

TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM POLICY

To ensure proper use of the Town of Southwick's telecommunications systems including the telephones, computers, electronic mail (email), facsimile machines and the internet, the Town has established a policy. This policy is designed to prevent misuses of these systems and to protect the Town from illegal use of these systems by its employees and others.

This policy applies to all full-time, part-time, and intermittent Town employees, as well as grant-funded position employees. This policy also applies to contractors, consultants, temporaries, interns, volunteers, and non-employees including but not limited to members of Town Boards, Commissions, Elected Officials of the Town of Southwick, including those users affiliated with third parties who access the Town of Southwick computer networks.

Note: Throughout this policy, the word "user" will be used to collectively refer to all such individuals indicated above. This policy also applies to all computer and data communication systems (telecommunication systems) used at, owned by, and/or administered by the Town of Southwick.

All Town users are required to read and comply with this policy. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action ranging from limiting an employee's privileges to use any telecommunication systems and further disciplinary action up to and including termination. Regarding non-employees, failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in the denial of access to the computer networks, legal action, and/or notification to the proper authorities.

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be updated or amended at any time at the discretion of the Select Board.

1. The following activities are strictly prohibited:
 - a. Any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, the transmission of copyrighted, trademarked, patented, trade secret material or the participation in any type of criminal activity.
 - b. Any inappropriate activity, including but not limited to the transmission or inquiry of obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, or threatening material.
 - c. Any attempts to tamper with or violate the computer security systems implemented by the Town of Southwick or the use of the Town's telecommunication system to tamper with other institutions, organizations, companies, or individuals.
 - d. Disseminating confidential or other non-public information to unauthorized parties.

- e. Instant messaging software, movies, music sharing software or other peer to peer data sharing software are prohibited. This includes AOL, Facebook, Twitter or any other website instant messaging.
 - f. The following types of email activities are expressly prohibited:
 - Transmission of global or mass mailings unless related to Town business or unless prior authorization has been received from the Chief Administrative Officer or their designee.
 - Transmission of chain letters or virus alerts.
 - Transmission of any email containing abusive, harassing, discriminatory, or sexually explicit language or content.
 - Transmission of deceptively labeled emails, to include any email that carries a misleading subject line, is anonymous, is attributed to another person, or which identifies its true sender incorrectly.
 - Inclusion of C.O.R.I. information within any email, except where the recipient's email address has been previously confirmed to be a legitimate and secure reception point.
 - Any other transmissions or inclusions that violate federal, state, or local law.
 - g. Employees of the Town have a right to have personal web pages or social networking sites. Use of the Town of Southwick's computers or equipment for the purposes of social networking is prohibited, along with accessing social networking sites from any other peripheral device while on duty or working. Employees are also prohibited from posting, transmitting and/or disseminating any photographs, video or audio recording, likenesses or images or departmental logos, emblems, uniforms, badges, patches, marked or unmarked vehicles, equipment or other material that specifically identifies the Town of Southwick on any personal or social networking website or web page.
2. Telecommunications systems are the property of the Town of Southwick and should be used for business purposes.
 3. Subject to department head approval limited appropriate personal use is allowed, but business use is primary. All files including documents, spread sheets and email correspondence shall be available to the department head at all times. No files shall be password protected unless authorized by the system administrator for a valid reason. Telecommunications Systems are the property of the Town of Southwick.
 4. Subject to certain exceptions in the law, email messages are considered public records and are therefore legally discoverable and subject to record retention policies. Employees

should not expect that email messages (even those marked “personal”) are private or confidential.

5. Upon the request of the department head and/or the Chief Administrative Officer and subject to the approval of the Select Board, monitoring of telecommunications systems usage may be necessary. Reasons for monitoring include, but are not limited to, review of employee productivity, investigations into claims of possible criminal activity and investigations into violation of the policy.
6. Use by employees of the Town’s telecommunications systems constitutes consent to monitoring of systems use and is conditioned upon strict adherence to this policy.
7. All users are expected to undertake precautions to prevent infection of Town computers by computer viruses. In particular, executable programs imported from other sites to Town computers must not be used unless they have been authorized by the System Administrator (Town Accountant) and they have been subjected to virus detection procedures approved by System Administrator. The System Administrator may, from time to time, impose restrictions or regulations shall be considered part of the policy. Users are expected to be energy conscious. Computers shall be powered off anytime they will not be used for two or more consecutive hours. Copiers and printers shall be powered off anytime they will not be used for twenty-four or more consecutive hours. Certain necessary exceptions are permitted with department head approval.
8. Department heads and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all their employees using the Town’s telecommunication systems have read this policy and understand its applicability to activities.
9. All network broadcasts must pertain to Town of Southwick business and be pre-approved by the Select Board or the Chief Administrative Officer.
10. Data files (word processing, email, and spreadsheets) will be backed up daily and weekly if they are stored in the users mapped drive and on the Town server. Backup of data not stored on the server is the responsibility of each user. The Town cannot be held responsible for lost data due to system failure caused by power outages or other problems with the system that may cause an unexpected shutdown. If data is important to a user, he or she must back it up.
11. If an employee indicates in any public forum any opinion on a Town issue, then that employee shall state that the views and opinions expressed are the employee’s personal ones, and not those of the Town of Southwick.

12. If an employee accidentally accesses an unacceptable site, the employee must immediately disclose the incident to their immediate supervisor or to the Chief Administrative Officer. Such disclosure may serve as a defense against an accusation of an intentional violation of this policy.
13. A sign-off sheet shall be attached to this policy and signed off by each user who utilizes any telecommunications system of the Town.
14. Notwithstanding sections 1(e) and 1(g) above, the Select Board may authorize the creation of social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) under limited circumstances for the sole purpose of furthering the purposes of the Town. Any request for such authorization must be made in advance in writing to the Select Board. In the event the Select Board allows an account to be created, the account shall solely be used to disseminate information regarding the Town and such use may not violate any other provisions of this policy. The account must be registered with the Town. The account may not be used for personal use at any time. The Select Board may terminate the account at any time.

Town of Southwick
Acknowledgement of Receipt of Telecommunication Systems Policy

I acknowledge receipt of the Telecommunications Policy and that I have read and understood it. I understand that I must adhere to proper usage of the telecommunications systems of the Town of Southwick including telephones, computers, electronic mail, facsimile machines, and the internet including social media.

Name

Signature

Date