



401 Webbs Mills Road
Raymond, Maine 04071

INTERNET/E-MAIL POLICY

I. Purpose

Electronic mail, Internet and telecommunication access are resources available to town employees to communicate with each other, other governmental entities, companies and individuals for the benefit of the Town of Raymond (Town).

II. Policy

The Town of Raymond Electronic Mail System (e-mail) is designed to facilitate town business communication among employees and other business associates for messages or memoranda. Since no computer system is completely secure, the e-mail system is not intended to transmit sensitive materials, such as personnel decisions and other similar information, which may be more appropriately communicated, by written memorandum or personal conversations.

The Town reserves the right to amend this policy. An employee's use of the Town's e-mail system constitutes the employee's agreement to abide by the Town's policy governing the e-mail system as set forth herein, or as modified in the future.

The e-mail system is Town property and intended for Town business. The system is not to be used for employee personal gain or to support or advocate for non town-related business or purposes. All data and other electronic messages within this system are the property of the Town of Raymond. Because all messages are the property of the Town, employees should not expect that messages are private. In addition, employees should be aware that deleted files might be retrieved and read by department heads or other supervisory personnel. The Town reserves the right to retrieve, monitor or review any messages in the Town's system, and may disclose such messages for any purpose without permission of the employee. E-mail messages have been found to be public records and may be subject to the right to know laws, depending on their content.

Employees may not intentionally intercept, eavesdrop, record, read, alter or receive other person's e-mail messages, without proper authorization.

The Town of Raymond, purchases, owns and administers the necessary software and licenses to provide access to e-mail and Internet services. The Town has invested much time and money to secure its electronic systems from intruders and harmful viruses.

Therefore, employees may not provide alternative software or hardware to access the system. Employees may be held responsible for any damages caused by using unauthorized software or viruses they introduce into the Town system. Department heads are responsible for the implementation and adherence of this policy within their departments.

III. Procedures

General Information on Passwords

While employees may have confidential passwords, users should be aware this does not mean that the system is for personal confidential communication, nor does it suggest that e-mail is the property right of the employee. The use of the e-mail system is for Town business. Passwords should be periodically changed to ensure security of the e-mail system. Users should not share their passwords with anyone else, other than as his or her supervisor may require.

Internet

The Internet provides the Town with significant access and dissemination of information to individuals outside of the Town. The use of the Internet system for access and dissemination is intended to serve Town business. Like all e-mail messages, Internet messages are capable of being forwarded without the express permission of the original author. E-mail messages are also routinely passed through routers before they reach their final destination. A message is "touched" many times before it gets to its recipient, and the message author should be aware of this. Therefore, users must use caution in the transmission and dissemination of messages outside of the Town, and must comply with all state and federal laws.

Prohibited uses

When sending e-mail messages, appropriateness and good judgment should be used. E-mail messages must follow the Town's policies on computer usage, sexual harassment and any other policies or procedures, as well as any state, federal and local laws.

Receiving and responding to e-mail

E-mail messages reflect the Town's image. Employees should keep in mind that electronic files may be subject to public disclosure under the Right to Know Law or other laws and so it is expected that employee statements in electronic messages and files will reflect favorably on the Town and on the employee.

Retention of E-mail

Generally, e-mail messages are intended to be temporary communications that are non-vital and may be discarded routinely. However, depending on the content of the e-mail message, it may be considered a more formal record and should be printed and filed appropriately.

Employees should be aware that when they have deleted messages from their workstation mailbox it might not have been deleted from the central e-mail system. The message may be residing in the recipient's mailbox or forwarded to other recipients. Furthermore, the message may be stored on the computer's back-up system for an indefinite period. (Note that e-mail has been classified as "public" documents, i.e. available to the media, in at least one state. Keep that in mind when you create or store e-mail.)

Employees should delete e-mail messages as soon as possible after reading. An accumulation of files will degrade system performance and response times.

Employee Termination, Leave of Absence, Vacation and Other

Employees who leave employment with the Town have no right to the contents of their e-mail messages and are not allowed access to the e-mail system. Supervisors or management may access an employee's e-mail if employees are on leave of absence, vacation or are transferred from one department to another department and it is necessary for the Town's business purpose.

Notice of Violations

Employees who observe violations of this policy shall notify their immediate supervisor or report the violation to the Town Manager.

Discipline

The misuse of the Internet or e-mail privileges may be considered sufficient cause of discipline in accordance with the Town of Raymond Personnel Policies and/or other applicable rules or laws. In addition, violations of this policy or misuse of the e-mail system may be referred for criminal prosecution.

Policy Changes

The Town reserves the right to modify or change the policies set forth herein to comply with applicable law, to meet changing circumstances or for any reason.

IV. Acceptance

The Town will require employees to read and signify acceptance of the terms of this policy by signing the following agreement before making electronic systems available.