

1.03(c) - COMMUNICATIONS – USE OF TECHNOLOGY

INTENT: Guidelines for the use of all agency communication devices

POLICY

Use of Western Human Resource Corp. communication systems must be lawful, ethical and consistent with WHRC professional reputation, standards, policies, procedures and guidelines.

In using any WHRC communications systems, all employees must exercise good judgement and follow the spirit of this policy. Access is a privilege and is at the discretion of Head Office.

Communications systems include SMS/texting, e-mail, voice mail, the Internet (while on WHRC premises or remote access via WHRC Internet accounts), as well as any other form of communication.

CONDITIONS

The following uses of communications systems are prohibited:

- A purpose inconsistent with the mission, ethics, and goals of WHRC
- Illegal, unethical or immoral uses;
- Sending, receiving or accessing offensive, objectionable, abusive, pornographic, obscene, sexist, racist, harassing or provocative messages, images or other materials, including adult-oriented Web sites or news groups;
- Defamatory, derogatory, or false messages;
- Distributing e-mail chain letters;
- Political activities, solicitation of funds, or advertising foods or services;
- Other commercial or business uses;
- Unauthorized access to other users' e-mail, data or communications;
- Uses that infringe copyright or other intellectual property rights;
- Unsecured disclosure of confidential or privileged information;
- Unauthorized use of data encryption;
- Uses that may compromise system integrity or degrade system performance.

Photographs and images of individuals receiving service or of WHRC personnel are NOT to be posted (physically, e.g., bulletin boards, or electronically, e.g., Facebook, Instagram, webpages, email, SMS/text), sent or shown without the express permission of a manager or Head Office. Management and staff are discouraged from taking photographs without prior permission.

All individual records are to be treated as a form of communication that is confidential, and steps, including use of screen savers, shutting down the websites (e.g., Sharevision)

when away from the computer, keeping passwords private, are to be taken to protect the privacy and dignity of individuals receiving service.

Personal uses

Communications systems may be used for personal purposes (e.g. to send and receive e-mail, voice-mail messages of a personal nature, to access the Internet for personal use) provided that, in the opinion of WHRC, those uses do not interfere with the organization’s business and do not compromise the integrity and efficiency of the agency’s communications systems, the agency’s professionalism or its reputation.

Personal business on agency or “work” time is limited by Policy 6.14 and applies.

Policies preventing harassment and discrimination (6.27, 6.27(a), etc.) apply.

All personal uses of the communications systems must comply with this policy and the organization’s other policies, procedures and guidelines including the Code of Ethics, Philosophy, Conduct and Behaviour and other positive workplace conduct expectations. Employees have the responsibility to bring forward to their manager any concerns they have regarding its use.

It should be carefully noted that all communications systems, data and uses, including e-mail, voice-mail and Internet, are not private and are subject to WHRC access and control.

Unless express permission has been given by Head Office or designate, any expenses incurred by an employee through the use of any WHRC controlled communication systems will be reimbursed by the employee.

Third-party access

Non-employees are not permitted to use or access the communications systems, including the organization’s Internet and e-mail accounts, without prior written authorization from the agency director.

Confidential communications

a. Internal E-mail

Internet e-mail is confidential and for internal use only. Internal e-mail may not be distributed to persons outside the agency unless such distribution is clearly authorized by the author of the e-mail. WHRC personnel are encouraged to use non-identifying means of exchanging information about individuals receiving service (e.g., initials), and to use discretion when sending sensitive information.

b. External E-mail

External e-mail and data transmission is not secure or private unless it is encrypted. E-mail and other data sent externally will pass through many computers and systems that are not under WHRC control, and may be subject to unauthorized access. WHRC personnel are encouraged to use non-identifying means of exchanging information about individuals receiving service (e.g., initials), and to use discretion when sending sensitive information.

Privacy

There is no assurance of privacy regarding the use of communications systems or the data contained in the communications systems, including e-mail and voice mail. Confidentiality policies and procedures apply to all information being exchanged, but those participating in information exchange through text, email or voice mail are understood to recognize agency access and the possibility of external access.

Communications systems and all data contained in the communications systems, including Sharevision and other Internet or 'cloud-based' systems, e-mail and voice mail, are the property of WHRC.

WHRC may access, inspect, retrieve, review, read, copy, store, archive, delete, destroy, distribute or disclose to others (including courts and law enforcement authorities) all communications systems data and uses, including text, e-mail, voice mail and Internet use, without any further notice as may be considered necessary or appropriate. WHRC has no obligation to monitor communications systems use and data.

Users who want their Internet use or e-mail or voice mail communications to be private should not use WHRC communications systems.

E-mail Protocols

E-mail is subject to the legal and practical consequences as other written communications. Users should thus exercise the same good judgement and discretion when sending e-mail as they would when sending a formal letter, written memorandum, or other correspondence.

E-mail sent via WHRC communications systems reflects the image of users and the agency. Accordingly, all e-mail messages must be consistent with WHRC professional reputation and standards.

A "SAMPLE DISCLAIMER" is used on WHRC emails:

This electronic mail message is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed. This message may contain information that is privileged, confidential or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the addressee, please notify us immediately and permanently destroy any copies you may have. Any unauthorized distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited.

Employment Termination

Employees who leave WHRC employment no longer have any right to any communications systems data, including e-mail messages; nor will they be allowed access to the organization's communications systems and its Internet accounts.

Compliance

Use of the communications systems is governed by this policy as well as all other policies that guide the conduct of staff.

Use of the communications systems is a privilege that must not be abused. Use of the communications system may be revoked at the agency's sole discretion.

FORMS: Communication Technology Use Statement

WESTERN HUMAN RESOURCE CORP.

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY USE STATEMENT

I have reviewed COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT policy, the COMMUNICATIONS – USE OF TECHNOLOGY policy.

I understand the agency expects strict adherence to the Code of Ethics and policies that protect the privacy and dignity of the individuals WHRC supports, their families and support networks, and WHRC personnel.

I have read and fully understand the terms of this policy and I agree to abide by them.

I acknowledge that all communication and IT systems are not private and subject to WHRC access and control.

I realize that WHRC’s computer software may record for management purposes the internet address of any site that I visit and keep a record of any activity in which I transmit or receive any kind of file or communications.

I acknowledge that any message I send or receive is recorded and stored in an archive file for management use.

I accept responsibility for any expenses incurred without the express permission of WHRC.

I have read and agree to abide by all of WHRC’s policies regarding privacy and release of information in “Confidentiality & Release of Information,” and “Records of Individuals Receiving Services” policies.

Name (printed)

Signature

Date

Manager