

GREENE COUNTY POLICY

Subject: Internet and Email Usage	Policy Number: 4
	Effective: October 2000
	Approved by: Board of Commissioners

Purpose

To establish a policy pertaining to the use of the Greene County Network (GreeneNet) and Email, the North Carolina Integrated Information Network (NCIIN) and the global internet by Greene County agencies.

Background

The Internet is a worldwide collection of interconnected networks. The State's wide area network, the NCIIN, is one of many networks connected to the Internet. Electronic tools associated with Internet access, such as electronic mail (E-mail) and the World Wide Web (www), help public agencies streamline information access and conduct business. These tools are used to facilitate inter-agency communication and information processing. These same tools are used for communication among public agencies, such as other government organizations, educational institutions, private businesses, citizens and entities on the Internet.

There are many parallels between the new electronic information tools and older technologies used for similar purposes (for example, telephones and written correspondence). As such, the same general concepts of professionalism and appropriate use of publicly owned or publicly provided information processing resources apply.

Increasing numbers of public staffs now access the Internet. Public use of publicly provided information on the NCIIN is also growing. Public staffs have stewardship responsibilities for public information. The open connection afforded by Internet access underscores the need for heightened awareness among public employees regarding prudent behavior as it pertains to information dissemination and access. Because electronic mail may appear to be more personal, more casual, and more private than traditional paper memos or letters, it is important to reemphasize the fact that all public communication, unless specifically exempted by law, regardless of its form or transmission media, is subject to public inspection.

Scope

This policy applies to all Greene County agencies.

Policy

1. While in performance of work-related functions, while on the job, or while using publicly owned or publicly provided information processing resources, public employees are expected to use the Greene County Network, NCIIN and the Internet responsibly and professionally and shall make no intentional use of these services in an illegal, malicious, or obscene manner. Public employees may make reasonable personal use of publicly owned or provided GreeneNet, NCIIN or Internet resources as long as:
 - a. The direct measurable cost to the public is none or is negligible;
 - b. There is no negative impact on employee performance of public duties;
 - c. The policy is applied equitable among all employees of the agency;
 - d. Employees shall reimburse the agency if costs are incurred, provided that costs may be incurred only in critical situations.
2. When sending or forwarding E-mail over the Internet, public employees shall identify themselves clearly and accurately. Anonymous or pseudonymous posting is expressly forbidden.
3. Public employees have a responsibility to make sure that all public information disseminated via GreeneNet, NCIIN and the Internet is accurate. Employees shall provide in association with such information its source and the date at which it was current and an electronic mail address allowing the recipient to contact the public staff responsible for making the information available in its current form.

The following are specifically prohibited uses of the Internet and e-mail access allowed on the GreeneNet:

- Accessing, storing, processing, displaying, distributing, transmitting or viewing material that is pornographic, racist, promotive of hate crimes, or subversive in nature.
- Obtaining, installing, copying, pasting, transferring or using software or other materials not expressly provided by the Agency.
- Knowingly writing, coding, compiling, storing, transmitting or transferring malicious software code, to include viruses, logic bombs, worms or macro viruses.
- Promoting partisan political activity.
- Disseminating religious materials outside the materials used to support the WorkFirst program.

- Using the system for personal financial gain, such as advertising or solicitation of services or sale of personal property.
- Fund Raising activities either for profit or not for profit, unless the activity is a county or agency sponsored activity.
- Gambling, wagering or placing any bets.
- Writing, forwarding or participating in chain letters.
- Posting personal home pages.
- Personal encryption of electronic communication is strictly prohibited.
- Any use which violates federal, state or local law.

All users are reminded that they have no expectation of privacy in their use of government information systems. Use of government information systems, including the use of e-mail and Internet, is subject to monitoring, and is subject to interception, accessing, and recording and may be passed to law enforcement.

Disciplinary Action: Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Greene County's Personnel Policy.

Definitions

E-mail: Electronic Mail – The capability to compose, address, and send messages electronically.

GreeneNet – refers to the closed TCP/IP network operated by Greene County and includes other agencies that are participating partners in the GreeneNet infrastructure.

Information processing resources: Electronic computing and communications hardware, software, networks, and information.

NCIIN: North Carolina Integrated Information Network – refers to a web of interoperable networks, within the state, that transmits data, text, images, voice and video.

Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) – commonly used to bring information to computer users via a client browser program.

World Wide Web: The integrated worldwide network of computers based on the hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP), and Transmission Control.

References

State of North Carolina, Information Resource Management Commission, "Policy and Guidelines on the Use of the Internet," adopted August 2, 1994.

Revision #3 was approved by the IRMC September 2000.

<http://www.sips.state.nc.us/IRMC/documents/approvals/irmcinet.html>