

# **Office of Selectmen**

**6 Holland Street • Post Office Box 139  
Moultonborough, N.H. 03254  
(603) 476-2347**

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

### **No. 13**

#### **INTERNET ACCESS AND e-mail USE**

The Town of Moultonborough provides access to the vast information resources of the “electronic superhighway” to help employees do their jobs faster and more efficiently. Unfortunately, because of infrastructure limitations, we can not provide every employee access. The facilities required to provide even limited access represent a considerable commitment of Town resources for telecommunications, networking, software, storage, etc.

When employees have access to the Internet and e-mail, they assume additional responsibility in terms of personal and job performance. The Board of Selectmen offers this Internet Access and e-mail Use Policy to help them understand our expectations when they use these tools and the electronic media to which they then have access. We hope to help everyone use those resources wisely.

While we have set forth specific requirements for use below, we would like to start by describing our philosophy regarding the use of these electronic media. First and foremost, Internet access and e-mail are business tools for the Town. We provide them for use at a substantial cost to Moultonborough’s taxpayers. That means that we expect employees to use these tools for Town-related purposes. This includes communication with or for the Town’s residents, researching relevant topics, intergovernmental agency communications, etc. We provide access to these tools to enhance employee’s ability to obtain and transmit information on behalf of the Town and its residents. To be absolutely clear, all existing Town Policies, Ordinances, state and federal laws, administrative rules and governing directives apply to employee conduct over this electronic media.

Unnecessary or unauthorized usage takes away from work time, consumes supplies and ties up other valuable resources. Unlawful usage may also garner negative publicity for those of us who strive to serve the residents and expose both you and the Town to significant legal liabilities.

Internet access, e-mail, chat groups and news groups accessible over the Internet give each individual Internet user an immense reach to provide information and serve the needs of our residents. Because of the power of this electronic tool we must take special care to maintain the clarity, consistency and integrity of the Town’s image and posture. People can and will take anything an elected official, employee or volunteer posts to the Internet or writes in an e-mail as

an official position. That is why we expect users to forgo a measure of their individual freedom when they use the Internet, e-mail, chat rooms, news rooms or other electronic media.

While connection to the Internet offers a world of potential benefits, it can also open the door to some significant risks to our data and systems if we do not follow appropriate security discipline. The overriding principle is that security is to be everyone's first concern. We will hold an Internet user accountable for any breaches of proper conduct, security or confidentiality.

### **Use of the Internet**

The Town currently has or will acquire software and systems that can monitor and record Internet usage. Employees should at all times be aware that we may be monitoring their exchanges on the Internet and conduct their business accordingly. We want all employees to be aware that security systems exist that are capable of recording each World Wide Web site visit, each chat room conversation, each news group exchange and every e-mail message you send or receive. We reserve the right to review all electronic media activity and analyze usage patterns to safeguard the trust, image and integrity of the Town, its employees and, most importantly, its residents.

We expressly forbid the display of any kind of sexually explicit image or document on any Town system. To do so is a violation of our policy regarding sexual harassment. In addition, employees may not archive, store, distribute, edit or record sexually explicit material using Town computing resources.

No employee may knowingly use the Town's Internet facilities and computing resources to violate the laws, rules and regulations of New Hampshire or the United States. The same restriction applies to the laws and regulations of any other municipality, county, parish, province, state, nation or other political division or subdivision. Use of any Town resources for illegal activity is grounds for immediate dismissal. The Board of Selectmen will cooperate with any legitimate law enforcement agency investigating allegations of illegal use or misuse of electronic data media.

Employees with Internet access may download only software with direct business use to the Town. Employees must make arrangements to properly license and register any software downloaded. The Board of Selectmen must receive written notification of software downloaded and confirmation of licensing or registration, as appropriate, at their next regular meeting. Any software or files downloaded into Town computer equipment via the Internet becomes the property of the Town. Employees must check any software or files they download into Town computer equipment using current anti-virus software. Employees may only then use any such software or files in ways that are consistent with their licenses or copyrights.

No employee may use Town facilities knowingly to download or distribute pirated software or data.

No employee may use the Town's Internet facilities to deliberately propagate any virus, worm, Trojan horse or trap door program.

Each employee using the Town's Internet facilities shall identify himself or herself honestly, accurately and completely at all times, including in chat and news groups.

Only those employees or officials duly authorized to speak on behalf of the Town may speak or write in the name of the Town to any news group or in any chat room. Other employees may participate in news groups or chats in the course of business when relevant to their duties, but they do so as individuals speaking only for themselves. Where an individual participant identifies himself or herself as an employee of the Town, that employee must refrain from any unauthorized endorsement or appearance of endorsement by the Town. Only those employees or officials duly authorized to speak to the media, to analysts or in public gatherings on behalf of the Town may grant such authority to news group or chat room participants.

We want to remind every employee that chat and news groups are public forums. It is inappropriate to reveal any confidential information or material covered by federal or state law or the Town's confidentiality procedures and policies. The employee who releases protected information via news group or chat room, whether or not the release is inadvertent, will be subject to all penalties existing under federal and state law and Town policies and procedures.

The Board of Selectmen will limit Internet access to those employees who demonstrate a legitimate need for access in order to meet and complete their responsibilities.

Since colleagues or customers may deem a wide variety of materials offensive, it is a violation of this policy to knowingly or willfully store, view, print or redistribute any document or graphic file not directly related to the user's job or the Town's business activities.

The Board of Selectmen, acting on behalf of the Town, will comply with reasonable requests from law enforcement and regulatory agencies regarding an employee's Internet activity.

Employees with Internet access may not use the Town's Internet facilities to download entertainment software or games, or to play games against opponents over the Internet.

Employees must scan for viruses any file that they download before you run or access it.

