

NO: R165

COUNCIL DATE: July 24, 2017

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **July 20, 2017**

FROM: **General Manager, Finance
General Manager, Human Resources**

FILE: **0625-20
(Electronic
Communications
Policy)**

SUBJECT: **Electronic Communications Policy Update**

RECOMMENDATION

The Finance Department and the Human Resources Department recommend that Council:

- Receive this report as information;
- Approve the proposed update of the Electronic Communications Policy; and
- Approve the Electronic Communications Policy be removed as a Council Policy and become an Administrative Policy.

INTENT

Staff is seeking to update the Electronic Communications Policy (approved by Council on March 22, 1999) to reflect both current technologies and staff usage patterns. Staff also believes that the Electronic Communications Policy has become an administrative policy and that it does not require ongoing Council oversight.

BACKGROUND

In March 1999, staff asked the Council of the time to review and approve a new Electronic Communication Policy (the “Policy”). Appendix “I” contains that corporate report and the original Policy. The Policy was introduced “to provide staff a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate use” of the diverse electronic communication devices and software applications that were being introduced in the City.

The Policy reflected a desire by Council and staff to add clarity to the rapidly changing workplace and to ensure best practices in the usage of new electronic devices and computer systems.

Staff is now seeking to update the Policy given the technology changes that have occurred in the 18 years from when the Policy was first issued; and since it is now an administrative policy, to transfer ongoing oversight of the Policy to the City Manager.

DISCUSSION

The review and approval of the original Policy by Council in March 1999 was logical as it served to inform both Council and staff of important changes occurring in the technology available to deliver work.

The Policy now requires an update and to be recommunicated to staff. With the growing complexities of workplace technologies, staff is recommending that the Policy be modified and renamed as the “Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy” (Appendix “II”). The revised Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy is aligned with current City practices.

Key changes to the revised Policy include:

- Modifications to refer to federal and provincial laws on electronic communications;
- Explicit references to the City’s Code of Conduct By-Law, 1994, No, 12196, its Human Rights Policy, its Social Media Policy and its Respect Workplace Policy;
- The addition of new technologies (such as the intranet, the cloud, social media, etc.);
- Clarifying who the Policy applies to (employees, contractors, volunteers and others);
- Clarifying individual responsibilities for managers and staff with respect to personal and work use; and
- Examples of unacceptable uses that reflect the current technology environment.

Given the ongoing administrative nature of this Policy, staff suggests that Council’s oversight of the Policy is no longer required. When the Policy was first introduced, it seemed logical that a discussion with and input from Council would add value. At this stage of the Policy’s evolution, it has become a well-established, internally focussed practice and further Council oversight is not required. The City Manager would continue to review and approve this Policy.

Staff’s recommendation is that Council remove this Policy from the group of Council approved Policies it oversees. This change in oversight will also provide staff with greater efficiency in updating the Policy, if required going forward, and support Council’s focus on those policies requiring its oversight and direction.

CONCLUSION

The Finance Department and the Human Resources Department recommend that Council:

- Receive this report as information;
- Approve the proposed update of the Electronic Communications Policy; and
- Approve the Electronic Communications Policy be removed as a Council Policy, and become an Administrative Policy.

Kam Grewal, CPA
General Manager,
Finance

Nicola Webb
General Manager,
Human Resources

Appendix "I" Corporate Report C#420 – March 22, 1999 – Electronic Communications Policy
Appendix "II" City of Surrey Policy – Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy

NW/cc



Corporate NO: C420

Report COUNCIL DATE: Mar. 22, 1999

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: March 1, 1999**

FROM: General Manager, Finance and Technology **FILE: 0566-000**

SUBJECT: Electronic Communications Policy

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received as information.

BACKGROUND

The field of electronic communications has changed dramatically in the last few years. The use of mobile (cell) phones, Internet browsers, pagers, Electronic Mail (E-Mail) and so on has increased at a remarkable rate. These new technologies have proven to increase operational efficiency and offer improved customer service.

Since many of these new systems are now in use at the City, it is important to establish a policy to provide staff a clear understanding of appropriate and inappropriate use.

DISCUSSION

The City uses the following electronic communication services as a regular part of daily work:

- Regular and Long-distance Telephone Services
- Fax Machines
- E-Mail
- Mobile (Cell) Phones

- Pagers
- Internet access

The first step in developing a new policy was to research existing policies from other organizations. Although some of these services are relatively new, many organizations have already developed and implemented policies and guidelines. Our plan was to identify the key components common to all and customize them to suit the unique circumstances of the City.

Most of the policies we reviewed were extensive and thorough. Unfortunately, they were also overly wordy and legalistic in tone. We decided that a better approach was to include the main ideas and concepts from these documents in a streamlined, simply-worded chart. Our goal was to produce a Policy which, while being comprehensive, was summarized in an easy-to-use format fitting on 2 pages. In short a Policy that staff could easily use as a guide.

The Policy is organized into the following categories:

- Definitions,
- Acceptable use,
- Unacceptable use,
- Exceptions (conditions where personal use is permitted) and
- Compliance.

