

Inclusion Hampshire Internet and Email Usage Policy

This policy details Inclusion Hampshire's policy on Internet and E-mail usage. It includes legal obligations. During set work hours, either on personal devices or Inclusion Hampshire equipment, Internet and E-mail may only be used for genuine Inclusion Hampshire business purposes except in certain circumstances outlines below.

These guidelines are to be regarded as a code of conduct for all members of staff¹ and failure to observe such procedures may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct, which will be dealt with according to Inclusion Hampshire's disciplinary procedure.

Purposes of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the effective, consistent and legal use of internal/external e-mail and internet access.

Because of the open nature and ready availability of e-mail and Internet services, there are potential dangers to Inclusion Hampshire arising from carelessness or misuse. This policy therefore seeks to ensure that staff makes best use of these facilities whilst maintaining Inclusion Hampshire's security, legality and good name.

Staff should be prepared for any e-mail that they send during work time and possibly outside of work time, to be disclosed under the requirements of Freedom of Information.

E-mail Usage

All e-mail, whether sent internally or externally should be regarded as public and permanent. In spite of its apparent temporary nature, it can be stored, resent and distributed to large numbers of people.

E-mail must not be used for sending threatening, harassing, discriminatory or illegal material, or any material that may be construed as offensive, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit by anyone (ie not just the intended recipient). The mailing of jokes containing sexually explicit or otherwise offensive material, either internally or externally is forbidden. E-mails must not contain profane, offensive or abusive language, or attempts to disguise such language by the use of codes or symbols. Such usage constitutes gross misconduct.

Users should be selective when forwarding or replying to an e-mail and consider who really needs to see the message. Forwarding of messages should only be to those who need the information. Users should ensure that any copies are necessary and the reason for a blind copy should be explained to the recipient.

Users should check e-mails regularly on each working day. E-mail is an essential tool for many staff and not answering e-mails in a reasonable time is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action.

¹ 'Staff' covers Inclusion Hampshire trustees and employees, volunteers, work experience learners, trainees and apprentices.

Private use of e-mails should be kept to a minimum and only for essential purposes.

Inclusion Hampshire recognises that it is not always possible to control incoming mail. Any material which would be considered as non business like, sexually explicit or offensive should be deleted at once from both the inbox and trash folder of your e-mail system. Similarly any 'junk' mail received should be deleted immediately.

The receipt of any offensive e-mail on inclusion Hampshire equipment should be reported immediately to the recipient's immediate manager. Such receipt will be logged but will not result in disciplinary action, but the failure to report it may be considered a disciplinary offence.

Internet Usage

Internet on personal devices or Inclusion Hampshire equipment during work time should be only be used for Inclusion Hampshire business.

Staff may use the Internet for occasional limited private use provided:

- It does not interfere with Inclusion Hampshire's work.
- It is not related to a private business interest
- It complies with this policy and all provisions relating to misuse.

Inclusion Hampshire reserves the right to remove a user's access to the Internet at any time and to monitor all use of the Internet.

Line managers are responsible for monitoring staff time spent in personal use of the Internet. Subsequently excessive time on personal use could be the subject of disciplinary action.

Inclusion Hampshire has the right to prohibit access to certain sites that Managers and the Inclusion Hampshire Chief Executive feels are not appropriate. Accidental access to offensive sites should be reported immediately by the user to their immediate line manager. Such access may be logged but will not result in disciplinary action, but the failure to report it may be considered a disciplinary offence.

Responsibilities

Staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply with Inclusion Hampshire's E-mail and Internet policy.

Adherence to this Policy is a condition for using Inclusion Hampshire's equipment and networks. Failure to comply with this policy may result in legal claims against the user or Inclusion Hampshire and could lead to disciplinary action being taken, including dismissal.

Staff are responsible to ensure no other users have access to your passwords or your Internet and E-mail facility.

Other General requirements

All computers must be switched off when not in use. (For short periods, when staff are away from their desk, the screen should be locked).

Any password protected internet site must be logged out of when not being used. All laptops and any other portable equipment should be placed in the designated cupboard when not in use.

Introducing a virus can lead to the infection of the entire network severely affecting computer systems and data. All disks, CD and memory sticks must be virus checked prior to use. Failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action.

It is the duty of all staff to monitor the use of the internet by service users and report misuse to their Line Manager.

Staff must do their utmost to ensure no software, from whatever source, should ever be loaded onto any of Inclusion Hampshire's equipment by service users without approval of service managers.

Further information can be found within the Inclusion Hampshire GDPR Policy: Data Security.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy and that regular reviews take place.

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction, supervision and training.

Failure to act in line with this policy will result in disciplinary action