

POLICY NO LG14 COMPUTER USE, INTERNET AND EMAIL POLICY

DEPARTMENT:	Corporate Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Manager Corporate Services
LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:	Ensure Council services support the betterment of the community while balancing statutory requirements with community and customer needs
STATUTORY AUTHORITY:	N/A
OBJECTIVE:	The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that employees of Break O'Day Council use information technology resources in an appropriate manner. Information technology resources such as equipment, software, email and internet access are provided to improve productivity in the employee's conduct of Break O'Day Council operations. This policy provides direction and guidelines to ensure appropriate use of the resources provided.
POLICY INFORMATION:	Adopted 19 March 2012 – Minute No 03/12.15.4.069 Amended 17 March 2014 – Minute No 03/14.11.12.057 Amended 20 April 2015 – Minute No 04/15.11.13.96 Amended 19 February 2018 – Minute No 02/18.12.4.29

POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to reflect the ideals and values by which the Break O'Day Council manages:

- Access and use of information technology and communication equipment and software.
- Access to and distribution of information.
- The use of email and internet technology in the workplace.

It is intended that this policy will encompass the whole of Break O'Day Council's activities including the operations at works depots and other business areas that are/may become operational. This policy shall apply to all users of internet and email systems provided by Break O'Day Council, including Break O'Day Councillors, all permanent, temporary and casual staff and any contractors and volunteers who are given access to Break O'Day Council's technology, equipment and systems.

2. COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Computer equipment and technology items are provided by Break O'Day Council to assist employees in the performance of their duties. Each employee is responsible for using this equipment in an appropriate manner. Incidental use of computer equipment for personal purposes is understandable, and all such use should be undertaken in a manner that does not negatively affect the equipment's use for their operational purposes.

3. SOFTWARE

Unauthorised installation of software is strictly prohibited. Only the General Manager and Corporate Services Manager or Council's contracted IT Support organisation are permitted to install software or authorise the installation of software by non-IT personnel. Software includes application programs, screensavers, desktop backgrounds, utilities, shareware, games and all other executable files.

4. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The computer systems developed or used by Break O'Day Council have been designed and developed at a cost to the Break O'Day Council. Such systems, and all ancillary documentation and information in relation to them constitute intellectual property owned by Break O'Day Council or the person who has authorised Break O'Day Council to use them. Employees, volunteers and contractors are required to protect the intellectual property of Break O'Day Council and where a system is being used under license from another person, the requirements of the licensor must be observed.

5. SYSTEMS' SECURITY/STORAGE

Employees must not delete, rearrange, access or otherwise use stored information in the Break O'Day Council's computer systems other than within the scope and course of the proper and diligent performance of the employee's duties. Where an employee has been provided with a password to facilitate access to the Break O'Day Council's computer systems or computer stored data, the employee shall not disclose the password or allow it to become known to any person, including Break O'Day Council's employees and agents.

Data and information is stored on Council's servers and records system in a systematic format. Shared organisation information and data should be filed according to this system. Information and data on the hard drives of individual work stations (eg "c drives") is not backed up and should not be used for organisationally important information.

6. EMAIL TECHNOLOGY

Email is an important productivity tool for business, as well as a personal communication medium. Care should be taken to avoid email overload, which wastes time by the recipient and places a burden on the technical network resources used to deliver email. Each employee is accountable for using email in a responsible manner. Respective Managers are also accountable for ensuring that employees are aware of their accountabilities and that these guidelines are adhered to as far as practicable.

Break O'Day Council is committed to effective and efficient email use, encompassing creation, retention and deletion of all relevant emails. Email is not to be used for inappropriate purposes. All email received and sent on the Break O'Day Council computer networks is owned by the Break O'Day Council and not individual users.

Non-adherence to this policy or abuse of the email system and/or the internet is not acceptable behaviour and will be dealt with under the Break O'Day Council's Performance Appraisal/disciplinary process. This may involve disciplinary action and in extreme cases, may lead to termination of employment.

This policy identifies rules and guidelines relating to the use of the Break O'Day Council's email system and general good email practice.

7. RULES FOR USE OF EMAIL

All email stored on the Break O'Day Council computer networks is owned by the Break O'Day Council and is not considered private. As such, the Break O'Day Council may access and monitor employee's email to evaluate content or for other purposes.