These categories overlay the various services in a chart format. The users can select the appropriate service and read down the chart to the desired category and obtain the related information.

The Policy is straight forward. Most of the content is common sense and easy to understand. The key to the policy is the “Unacceptable Use” category. This is best summarized by the statement “ if unsure, don't do it”.

The “Exception” category details allowable personal use. In some cases, like use of 1-900 telephone numbers, we have the technological capability to block access to a service and eliminate personal use options. But, the nature of

the rest of these services make policing or complete control of their use prohibitively expensive, if not impossible.

Recognizing this, we have permitted 'personal use' under certain circumstances. Personal use is subject to the same "Unacceptable Use" criteria, restricted to personal time and must be at no cost to the City. For instance, staff may use applications such as E-Mail and Internet on their own time, to research and improve their business knowledge. Or staff may deal with family issues using long distance calling or fax machines, as long they have received their Managers approval and there is no charge to the City. We believe this is a rational solution, given the limitations to prevent misuse, to the 'personal use' dilemma.

CONCLUSION

The City has expanded the use of these electronic communication services and it is time to provide staff with clear directions on the correct use and misuse of these technologies. Laminated copies of the Policy will be given to each Manager and a full copy of the Electronic Communication Policy and Code of Conduct By-Law will be distributed to all staff with their earnings statements. Since Council also uses this equipment, we have attached a laminated copy of the Corporate Policy for Council's personal use.

We recommend that Council approve the attached Corporate Policy

Gary D. Guthrie, CA

General Manager, Finance & Technology

Attachments

cc City Manager

City Clerk

**City of Surrey
Electronic Communications Program**

Purpose

To establish polices and procedures for City staff and contractors use of electronic mail, Internet, mobile phones, telephone services, fax services, and paging services for the City of Surrey.

	Electronic Mail	Internet	Mobile Phones	Telephone Services	Fax Services	Paging Services
Definitions	A computer based system that allows the creation sending receiving and forwarding of electronic messages and files within the City of Surrey and/or the Internet Data is centrally stored for 90 days.	Access to internal networks and the internet to provide world wide access to information databases, computer file transfer facilities, electronic mail and on-line discussion groups.	Portable telephones provided by the City for business purposes.	Telephone services including: Pre-authorized: -Toll lines (1-900) -Long distance calls	Devices used to transmit and receive information or documents.	Portable electronic devices used to receive messages sent by telephone.
Acceptable Use	Transmitting and receiving messages, documents and computer files for City business purposes only.	Transmitting and receiving messages, documents and computer files for City business purposes	Transmitting and receiving voice & text messages, for City business purposes	To conduct City business.	Transmitting and receiving documents for City business purposes.	Receiving text messages for City business purposes
Unacceptable Use	Transmitting any materials in violation of Canadian laws; duplicating storing or transmitting pornographic materials; using vulgar, profane or inappropriate language; transmitting or posting threatening, abusive obscene material; duplication, storing or transmitting copyrighted material that violates copyright law; advertising items for sale; lobbying for political purposes; operating a personal business; participating in pyramid or chain schemes. This in not an exhaustive list. Users are bound by the City's conflict of interest by-law. IF UNSURE, DON'T DO IT.					
Exceptions	Outside of normal working hours and subject to "unacceptable uses" defined above.	Outside of normal working hours and subject to "unacceptable uses" defined above.	Personal usage is only permitted when: no charge is levied to the City by the service provider or, as authorized by the General Manager or Designate	Personal long distance and toll line use may be permitted only with the authority of the General Manager or designate. Authorized personal calls must not be charged to the City.	Personal transmissions must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Long distance charges for personal transmissions must be reimbursed to the City.	No exceptions are permitted, business usage only.
Compliance	The City of Surrey has the right to audit its systems to ensure compliance with this policy. These tools and applications are the property of the City of Surrey and are subject to Freedom of Information requirements should requests be made of City records.The City may monitor, copy, access or disclose any information or files that you store, process, receive or transmit.					



City of Surrey

Policy

Policy Title:	Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy	
Approval Date:	2017 _____	_____
History:	1999 APR 26 (CP-2)	City Manager
Department:	Corporate Services	

Policy Statement

In accordance with Federal and Provincial legislation and related City policies, this Policy sets out the acceptable use standards that apply to employees, contractors, volunteers, and others, for the computing environment and electronic communication of the City of Surrey.

1. Reason for Policy

This Policy establishes the acceptable usage practices for the use of electronic mail, internet, intranet, phones (all formats), and other electronic systems that the City may implement over time.

Specifically, this Policy:

- Establishes the acceptable uses of the City of Surrey's computing environment and electronic communications;
- Informs City of Surrey employees, contractors, volunteers and others of their responsibilities;
- Supports Federal, Provincial and City of Surrey privacy and security requirements for all computing environment and electronic communications; and
- Clarifies the City's expectation that the City's electronic devices and electronic communications systems be used for appropriate purposes.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to users of the City's computing environment including, employees, contractors, volunteers, and any other individual acting on behalf of or conducting business for the City.