As with any privilege, the Board of Selectmen can revoke Internet and e-mail access if an employee misuses it. Please abide by this policy. If an employee or official has any questions, he or she should contact the Administration Department, Town Administrator or Board of Selectmen for answers or clarifications.

### **e-mail Policy**

The Town of Moultonborough provides e-mail accounts to its employees to enhance job performance and to expedite correspondence between Town officials, employees, residents, customers and business associates. Personal communications, although not strictly prohibited, must be kept at a minimum in order to maximize productivity.

The Board of Selectmen does not condone the use of e-mail accounts for exchanging jokes or discriminatory materials or for any other correspondence that is unethical, immoral in nature or simply in poor taste. We do not condone its use for exploiting or harassing others.

We choose to provide an e-mail account to expedite correspondence and to enhance job performance. Any other use of e-mail is unauthorized and may be grounds for disciplinary action or termination. All e-mail remains the property of the Town of Moultonborough.

The Board of Selectmen understands the exigency and necessity for employee e-mail correspondence and the benefits gained thereby. However, we also recognize that e-mail can present an opportunity for negligence that can constitute irrevocable damage to the Town and its employees. To best protect the Town and its employees, we place the following provisions into effect.

1. Elected officials or employees looking to gain an e-mail account must have a concrete motive for doing so and must have permission from their department head (if appropriate) in order to initiate this process.
2. Elected officials, department heads or supervisors must request e-mail access in writing specifying the user, their title, the supervisor, department and the reason for establishing the account. Send this request to the Board of Selectmen through the Town Administrator.
3. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right, at their discretion, to remove e-mail messages from official or employee accounts where there is reason to believe that offensive or off color jokes are being inappropriately disseminated; discriminatory or harassing messages are being created; the employee uses the account for unethical or immoral purposes; or, e-mail is being used for purposes other than business or customer service unrelated to the employee's position.
4. The Board of Selectmen may, at their discretion, immediately revoke an official's or employee's e-mail account should they encounter any of the previously listed instances to hold true. The Board of Selectmen may then determine what additional disciplinary action needs to take place in the event that there is gross negligence with e-mail.

Each elected official or employee who desires access to electronic media, including the Internet and e-mail, will by signing the appropriate form provided acknowledge that they fully understand and agree to the above Policy of the Town of Moultonborough.

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This policy is effective May 4, 2000, by order of the Board of Selectmen.

Ernest E. Davis, Jr., Chairman  
Robert W. Foster  
Russell C. Wakefield

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

This Policy received review, revision and update on September 21, 2006

Karel A. Crawford, Chairman  
Edward J. Charest  
Ernest E. Davis, Jr.  
James F. Gray  
Joel R. Mudgett  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

## **Internet and e-mail Use Policy**

The Board of Selectmen provides Internet access and e-mail accounts to its employees for business use. Our intent is to enhance job performance and to expedite correspondence between Town officials, employees, residents, customers and business associates. Personal communications, although not strictly prohibited, must be kept at a minimum in order to maximize productivity. Any other use of the Internet or e-mail is unauthorized and may be grounds for disciplinary action or termination. All material downloaded or software from the Internet and all business related e-mail correspondence remains the property of the Town of Moultonborough.

No employee may knowingly use the Town's Internet facilities and computing resources to violate the laws, rules and regulations of New Hampshire or the United States. The same restriction applies to the laws and regulations of any other municipality, county, parish, province, state, nation or other political division or subdivision. Use of any Town resources for illegal activity is grounds for immediate dismissal. The Board of Selectmen will cooperate with any legitimate law enforcement agency investigating allegations of illegal use or misuse of electronic data media.

The Board of Selectmen does not condone the use of the Internet or e-mail accounts for exchanging jokes or discriminatory materials or for any other correspondence that is unethical, immoral in nature or simply in poor taste. We do not condone its use for exploiting or harassing others. We expressly forbid the display, archival, storage, distribution, editing or recording of any kind of sexually explicit image or document on any Town system.

The Board of Selectmen understands that employees having Internet access and the ability to correspond by e-mail present the potential for tremendous benefits to the Town and its residents. However, we also recognize that the Internet and e-mail can present an opportunity for negligence that can likewise do irrevocable damage to the Town and its employees. To best protect the Town and its employees, we place these provisions into effect. All other provisions of the Internet Access and e-mail Policy remain, whether or not they are enumerated here.

1. Elected officials or employees looking to gain an e-mail account must have a concrete motive for doing so and must have permission from their department head (if appropriate) in order to initiate this process. Elected officials, department heads or supervisors must request e-mail access in writing specifying the user, their title, the supervisor, department and the reason for establishing the account. Send this request to the Board of Selectmen through the Town Administrator.
2. The Board of Selectmen reserves the right, at their discretion, to remove downloaded information or e-mail messages from official or employee accounts where there is reason to believe that information or messages contained in the account are offensive; discriminatory or harassing messages are being created; the employee uses the account for unethical or immoral purposes; or, e-mail is being used for purposes other than business or customer service unrelated to the employee's position.

4. The Board of Selectmen may, at their discretion, immediately revoke an official's or employee's e-mail account should they encounter any of the previously listed instances to hold true. The Board of Selectmen may then determine what additional disciplinary action needs to take place in the event that there is gross negligence with e-mail.

Each elected official or employee who desires access to electronic media, including the Internet and e-mail, will by signing below acknowledge that they fully understand and agree to the above and to the Internet and e-mail Use Policy of the Town of Moultonborough.

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I have read and do here acknowledge the "e-mail Policy" for the Town of Moultonborough. I fully understand that this Policy applies to me. I accept the Policy and hereby apply for Internet and e-mail access under its provisions.

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Employee Signature

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Employee Name (Printed or typed)

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Date