City of Hickory Electronic Communications Policy

Telephones, radios, voice mail systems, and computers, (including electronic mail systems and Internet access), are provided for official City business, and excessive personal use of these devices is prohibited.

It is the user's responsibility to read and abide by topics set forth in this document.

It is the Department Heads' responsibility to ensure their department's users abide by the guidelines set forth in this and other related documents.

The City expects this policy to be followed in all communications technology use, including communications sent or received outside the City organization.

The following uses of the City's communications systems are prohibited:

Use of the communications systems to send chain letters.

Use of the communications systems to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.

Use of the communications systems for purposes of satisfying idle curiosity about the affairs of others, with no substantial business purpose for obtaining access to the files or communications of others.

Use of the communications systems to compromise the integrity of the City and its business in any way.

Use of the communications systems to send messages containing offensive, abusive, discriminatory, threatening, harassing, or other language inappropriate for the organization.

Use of the communications systems to send messages that violate the City's Policy Against Sexual Harassment

Use of the communications systems for moonlighting, job searches, or the advertisement of personal business may only occur in the Bulletin Board Public Folder.

Communication through these devices is subject to monitoring by the City.

All electronic communications are the property of the City and therefore are not considered private. The City will refrain from accessing employees' electronic communications, unless it has legitimate reasons to do so. These reasons may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Upon leaving the employ of the City for any reason, a user's mail may be accessed for the purpose of saving those messages that pertain to City business. These files may be subject to transfer to another user if necessary to conduct city business.

When necessary to investigate a possible violation of a City policy or a breach of the security of the communications systems.

In the event there is reasonable suspicion a user has committed or is committing a crime against the City or for which the City could be held liable.

The City will disclose any electronic mail message as required by law. Any questions regarding the legality of requests should referred to the City Clerk. The City will give notice of such disclosure to users who have sent or received such messages unless the City believes that it may have been a victim of a crime or has a legal obligation not to do so.

When under legal obligation the Director, Information Services, in conjunction with the appropriate Department Head will be notified of, and will assist in complying with, any requests for access to the contents of electronic mail without the consent of a sender or recipient.

Access solely for the purposes of assuring system security must be approved in advance by the Director, Information Services.

Employees should take steps to assure City documents which should be available to other employees of the City are so available.

If a user will be away from work for an extended period of time (i.e. annual leave, illness, and/or suspension) action should be taken to forward messages to another appropriate user.

Messages that have been deleted from a user's in box or out box will be permanently deleted upon logging out every day. If a message needs to be kept, it should be saved in a system folder. Electronic mail files that are left in system folders are backed up nightly.

Violations of any of the provisions of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, as provided for in the Personnel Ordinance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

I _____ have received a copy of the City of Hickory's Electronic Communications Policy. I understand that violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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Coworker's Signature Date