Use of the City's computing environment and electronic communications include work and personal use (as defined below). Additional procedures may be established at the department level to support employee compliance or to augment this Policy.

3. Definitions

Commercial Activity is any transaction related to advertising or promoting goods or services, providing a business opportunity, or directing a recipient to information which is considered to have a commercial purpose.

Computing Environment is any electronic information, information system, application, device (including PCs, laptops, mobile devices, and telephones) or other communication technology that is connected to the City's IT systems (including cloud based services and mobile services).

Electronic Communication is any form of digital communication including, but not limited to, email, text/short message service, instant messaging, online chat, social media posts/tweets, blog, online video/audio posts, telephonic, faxing, and Audio/Video conferencing.

Electronic Communication System is the technology on which the electronic communication occurs.

Social Media are websites and online applications that allow people and organizations to create, share, and exchange content or to participate in social networking.

Mobile Devices are devices such as a smart phone (iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, etc.), cell phone and tablets (iPads).

4. Responsibilities

Director Information Technology (IT) is responsible for issuing corporate policy, directives and guidelines on the appropriate use of City IT Resources.

Information Technology Security Manager is responsible for communicating this Policy to City employees, and for approving related standards and procedures.

Supervisors/Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees, volunteers, contractors and others are made aware of their responsibilities concerning this Policy.

Employees are responsible for reading, understanding and complying with this Policy and for seeking direction from their supervisors/manager if they have any questions.

5. Monitoring and Investigation

Any collection, access, use, transmission, or disposal of City related information (including records, reports, emails, data, etc.) or use of the computing environment or electronic communication systems, whether for personal or business use, may be audited, inspected, monitored or investigated to:

- a) Maintain, repair and manage the City's computing environment and electronic communication systems for efficient operation;
- b) Respond to and remediate a security or privacy incident;
- c) Meet legal requirements to produce information;
- d) Ensure accessibility of the City's computing environment and electronic communications systems for the continuity of work processes;
- e) Improve business processes and manage productivity; and
- f) Ensure City compliance with legislative and policy requirements.

6. Acceptable Use

The City's computing environment and electronic communications are to be used for work purposes meeting appropriate, professional standards.

Occasional personal use of the City's computing environment is permissible on the following basis:

- Personal use is done on personal time;
- The personal use does not violate any law such as copyright, Criminal Code, or privacy legislation;
- The personal use does not contravene City of Surrey policies;
- No software, music, movies, entertainment videos or other unapproved bandwidth-intensive applications are viewed, downloaded or saved while connected to the City network or the City cellular network;
- No charges are incurred by City for the personal use; and
- No electronic communications, including postings are made which could harm the reputation of the City.

7. Unacceptable Use

The following activities are prohibited:

Computing Environment

ALL DEVICES

- Any activity that is illegal or fraudulent under federal or provincial legislation;
- Unauthorized downloading, installation or copying of copyrighted material (including software) for which the City does not have a license;
- Accessing City data, a City application or using a City account for a purpose other than conducting City business (other than as described in Personal Use above);
- Unauthorized downloading, installing or use of unapproved software or cloud services;
- Accessing data, a system, or an account for a purpose other than conducting City business;
- Introduction of malicious programs into the network or server (e.g. viruses, password breakers and keystroke recorders);
- Sharing account passwords or allowing use of employee City accounts by others;
- Use of a City of Surrey system to procure or transmit material which is not permitted under the City of Surrey's Code of Conduct By-law 1994 No. 12196, Respectful Workplace Policy or Human Rights Policy;
- Unauthorized access or use of City of Surrey data or applications; and
- Use of unauthorized cloud services or mobile applications for conducting City business.

The above noted restrictions apply to the use of any City of Surrey computing environment at any time.

Electronic Communications System

- Distributing personal information or any other privileged, confidential or sensitive information, without proper authorization;
- Sending unsolicited messages, including the sending of "junk mail/text" or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material;
- Any form of harassment via email, telephone, texting, or any other electronic communication, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages; and
- Impersonation of another sender or another sender's email address.

The above noted restrictions apply to the use of any City of Surrey electronic communications system at any time.

8. Email Communication

Email use by City of Surrey users is subject to the conditions set out in this Policy regarding electronic communications, other City Policies, and applicable Federal and Provincial legislation.

9. Compliance

Audit

The City of Surrey has the right to audit its computing environment and electronic communications to ensure compliance with this Policy. Its computing environment, tools and applications are the property of the City of Surrey and are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The City may monitor, copy, access or disclose any information or files that are stored, processed, received or transmitted on its computing environment.

The City of Surrey reserves the right to edit and remove inappropriate information or contributions to its computing environment and electronic communications systems.

Exceptions

Any exception to the Policy must be approved in writing by the Director Information Technology.

Non-Compliance

An employee found to have violated this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Other users found to have violated this Policy may be denied access to the City's computing environment and electronic communications system and may have their relationship with the City ended.

Users of the City's computing environment and electronic communications systems are subject to the City's Code of Conduct By-Law, 1994, No. 12196, the City's Human Rights Policy, the City's Social Media Policy, and the City's Respectful Workplace Policy.