

COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY Office of the Chief Information Officer Enterprise Policy (CIO)		Page 1 of 3
CIO-060: Acceptable Use Policy		
EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/15/1996	REVISED: 01/11/2023	REVIEWED: 03/03/2025

I. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes controls related to acceptable use of enterprise IT resources. The policy provides guidance in decision-making and practices that optimize resources, mitigate risk, and maximize return on investment.

II. DEFINITIONS

“State IT Resources” – means services, assets, and access that include but are not limited to e-mail, network access, internet access, text messaging, wireless devices, voicemail, software, and devices such as phones, mobile phones, desktops, tablets, monitors, storage (like network drives, USB, and external hard drives), scanners, printers, plotters, projectors, servers, routers, and switches.

III. POLICY

The Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT) provides state IT services, assets, and access to staff, visitors, vendors, and the public. These services, assets, and access (collectively known as IT resources) are under COT’s authority, and all users of state IT resources shall comply with all enterprise and agency policies.

Staff in the Executive Branch agencies shall read and acknowledge their responsibility for appropriate use of state IT resources. Users of state IT resources shall protect the resources and associated content appropriately.

Staff shall have no expectation of privacy associated with the information they publish, store, or access using Commonwealth resources. Staff shall report to their supervisor or agency IT coordinator immediately of any loss, abuse, or suspected abuse of state IT resources. Tools are available to monitor the use of state IT resources, and management may review potential abuse claims or inappropriate conduct. Staff members shall use state IT resources to accomplish their job responsibilities. Staff may also use state IT resources to maintain and develop professional skills. Incidental personal use is permissible, though not encouraged, and shall:

- Be infrequent, brief, ethical, and responsible.
- Have no negative impact on the staff member’s overall productivity.
- Not interfere with the normal operations of the agency or work unit.
- Not compromise the agency or the Commonwealth in any manner.
- Not cause any additional expense to the Commonwealth or the agency.

Staff shall reimburse the state for printers/copiers, personal telephone or mobile phone use on agency devices.

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COT must approve any commercial use of Internet connections by agencies for which the agency receives compensation. State agencies should avoid endorsing or promoting a specific product or company on agency websites; however, the placement of acknowledgements, accessibility, and certifications is acceptable.

IV. UNACCEPTABLE USES

Agencies and staff shall **not** use state IT resources to:

- Engage in inappropriate or unprofessional conduct;
- Engage in unapproved activities that may cause congestion or disruption of networks or systems;
- Use an application or otherwise access the Social Media site owned by the Chinese company ByteDance Limited or its successors commonly known as “Tik Tok,” other than for a law enforcement purpose;
- Access for personal use or operate personal Social Media accounts on state IT resources, including, but not limited to, state-owned mobile devices such cellular phones or tablets, and state-owned desktop or laptop computers;
- Connect unauthorized personal or state devices to the state network;
- Falsify state resources or content;
- Solicit money for religious or political causes or for illegal purposes.

Staff shall not use any IT device (e.g., mobile phone or laptop), whether state-owned or personal, while operating a government vehicle.

Staff may need to be exempt from some of these prohibitions in the course of completing their job requirements and for legitimate state government business. Agencies requesting an exemption from or an exception to any parts of this policy shall submit an exception request to COT’s Office of IT Architecture and Governance (OITAG) via the Commonwealth Service Desk. COT will pass any costs resulting from the exemptions or exceptions to this policy to those agencies.

This policy is subject to all terms and provisions of the ENT-301 Acceptable Use and Social Media Guidelines, all of which are, by this reference, made a part of and incorporated in this policy.

V. COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Each agency must ensure that staff within their organizational authority are made aware of and comply with this policy. The agency is responsible for enforcing it. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. COT may require additional service charges for remediation efforts due to non-compliance with this policy.

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VI. APPLICABILITY

All executive branch agencies and non-executive branch agencies using COT-managed infrastructure or services shall adhere to this policy. This includes employees, contractors, consultants, temporaries, volunteers, and other workers within state government. Organizations may modify this policy to fulfill their responsibilities but must obtain approval through an exception request. Staff should refer to their internal policy, which may have additional information or clarification.

VII. REFERENCES:

Helpful references can be found on the Enterprise IT Policies webpage.