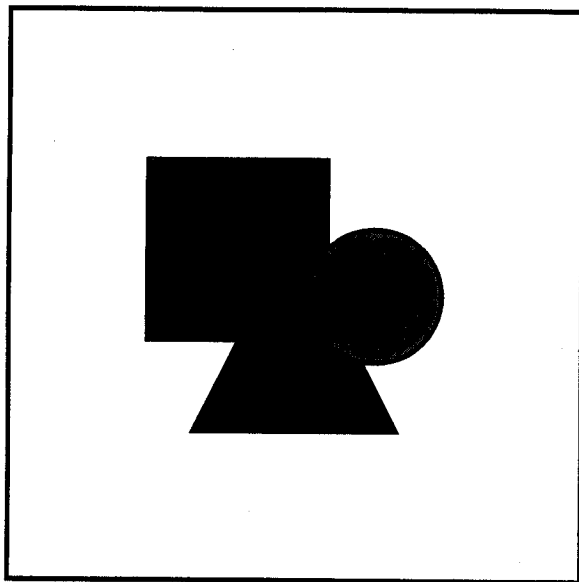


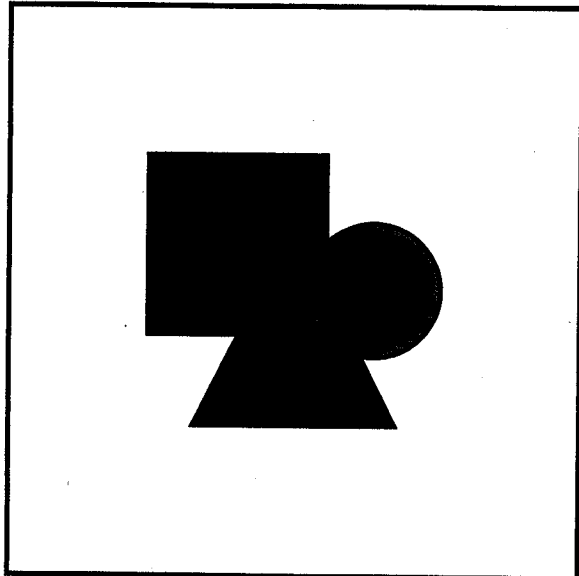
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POLICY 402.00

INTERNET USE



References:



APPROVED
Executive Ethics Board

Date: _____

WAC 292-110-010: Use of state resources.

DSB Policy 401.10: Information Technology Resources

DSB Policy 203.80: Ethics

PURPOSE: This policy defines allowable use of Internet services provided by the Department of Services for the Blind.

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RESPONSIBILITIES:

The computer systems and Internet services provided by the department are state resources to conduct the business of the department. The department recognizes the business need, value and usefulness of the Internet. All rules of conduct and law that apply in the workplace also apply when using department Internet resources. Internet resources should only be used for activities that would not undermine public trust and confidence. Users of Internet resources should also be familiar with Policy 401.10 Information Technology Resources.

Individual User Responsibility

1. Users will sign DSB-409 Internet Agreement Form and submit to the IT Network Manager before using department Internet resources.
 2. Users will manage the security of computer and other personal-use systems, and are responsible for all information accessed.
 3. Users will treat department Internet activities as public record. All department Internet activity is recorded and becomes an electronic record. An electronic record is reproducible and is therefore not private. This means these records are subject to public disclosure and may be audited or used for state operational or management purposes.
 4. Users may not use department Internet resources to conduct any business or activity for private benefit or gain.
 5. Use of department Internet resources for personal use is *permitted under limited circumstances*. *Limited circumstances* or "*de minimis*" use is defined as a use that:
 - results in little or no cost to the state;
 - does not interfere with the performance of official duties;
 - is brief in duration and frequency;
 - does not distract from the conduct of state business;
 - does not disrupt other state employees and does not obligate them to make a personal use of state resources;
 - and does not compromise the security or integrity of state information or software.
1. Users will not send confidential information or passwords via the Internet. The Internet does not provide security for transmitted information. Unauthorized access is possible under certain circumstances.
 2. Users will immediately scan for viruses all information downloaded from the Internet using the virus scan software on your computer.

Management Responsibility

1. Ensure that employees and contractors are aware of all policies for Internet use.
2. Encourage employees to use Internet technology along with more traditional resources to conduct their official business activities.

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3. Manage and approve user requests for access, training, and resources.

IT Responsibilities

1. Ensure Internet access is available to staff to conduct the business of the department and provide user support as needed.
2. Manage infrastructure and security for Internet access and use.
3. Manage Internet user identification and authorization.

EXAMPLES:

Example A: Several times a month an employee quickly uses the Internet to check his or her children's school website to confirm if the school will end early that day. The transaction takes about five minutes. This is not an ethical violation. The use is brief and infrequent, there is little or no cost to the state, and the use does not interfere with the performance of official duties.

Example B: An employee routinely uses the Internet to manage her personal investment portfolio and communicate information to her broker. This is an ethical violation. Using state resources to monitor private stock investments or make stock trades, are private activities that can result in a private financial benefit or gain. Allowing even an occasional or limited use of state facilities to facilitate a private financial gain undermines public confidence in state government.

Example C: An employee spends thirty to forty minutes looking at various web sites related to a personal interest. This is an ethical violation. The use is not brief and can interfere with the performance of state duties.

Example D: An employee visits several humor and joke sites. While at a site, he/she downloads a joke file and e-mails it to several co-workers. This is an ethical violation. By e-mailing a file to co-workers, the employee disrupts other state employees and obligates them to make a personal use of state resources. In addition, downloading files and distributing them to co-workers can introduce a computer virus, which can compromise state databases.

Example E: An employee infrequently and for brief periods of time visits a pornographic web site. This is prohibited. Although it meets the "*de minimis*" standard, it would clearly undermine public trust and confidence.