

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	TOPIC: COMPUTER SERVICES APPROPRIATE AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY
EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES MANUAL	<u>SECTION: 19.0</u> <u>PAGE 1 OF 5</u> <u>EFFECTIVE DATE:</u> <u>MAY 1, 2000</u> <u>REVISION #3:</u> <u>DEC. 1. 2024</u>

APPROPRIATE AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Office of Technology and Strategic Services (OTSS) is dedicated to providing the best service to its customers and is committed to ensuring that the information systems resources of the State of Mississippi and MDE are used appropriately for their intended purposes. The information systems resources are in place to facilitate the ability of MDE employees to do their job efficiently and productively.

This policy governs the use of the MDE information systems resources, which include all computers, computer-based communication networks, Internet, and all related equipment administered by OTSS and/or assigned to an employee to conduct MDE business. The electronic communications and facilities of MDE are the property of the State of Mississippi and by using these facilities, or any equipment, software, or hardware assigned to an employee to conduct MDE business, the user acknowledges consent to abide by this policy. A “user” is defined as any person employed by MDE, which includes full-time, part-time, temporary, contract employees, persons who are employed by contractors or subcontractors of MDE, and any other individuals who are authorized to use agency computer resources. “Appropriate use” is defined as official business conducted on behalf of the MDE according to its statutory mission and ongoing work policies and operations. Game playing or use of computers for personal financial gain or business other than that conducted for the MDE is strictly prohibited. Instant messaging through Microsoft Teams may only be used for business related purposes. Use of the system for illegal acts or to view or download sexually explicit material is strictly forbidden. The user should be aware that any communications or uses of the MDE information systems resources, or the use of any information systems resources provided to an employee to conduct MDE business are not considered private or confidential and can be monitored at any time. All users are hereby notified that system security features allow any messages or usage to be monitored and archived regardless of passwords and message deletions, and that computer use is subject to search and monitoring at any time.

Appropriate use reflects honesty and ethical behavior and demonstrates consideration in the consumption of shared resources.

For any questions, employees should contact their immediate supervisor, MDE Human Resources Manager, or the OTSS Security Administrator clarification or additional information.

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SOFTWARE:

Software, including but not limited to, Internet downloads, utilities, add-ins, programs (including shareware, freeware and Internet access software), patches, upgrades, or clip-art, shall not be installed on any desktop, notebook personal computer (PC), Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), Tablet, Smart Phone, or server by anyone other than a representative of the OTSS Department, without notification to OTSS or a Help Desk ticket. Games are not permitted on any desktop, PC, or server. OTSS shall approve all software purchased for use on MDE equipment in writing.

Software owned or licensed by MDE may not be copied to alternate media, distributed by e-mail, transmitted electronically, or used in its original form other than on MDE PCs, or any PC assigned to an employee to conduct MDE business, without written permission from designated OTSS personnel. In no case shall the license agreement or copyright to be violated.

Standard software shall be used for all internal functions. Approved non-standard software is only to be used to interface with customer or vendor organizations when they require the non-standard software. Any non-standard software necessary to perform a specific job function will need to be brought to the attention of the OTSS Director. Those applications shall be the sole responsibility of that department or program office and if the application interferes with any required programs, applications, and utilities, it should not be used, and if in use, it may be disabled. OTSS will maintain a list of all supported, approved software.

HARDWARE:

All PCs, workstations, printers, add-in cards, memory modules, and other associated equipment are the property of MDE and should not be used for purposes other than MDE business. No changes, modifications, additions, or equipment removals may be done without notification to OTSS.

Any equipment being transferred to another employee or to a school district must fill out a transfer form to be submitted to the Accounting Office with a copy sent to OTSS.

Except notebook PCs, PDAs, Tablets, or Smart Phones, used in daily offsite work, no information systems equipment should be removed from MDE premises without the permission of one's immediate supervisor. If equipment is to be off premises, the employee responsible for the equipment must file a hand-written receipt with OTSS.

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ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL):

MDE email system shall be used for electronically conducting official business correspondence. Employees should keep personal use of the email system to a minimum. All email sent/received or stored by the MDE email system shall become the property of MDE. Any form of harassment via email, telephone, text, or paging, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages is forbidden. Unauthorized use, or forging, of email header information is forbidden.

