

## **POL.P.06.20 - Electronic Communication Policy**

All computer equipment, voicemail, and online mobile access devices, including information transmitted, received or contained therein, are the property and assets of the Park District. The use of computer equipment, telephones, cell phones, tablets, and electronic communication devices issued by the Park District are for business purposes only. The Park District decides at its sole discretion whether a communication or activity falls within a legitimate business purpose.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the Park District's computer equipment, e-mail system, telephones, cellular phones or mobile devices.

Failure to abide by this Policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

### **System Security and Configuration Guidelines for Computers**

All computer equipment provided by the Park District is pre-configured with the appropriate hardware and software for Park District business use. No employee may install, change, or remove system hardware or software. For the purposes of this Policy, "systems" means the Park District's electronic systems, including but not limited to its computer system, e-mail network, and phone and voicemail systems.

A user may be responsible for replacement or repair costs up to the Park District's insurance deductible for lost, stolen, damaged, unsecured, or unprotected equipment.

### **No Expectation of Privacy**

No user has any reasonable expectation of privacy or other rights at any time with respect to any use of Park District property, including without limitation electronic and communications systems and equipment. The Park District has the right to monitor all on-line activity, including communications, to ensure that appropriate business and lawful purposes are being pursued to ensure compliance with the Park District's policies, and to limit communications solely to business-related reasons. The Park District's systems may not be used for personal, political, or commercial purposes unless specifically authorized in advance by the Park District. The Park District may search all computers, cell phones, other equipment, and information at any time.

Any electronic communication may be considered a "public record" and thus may be subject to inspection and copying under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. No message should be created on the Park District's systems that casts the Park District in false light or that creates unfair or undue discomfort or embarrassment.

### **Illegal and Inappropriate Use**

The Park District specifically prohibits the use of its systems and computer equipment for any illegal or inappropriate purpose at any time, whether in the course of business or otherwise. All users are prohibited from gaining unauthorized access to, or intentionally damaging, other computer systems, networks, or the information contained within them; committing theft, fraud, or other criminal or dishonest acts of any kind; distributing or obtaining illegally copied software, graphics, sounds, text, or other material; or sending or posting defamatory, harassing, threatening, pornographic, or patently indecent content.

## **User Name/Password**

A user name and password is assigned to each employee for their use only; it is not to be shared with other employees. However, the use of passwords for security and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, and the Park District has the right to remove or change passwords.

Passwords are an important aspect of computer security. They are the front line of protection for user accounts. A poorly chosen password may result in the compromise of the Park District's entire network. As such, all Park District employees are responsible for taking the appropriate steps, as outlined below, to select and secure their passwords. The purpose of this Policy is to establish a standard for creation of strong passwords, the protection of those passwords, and the frequency of change. The scope of this Policy includes all personnel who have or are responsible for an account (or any form of access that supports or requires a password) on any system that resides at any Park District facility, has access to the Park District network, or stores any non-public Park District information.

User passwords should be changed every 90 days at a minimum. Passwords must not be inserted in email messages or other forms of electronic communication. Employees shall not share Park District passwords with anyone. All passwords are to be treated as sensitive, confidential Park District information. All Park District passwords are required to be a minimum of six alphanumeric characters long, include at least one upper case and one lower case character and include at least one number. Employees shall not use the same password for Park District accounts as they do for their personal accounts and where possible, shall not use the same password for various Park District access needs.

Employees shall not use the "Remember Password" feature of applications (e.g., Outlook, Yahoo Mail) or write passwords down or store them anywhere in Park District facilities. Passwords should not be stored in a file on ANY computer system (including handheld/mobile devices) without encryption. If an account or password is suspected to have been compromised, employees should report the incident to IT and change all passwords. Password cracking or guessing may be performed on a periodic or random basis by IT or its delegates. If a password is guessed or cracked during one of these scans, the user will be required to change it. If someone demands a password, employees should refer them to this Policy or have them contact the IT Manager.

## **Downloading or Saving Information**

To protect systems from computer viruses, no user may download or install any executable programs, screen savers, or other similar items without the prior approval of the IT Manager.

To protect the Park District from infringement actions due to copyright or trademark violations, no user may send, download, or save any material from any online source, however retrieved, unless the material is legally permitted to be downloaded without violation of copyright or trademark laws.

