



**Missouri Department of  
Natural Resources  
Administrative Policies and Procedures**

**Chapter 2 Communications**

<b>Internet Acceptable Use Policy</b>	<b>Effective date</b>	<b>Revised</b>
<b>Number: 2.03</b>	<b>August 16, 2001</b>	<b>June 7, 2010</b>

**Introduction:**

Internet use is intended to further the mission, goals, and objectives of the department; and can provide staff with a valuable tool to make their work more efficient and effective when used wisely. This policy is intended to ensure that all department Internet users understand their responsibilities and proper uses for the Internet.

Social networking websites (such as Facebook, MySpace, blogs, newsgroups, chat rooms and Twitter) provide users with a means to connect with people around the world. Employees are prohibited from using or accessing social networking sites using state equipment unless for work related reasons. While the department does not prohibit employees from accessing or using these websites for work related reasons, it is important to remember that in some contexts they may be perceived as representatives of the department, even on employee’s personal sites. This policy provides guidance to employees with respect to social networking and applies to the extent permitted by law.

**References:**

Personnel Advisory Board Rules and Regulations 1 CSR 20-3.070

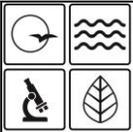
<http://www.sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/csr.asp>

***Related DNR Policies:***

- Conduct and Ethics Policy 1.01
- Discrimination Complaint Procedures 1.02-03
- Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures 1.02-07
- Progressive Discipline Policy 1.08
- Communications Policy 2.01
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy 2.03

**DEFINITION**

*Social Networking:* Pertaining to the Internet, social networking is the process and practice of individuals, businesses and other types of organizations interacting with each other through common websites and specialized areas within those websites for the purpose of sharing, gaining, propagating and discussing all manner of information.



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**Policy:**

Internet access is for department business only. No other use of the Internet is allowed or is appropriate when using department time and/or resources. Most questions that staff have asked about what is or isn't appropriate come down to this very simple distinction.

The department provides an internal e-mail system for staff use. Use of other e-mail and similar services is prohibited. This prohibition includes "Web-based" e-mail services, and other Internet services which offer interaction that could be handled via the standard departmental e-mail system.

Employees have no right to privacy when using department equipment, the department's Internet connection, or the department's email system. In addition, the department reserves the right to review employee profiles and postings on social networking sites, whether or not they were made using department equipment or the department's computer systems.

Employees are personally and legally responsible for the content of information they post on social networking sites. Employees should treat all postings as potentially public information.

Employees are prohibited from representing the department by using a department email address as their login name, user handle, in their personal profiles, or when posting, blogging, or tweeting. Employees are also prohibited from using department logos, trademarks, and other intellectual property unless the department has given the employee prior approval.

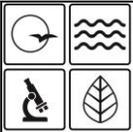
Even when using the Internet for department business, there are other provisions that must be observed. See the following pages for further guidance on such issues, which are categorized for easier reference. Individuals should discuss any questions related to this policy with their supervisor.

**Disciplinary Action:**

An employee determined to be in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal, in accordance with Progressive Discipline (1.08) and 1 CSR 20-3.070, the Personnel Advisory Board Rules and Regulations. Depending upon the circumstances of the behavior, an individual may also be subject to prosecution under State or Federal law.

**Provisions for Retrieving and Transmitting Information:**

Internet users are responsible for all material received under their account, including mail, data, documents, and software.



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Internet users are responsible for the protection of all copyrighted materials received through the Internet to include dissemination, re-publication, or distribution of such materials.

Internet users are responsible for assuring that inappropriate materials including pornography and files dangerous to the department’s network are neither accessed using the Internet nor transferred between department computers and the Internet. All files downloaded from the Internet must be checked for computer viruses before they are used. This includes files attached to e-mail messages.

Internet users will use discretion when downloading or uploading large files and databases which could severely hinder Internet access for other staff by exceeding available capacity. Questions about specific situations should be referred to the appropriate Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) representative.

**Provisions for Publishing and Posting:**

Internet users will not publish or distribute information using any Internet service besides electronic mail without the approval of their Program Director.

All information disseminated to the public through the Internet must be authored in accordance with department guidelines pertaining to the release of public information. Such information must always be directly related to the official duties and responsibilities of the department.

Internet users must not use the Internet for advertising, commercial ventures, political purposes, chain letters, or other inappropriate purposes. Even the appearance of impropriety or a misuse of state resources is unacceptable when communicating via a global computer network.

