

University System Office

Appropriate Use Policy for Information Technology (IT) Resources

7.12 Information Security Policy

7.12.4 Specific Policies and Standards

7.12.4.1 Appropriate Use

It is USG policy to provide an environment that encourages the free exchange of ideas and sharing of information. Access to this environment and the USG's information technology (IT) resources is a privilege and must be treated with the highest of ethical standards.

The USG requires all institutions and their users to use IT resources in a responsible manner, respecting the public trust through which these resources have been provided, the rights and privacy of others, the integrity of facilities and controls, state and Federal laws, and USG policies and standards. USG institutions may develop policies, standards and guidelines based on their specific needs that augment, but do not lessen, the intent of this policy.

This policy outlines the standards for appropriate use of USG IT resources, which include, but are not limited to, equipment, software, networks, data, and telephones whether owned, leased, or otherwise provided by the USG institutions.

This policy applies to all users of USG IT resources including faculty, staff, students, guests, and external organizations and individuals accessing network services, such as the Internet, via USG resources.

Preserving the access to information resources is a system-wide effort that requires each institution and its leadership to act responsibly and to proactively guard against abuses. Therefore, the USG as a whole, each individual institution, and its users have an obligation to abide by the following standards of appropriate and ethical use:

1. Use only those IT resources for which you have authorization.
2. Protect the access and integrity of IT resources.
3. Abide by applicable local, state, federal laws, university policies and respect the copyrights and intellectual property rights of others, including the legal use of copyrighted material.
4. Use IT resources only for their intended purposes.
5. Respect the privacy and personal rights of others.
6. Do no harm.

Failure to comply with the appropriate use of these resources threatens the atmosphere for the sharing of information, the free exchange of ideas, and the secure environment for creating and maintaining information, and subjects one to discipline. Any user of any USG system found using IT resources for unethical and/or inappropriate practices has violated this policy and is subject to disciplinary proceedings including suspension of system privileges, expulsion from his/her institution, termination of employment, and/or legal action as may be appropriate.

Although all USG members have an expectation of privacy, if a user is suspected of violating this policy, his/her right to privacy may be superseded by the USG's requirement to protect the integrity of IT resources, the rights of all users, and the property of the USG and the State. The USG thus reserves

the right to examine material stored on or transmitted through its resources if there is cause to believe that the standards for appropriate use are being violated by a member institution, a user, or a trespasser onto its systems or networks.

Specific guidelines for interpretation and administration of this policy are given in the *Guidelines for Interpretation and Administration of the USG Appropriate Use Policy*. These guidelines contain more specific examples of offenses, and procedures for dealing with incidents.

In signing your name below, you are stating that you have received a copy of the USG Appropriate Use Policy (AUP) for IT Resources as well as the Guidelines for Interpretation and Administration of the AUP and that you will abide by this USG policy/standard.

Employee's Printed Name

Employee's Signature

Date