Resources Policy, by adding the following paragraph:

7. Employees of the Sheriff and Register of Deeds

The Sheriff of Craven County and the Register of Deeds of Craven County respectively consent to the employees of the Sheriff of Craven County and Register of Deeds of Craven County signing and being subject to and abiding by the terms and conditions of the Craven County E-Mail, Internet and Computer Resources Policy as a condition of initial and continued employment with the Sheriff of Craven County and Register of Deeds of Craven County; however, notwithstanding, the Sheriff of Craven County and Register of Deeds of Craven County shall retain the exclusive right to hire, discharge and supervise the respective employees of their offices, as described in North Carolina General Statutes §153A-103.

Amended this 6th day of November, 2000.