Internet users will keep their language within proper decorum. Profanity, obscenities, hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other inappropriate language are prohibited.

**Confidentiality of Department Information**

Department policies prohibit current and past employees from providing confidential department information. Employees are required to maintain the confidentiality of department and employee information and are prohibited from disseminating such information through the use of internet or social networking sites. Confidential information includes closed records, legal work product, draft documents or pre-decisional deliberative documents, internal policies and procedures, as well as other employees’ personal information. Department personnel shall not use or disclose, directly or indirectly, confidential information obtained in the course of or by reason of their employment or official capacity in any manner. Staff who breach confidentiality will be subject to discipline as outlined in department policy.



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**Placing The Department In A Negative Light**

Many social networking sites allow users to indicate their past and present employers on their user profiles. In addition, it may be possible for others to ascertain your current or past employers through your pictures, posts or through other means. As a result, employees are prohibited from making statements or posting any pictures, articles, or other content that may jeopardize the department's image, or otherwise be embarrassing for or have negative consequences for the department, including postings which may damage the departments working relationship with other entities. Even on an employee's personal site, their views may be seen as representing the department.

**Complying With All Other Department Policies**

Employees must be especially mindful to follow the department's Sexual Harassment and Discrimination policies at all times when using social networking sites. Additionally, employees are prohibited from bullying, harassing, defaming, or gossiping about co-workers and clients when using social networking sites.

**Use Of Social Networking Websites During Work Hours**

The department reserves the right to monitor employees' website history to determine whether employees are complying with this policy. Using personal devices to access such sites is only allowed during breaks and lunch during the work day.

**Complaint Procedure**

Should an employee believe that another department employee is violating any aspect of this policy, or if an employee has any other questions or concerns about this policy, the employee should contact their supervisor, Human Resources, or Employee Relations.

**Provisions for Security:**

Passwords must be protected and not shared with or divulged to others. This helps ensure that data integrity and security are preserved.

Internet users will respect the rights and privileges of other users by not modifying files, data, passwords, or other information belonging to other users.



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Internet users will not attempt to violate the integrity or security of the department's computer network nor those computing systems they access through the Internet. There are also State and Federal laws that criminalize such activities.

Internet users must realize that information placed onto the Internet can potentially be intercepted or monitored by individuals worldwide. Care must be taken to avoid transmitting information that would be embarrassing to or have negative consequences for the department or the individual. Information can similarly be collected on all Internet locations that users visit. Personal and confidential information in particular must not be posted on the Internet, and transmission of such information via the Internet is discouraged unless reasonable security methods are used to protect confidential information.

Internet users must not use dial-up or similar technologies that connect to the Internet or other TCP/IP-based services (personal or department-provided) while their computer is also directly connected to the Internet via the department's firewall. Having two different Internet-type connections available on the same machine simultaneously exposes the department's and the state's internal networks to the potential of outside attack. Simply logging out of the department's network before using such a connection is not a solution. The hardware connection to the network must be disconnected before using such dial-up services. Contact your ITSD representative for assistance in determining whether using a particular dial-up or similar service would violate this provision.

**Provisions for Administration:**

Internet users are responsible for reporting violations of this policy to their supervisor.

Internet users must abide by existing state and federal laws regarding communications when using the system.

Internet users must ensure that time spent using the Internet, including time spent searching for information, is likely to have sufficient benefit to the department to justify the time spent. If searching the Internet for particular information becomes too time-consuming, other avenues should be considered.

Internet users may not subscribe to pay Internet services that will be billed to the department without prior approval. DPSRs for such services should be clearly identified with the words "Internet service request", and indicate the type and length of service. Detailed justification may also be attached, and could expedite the approval process.

When Internet users are provided direct Internet access through the department's network, any existing Internet services on their computer such as dial-up accounts must be immediately disconnected and remain disconnected. If a computer has no other dial-up needs, it is strongly



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recommended that the dial-up software be removed or disabled, the phone line be unplugged from the computer, and that the phone service be disconnected if there is no other use for that line.

Prospective Internet users must coordinate with their supervisor on what, if any, Internet usage is appropriate to their job function. Such determinations are ultimately at the discretion of their Program Director.

Many common Internet services including Web access will be enabled via the department's network by default. Less common services will be blocked by the department's firewall to enhance security. Requests to enable additional services should be routed first to the appropriate Program Director, then the appropriate ITSD representative. Including justification with such requests may expedite the review process.