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PRIVATECH

SAMPLE INTERNET AND E-MAIL ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

ABC Co. has established this policy to address employee use of e-mail and the Internet in the course of their work-related activities.

Effective security is a team effort involving the participation and support of every ABC employee who deals with information and/or information systems. It is the responsibility of every computer user to know these guidelines, and to conduct their activities accordingly.

Acceptable Uses

ABC provides its employees with access to e-mail and the Internet as a business-related tool. While some limited personal use of e-mail and the Internet is considered reasonable, employees are expected to respect the following usage guidelines:

- Internet surfing should be restricted to business-oriented uses. Internet access should not be used for shopping, games or personal interests.
- Employees must not knowingly visit Internet sites containing offensive content, including sexually explicit material or material that is racially or culturally offensive.
- Employees must not download any non-business information from the Internet onto office computers, including any music files, software application programs, upgrades, or add-ons.
- Employees must not engage in any unauthorized copying of copyrighted materials found on the Internet, for which ABC does not have an active license.
- Employees must not access personal e-mail services from an office computer.
- Employees should limit the use of the ABC e-mail system to work-related activities, but may send or receive personal e-mail messages through the e-mail system on an occasional basis.
- The sending of unsolicited e-mail messages is strictly prohibited, including the bulk sending of advertising materials to individuals who did not specifically request such material (e-mail spam).
- Employees must not use the e-mail system to distribute any content of an offensive or derogatory nature, including sexually explicit jokes, cartoons, illustrations or photographs, or any other material likely to be offensive.

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- Postings by employees from an ABC e-mail address to newsgroups should contain a disclaimer stating that the opinions expressed are strictly their own and not necessarily those of ABC, unless posting is in the course of business duties.
- Avoid using music and video streaming websites and video players (e.g. YouTube) as much as possible while at work. Video streaming websites consume a lot of shared server resources which slows down the network performance for all users.
- Avoid sitting on busy website pages which streams video off their home page (e.g. MSN.com). Change your web browser home page to a static website page (e.g. google.ca). Avoid leaving website pages open with streaming video on them for an extended period of time as doing so will slow down server performance for all ABC office users.

Inbound E-mail

- **Phishing** is the attempt to acquire sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, and credit card details (and sometimes, indirectly, money), often for malicious reasons, by masquerading as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication. When you provide requested information, the scammer has successfully 'phished' personal or confidential information

- To protect against harmful viruses and other malicious activity sent to you in the form of an email, be extra cautious when receiving ANY e-mail from an unrecognizable or recognizable containing clickable links inside the message body of the e-mail or containing e-mail attachments.

- It is safe practice and highly advised not to click on the links inside the body of the email nor open the email attachments until having spoken with the sender and confirmed that they have sent that e-mail, to ensure it has not been sent from an e-mail account that has been hacked into by a virus or other malicious software on the sender's computer.

- Sometimes it is difficult to tell if an e-mail is reliable – when you want to be sure that a request is authentic, seek confirmation by starting a new e-mail message rather than replying.

- If you are unsure whether or not an e-mail you received is safe to open, please open a ticket with the Help Desk to inquire, otherwise please proceed to delete all suspicious looking emails that have reached your inbox.

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*** END OF SAMPLE ***

Complete sample policy is 5 pages in length. Other topics covered in this policy include:

- Best practices to identify phishing scams
- Outbound mail safeguards
- Company monitoring – no expectation of privacy
- Policy violation consequences

Purchase complete policy (in Word format) at:
https://privatech.ca/privacy-resources/the-privacy-documentation-suite/