Email messages must not contain defamatory, disparaging or disrespectful comments about people or organisations.

Email must not be used for any form of harassment. Employees must not transmit any data that is or could be conceived as threatening, obscene, pornographic, offensive, defamatory or sexually explicit. Whilst employees cannot be held accountable for receiving such emails, they will be held accountable for forwarding or storing such messages.

The email system is provided for work use to advance the business interests of the Break O'Day Council. It is recognised that personal emails will be received and sent but this should be kept to a minimum. Individuals are able to use the internet and email facilities in their own time providing that it does not impact adversely on the normal running of the computing systems.

Email, such as chain letters or similar "junk" email must not be originated by, or forwarded to anyone internal or external to the Break O'Day Council.

Any warnings about viruses received from any source should be referred to the Corporate Services Manager or Council's contracted IT Support organisation as soon as possible.

All emails sent to recipients outside the Break O'Day Council should include the most recent official email confidentiality footer.

Emails are correspondence and need to be recorded in Council's Record Management system. It is the responsibility of the employee receiving and/or sending correspondence by email to ensure that this is recorded in an appropriate and timely fashion.

8. EMAIL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The following provide guidelines for good practice when using e-mail:

Sending e-mail messages

- Only send email messages to those who need them
- Refer to relevant Procedures/Communication Guides/Style Guides for the format of emails
- Using email to deliver external documents is not secure and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, discretion must be exercised when sending emails externally. Where feasible, confidential information should not be sent via email to external organisations – alternative arrangements, such as DropBox or the courier of hard copy should be utilised
- Refer to Council's procedure for large attachments
- Avoid sending large attachments to a large distribution list, as it multiplies the system resources required to deliver the mail
- Be aware that large attachments may take a large amount of time to deliver, and may not be accepted by the recipients system
- Do not "reply with history" to emails that had attachments in the original email
- Be aware that the downloading of video and audio across the internet has the potential to significantly affect the performance of the computer network

- You should ensure that your password and user accesses are kept confidential. Remember that it is your individual name, as well as that of the Break O'Day Council that will be broadcast on the internet
- Users who use the internet to make electronic purchases should ensure that data they submit is adequately protected and secure
- Please note the procedure for official communications by email and how it must be recorded in the Central Filing System
- Ensure all emails are appropriately flagged for delivery receipt and read receipt

Receiving email messages

- DO NOT forward inappropriate emails you have received to others, delete immediately
- Unsolicited email from unidentified sources should be treated as hostile, and should be deleted without opening
- Be wary of attachments from untrusted sources. Request that the Corporate Services Manager or Council's contracted IT Support organisation run a virus check on the email and the attachments before opening
- Do not "reply to all" unless everyone has to see the reply
- If the incoming email is a formal communication from an external source please ensure the email is forwarded to the Break O'Day Council's records management area or saved directly in HPE Content Manager
- Regularly delete messages that are no longer required
- Where requested by the sender, dispatch read receipts

9. INTERNET TECHNOLOGY

This policy provides rules and guidelines on using the Break O'Day Council gateway to the internet within the Break O'Day Council Facility.

The Internet is a tool that can be used for information gathering and research. It can also be a time waster, impacting on personal productivity, and overuse may hinder normal business activities which rely on the internet gateway. As such, each employee is individually accountable for using the internet in a responsible manner. Respective managers are also accountable for ensuring that employees are aware of their accountabilities and that these guidelines are adhered to as far as practicable.

10. RULES FOR THE USE OF THE INTERNET

Employees can use the Internet for gathering information or research related to Break O'Day Council business activities.

The Break O'Day Council may monitor use of the internet by its employees.

Under no circumstances are web-sites known to contain offensive or potentially offensive material to be visited.

Under no circumstances is threatening, obscene, pornographic, offensive or sexually abusive material to be viewed or down loaded from the internet.

Employees are prohibited from downloading any type of software from the internet without the permission of the Corporate Services Manager or the Council's contracted IT Support organisation.

Any files downloaded from the Internet should be checked automatically by the system for viruses.

The internet is not to be used for “chat” lines for personal purposes.

11. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years in line with the Council’s Policy Framework or earlier in the event of major changes to legislation or related policies, procedures or if deemed necessary by the General Manager.