

County of Branch Computer Usage Policy

I. Legal Use Of Computer Systems

These guidelines apply to all users of computing resources and computing equipment owned, leased or rented by the County of Branch. Computing equipment includes, but is not limited to, the dial-up modems, printers, terminals, microcomputers, file servers, and networking equipment used to link these components and to the Internet. The user is responsible for the content of any material the user prepares, receives or transmits. It is the users responsibility to make sure they comply with all Local, State, Federal, and International laws governing computer usage, this includes but is not limited to, the following:

1. Harassment of others;
2. Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to County of Branch or other users;
3. Unauthorized copying of copyright-protected material;
4. Transmission of any material in violation of any Federal, State or Local laws and/or regulations. This includes but is not limited to threatening, sexist, or obscene material or materials protected by trade secrets; and
5. Engaging in any unauthorized or illegal commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying.

II. Ethical Use Of Computer Systems

Computing resources should be used in accordance with the ethical standards of the County of Branch. Examples of unacceptable use (some of which may also have legal consequences) include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Violation of computer system security;
2. Use of computer accounts, access codes, passwords, or network identification numbers assigned to others;
3. Use of computing facilities for private business purposes unrelated to the mission of the County of Branch;
4. Violation of software license agreements; and
5. Violation of another user's privacy.

III. Cooperative Use Of Computer Systems

Computing resource users can facilitate computing at the County of Branch in many ways. Day to day operation of the County of Branch demands the practice of cooperative computing. It includes, but not limited to, the following examples:

1. Regular deletion of unneeded files from one's accounts on shared computing resources;
2. Refraining from unnecessary information storage space, printing facilities or processing capacity;
3. Refraining from use of sounds and visuals which might be disruptive to others; and
4. Refraining from unauthorized use of departmental or individual computing resources.

IV. Non-County Software and Hardware

No computer software or hardware from outside sources is to be installed on any County of Branch computer system without the written permission from the Administrator's Office. This will cut down on software and hardware configuration errors that can arise from some software and/or hardware configurations. Outside sources include but are not limited to, the following examples:

County of Branch Computer Usage Policy

1. Any retail software or hardware package NOT pre-authorized by the Administrator's Office;
2. Any software download from the Internet where it is retail or shareware (this includes but is not limited to: screensavers, games, and system utilities.)

V. Freedom of Information Act

Electronic information does fall under the Freedom of Information Act. Thus any data file(s) or composed / received E-mail messages can be considered County records, depending on their content, and therefor may be subject to a Freedom of Information Act request.

VI. Sanctions

Violators of computing resources usage policy will be subject to the normal disciplinary procedures of the County of Branch. Violations of the policies described above for legal and ethical use of computing resources will be dealt with in a serious and appropriate manner. Illegal acts involving County of Branch computing resources may also be subject to prosecution by local, state, and/or federal authorities.

VII. Amendments

This policy may need to be amended through experience and technological advances. Anytime this policy is changed, users will be notified by written memorandum. Any questions or suggestions regarding this or future policy changes should be directed to the user's supervisor or the Administrator's Office.

Date Adopted: November 3, 1999

Yeas: 8

Nays: 0