MDE employees have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on the agency's email system. MDE may monitor messages without prior notice, and all messages are considered public records subject to disclosure under the Mississippi Public Records Act unless labeled otherwise by State or MDE attorneys. MDE employees shall not set up rules to automatically forward email messages outside of the MDE mail system to personal or other type accounts. Data classified as Sensitive should never be sent via email. This includes, but is not limited to, data such as Social Security numbers, passwords, and user account information for logging in to various systems.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

State email addresses shall not be used to register for personal social media activity. The Mississippi State Employee Handbook provides definitions, guidelines, and reminders regarding personal use of social media by State employees. Employees may not attribute personal statements, opinions or beliefs to MDE when engaged in blogging. If an employee is expressing his or her beliefs and/or opinions in blogs, the employee may not, expressly, or implicitly, represent themselves as an employee or representative of MDE. Employees assume all risk associated with blogging.

MDE Oath of Confidentiality (Confidentiality Agreement) applies to blogging. As such, Employees are prohibited from revealing any Sensitive or proprietary information, trade secrets or any other material covered by MDE Data Privacy policy, State of Mississippi Enterprise Security Policy, or other State or agency describing such.

HELPDESK:

The OTSS has established a HELPDESK for accepting requests for assistance from anyone who is having computer hardware/software or network related problems. These requests will be entered into the HELPDESK database for tracking and distributed to the first available technician to assist employees. These technicians will be instructed to not accept any help request that has not been

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processed by OTSS HELPDESK. This is to ensure that all issues will be handled in an orderly and timely manner.

Any request for computer services, whether it is a work order, a modification to a current program, a special report, etc., must be placed on the OTSS HELPDESK. The requesting office and division must provide a detailed description of the requested services. In addition, the requesting division should provide a statement of urgency, a priority, and a requested completion date. Many requests for program changes, etc., cannot be accomplished in a short period of time; therefore, the OTSS office should be given as much lead time as possible. The request will be more likely to be completed by the time it is needed if it contains a due date and not just an "As Soon As Possible" statement.

PRACTICES:

No materials, including obscene, racist, sexist, harassing, or offensive based on color, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, are to be disseminated in any manner which are derogatory to any person or group.

All external data devices, e-mail attachments, and executable e-mail messages should automatically be scanned for viruses using the virus detection software installed on all MDE computer workstations which have been configured by OTSS. If employees have made any configuration changes to their workstation, even with the approval of OTSS, it is their responsibility to ensure virus protection prior to opening/executing external data devices, e-mail attachments or executable e-mail messages.

Like all MDE information systems resources, Internet access and e-mail are for work-related use. Employees shall not use electronic communications systems, such as email, to harass or solicit others or interfere with their work. Visits to sites and e-mail access can and may be monitored at the specific individual level.

Employees may not use MDE information systems resources, or any information systems resources provided to an employee to conduct MDE business for soliciting, personal financial gain, partisan political activities, or further disseminating "junk" email, such as chain letters. MDE email accounts should not be used to receive, store, or disseminate solicited or unsolicited email known as 'SPAM'. Such items should be deleted immediately. Mailbox restrictions may be imposed for violating MDE policy.

All employees shall store data files (word documents, spreadsheets, databases, etc.) in their user's directory on the network files storage (One Drive, SharePoint, etc.) If the employee is unfamiliar with these options, the office of OTSS will assist in setting these up on their PC. OTSS is not

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responsible for any data lost on the PC in the process of repairing or replacing the computer. Employees are responsible for the data in their care. If an employee account is shown to actively behaving in a manner out of the ordinary (i.e., mass file deletion, copies, or encryption) OTSS is authorized to disable the account pending further review and inquiry.

Employees are expected to report policy violations, when observed, to their supervisor, or if the violation involves the supervisor, to the MDE Human Resources Manager and General Counsel. Likewise, if an employee witnesses a violation, they are expected to cooperate in any investigation of the violation.

Users shall not disable or circumvent any content filtering mechanisms that are in place preventing access to inappropriate content by students, in accordance with CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act).

CONSEQUENCES:

Any user who knowingly and willingly violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment. If the employee is found to have deliberately destroyed, deleted, or made data of any type inaccessible for the agency to continue its activities or business as usual that employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Furthermore, in the event of suspected illegal activity, the user will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authority.