## **E-mail and Text Messages**

E-mail messages and text messages are business communications and an appropriate business tone should be used in every message. E-mail messages and text messages should not contain any material that would be inappropriate in any written form.

## **Prohibited Activities**

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The following activities are strictly prohibited on the Park District's systems:

- Posting of confidential information on the Internet related to the Park District's patrons or guests;
- Subscription to news groups or mailing lists without prior approval;
- Chat group visitation;
- Completion of the final terms of any contract electronically;
- Removing electronic equipment of any kind from Park District premises without prior approval;
- Disseminating or printing copyrighted materials, including articles and software, in violation of copyright laws.
- Sending or soliciting sexually oriented or harassing statements, messages, images or language.

## **Internet**

The Internet is a useful research and communication resource that is provided to Park District employees for uses related to Park District business. Employees accessing the Internet for work are representing the Park District. All communications shall be for primarily business reasons. Employees are responsible for seeing that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. Blog/chat sites may only be used to conduct official Park District business or to gain technical or analytical advice. Use of the Internet must not disrupt the operation of the Park District network or the networks of other users. It must not interfere with the user's job performance productivity.

Employees may not use the Internet to:

- Transmit, retrieve or store communications of a discriminatory or harassing nature or materials that are obscene, pornographic or violent including gambling sites or any illegal activities;
- Download unauthorized software from the Internet including games; or
- Access other materials that may violate the Park District's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

## **Disclaimer of Liability for Use of Internet**

The Park District is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the Internet. Users are cautioned that many Internet pages include offensive, sexually explicit, and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the Internet. Even innocuous searches may lead to sites with highly offensive content. In addition, having an e-mail address on the Internet may lead to the receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive conduct. Employees accessing the Internet should notify the IT Manager immediately if this occurs.

## **Confidentiality**

Electronic messages may be monitored by service providers and authorized Park District officials, and may be compromised by unauthorized or unintended distribution. Confidentiality may also be compromised because of inadequacy of current technology to protect against unauthorized

access. Consequently, all electronic messages shall be limited to non-confidential matters, except for communications with Park District Legal Counsel.

## **Information Sensitivity**

Users are also prohibited from using electronic means to seek out personal or confidential information regarding Park District employees, contracts, finances, or other non-public matters, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Board of Park Commissioners or Executive Director.

## **Cellular Phones and Mobile Devices**

The Park District may issue cellular phones or mobile devices to certain employees. Cellular phones and mobile devices will be provided only when they are required for the employee to perform essential functions of his or her job. Incidental and infrequent personal use of cell phones and mobile devices issued by the Park District is permissible. In certain circumstances, a Department Head may authorize an employee to use a personal cell phone or mobile device for Park District business. Authorized use of personal cell phones or mobile devices to conduct business is a reimbursable expense. In any case, the Department Head is responsible for the continued justification of providing or authorizing the use of a cell phone or mobile device on the job.

Each employee who is issued a cellular phone or mobile device by the Park District should keep costs low by using land lines whenever possible, by giving the cellular phone/mobile device number only to those who need it for matters related to the essential functions of the employee's job, and when traveling for business.

All equipment, and all information transmitted, received, or contained in the equipment, is the property of the Park District and may be subject to a Freedom of Information Act request. All relevant Park District policies and procedures will apply to the use of cellular phones and mobile devices. Employees are responsible for the proper care and maintenance of the cellular phone equipment issued, and employees will be required to pay for the repair or replacement costs of equipment that is damaged or lost due to negligence. Employees must return equipment in good working condition upon request.

Failure to abide by these rules is grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### Reimbursement for Personal Cell Phone Calls

It is preferable that Park District-provided cellular phones and mobile devices not be used for personal business, but if an employee elects to make or receive personal calls on a Park District-provided cellular phone or mobile device, those calls should be kept to a minimum and be made only during non-working time. Employees who have excessive usage for personal calls during work hours will be subject to disciplinary action. Alternatively, if an employee is authorized to use a personal cell phone or mobile device to conduct business, then the Park District will reimburse the employee at a predetermined monthly cellular phone/mobile device usage allowance. In either event, the employee will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging the terms and conditions of the Cell Phone/Mobile Device Policy and reimbursement rate.