



EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE

For information, contact Institutional
Effectiveness: (915) 831-2614

2.05.01.54 Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources **APPROVED:** July 18, 2005 **REVISED:**
AUTHORIZING BOARD POLICY: 2.05.01

OBJECTIVE: This procedure was written to guide students, faculty and staff in the acceptable use of computer systems. All computer systems, networks, network connections, hardware and software are the property of El Paso Community College.

PROCEDURE:

I. Access to Information Technology Resources

- A. Access to computer resources by the College for student, faculty and staff use is solely for the furtherance of the educational, operational and professional goals of the College. All computer resources including hardware, software, databases and all computerized information and data entered on, or developed with, these resources are either owned by licensors or directly owned by the College. Users have no property rights to computer resources or the information contained therein.
- B. Students, faculty and staff shall have access to information technology resources in accordance with the established guidelines described within this procedure.
- C. Academic Computing Labs and Library Information Technology resources are available to students on a first-come, first-served basis. User time limitations are based upon demand for use of resources. Lab personnel are authorized to utilize their best judgment in overseeing the use of computers during periods of high demand. Students, who utilize computers for purposes of doing homework, research assignments and other functions related to the classroom, shall be given priority.
- D. The College may restrict access to computers and network systems when presented with evidence of the violation of College policies or procedures, federal or state laws, or when it is necessary to protect the College against potential legal liability. The College reserves the right to limit access to its informational resources, and to remove or limit access to material stored on College information technology resources.

II. Use of Information Technology Resources

- A. Users are cautioned that information contained in computer resources may be subject to the Texas Public Information Act, Tex. Gov't Code 552.001 *et seq.*, or other law permitting public access by third parties to information held by governmental units. Users are further cautioned that, conversely, some information is shielded from public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or similar law, including the doctrine of common law privacy. The release of this latter class of information or obtaining authorized access thereto may result in individual liability or disciplinary action. Users shall only have access to, and use of, information for which they have received prior authorization and approval from the College to access and use.
- B. The College encourages all members of its community to use electronic resources in a manner that is respectful of others. While respecting users' privacy, the College reserves the right to examine any computer file, and all expectations of privacy should be governed accordingly. The College reserves this right for bona fide purposes, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Enforcing policies against unlawful discrimination, defamation, harassment and threats to the safety of others.
 - 2. Protecting against, or limiting, damage to College information technology resources.

3. Complying with a request for public information under the Texas Public Information Act, Tex. Code 552.001 *et seq.*, or complying with a court order, subpoena or a legally enforceable discovery request.
4. Investing and preventing the posting of proprietary software or electronic copies of texts, data, media or images in disregard of copyright, licenses, or other contractual or legal obligations or in violation of law.
5. Safeguarding the integrity of computers, networks, software and data.
6. Preserving information and data.
7. Upgrading or maintaining information technology resources.
8. Protecting the College or its employees and representatives against liability or other potentially adverse consequences.

C. Use of Software, Databases and Network Connections

Users are expected to use computer and network resources in a responsible manner. Users should take appropriate precautions to ensure the security of their passwords and prevent others from obtaining access to their computer resources. The convenience of file or printer sharing is not sufficient reason for sharing computer accounts.

D. Display of Offensive Material

El Paso Community College cannot insure against the display or the receipt of potentially offensive material. Those who use electronic communications occasionally may receive material that they might find offensive. Those who make personal information available about themselves through the Internet or other electronic media may expose themselves to potential invasions of privacy.

III. Incidental Use

A. Information technology resources shall be used in accordance with the following:

1. Incidental personal use of Internet access is restricted to EPCC approved users; it does not extend to family members or other acquaintances.
2. Incidental use must not result in direct costs to EPCC.
3. Incidental use must not interfere with the normal performance of an employee's work duties.
4. No files or documents may be sent or received that may cause legal liability for, or embarrassment to, EPCC.
5. Storage of personal files and documents within EPCC's information resources should be nominal.
6. All files and documents, including personal files and documents, are owned by EPCC, may be subject to open records requests, and may be accessed in accordance with this procedure.

B. The following acts, the listing of which is not exhaustive, are prohibited:

1. Creating a hostile working environment, or sending communications that are threatening, malicious, defamatory, harassing or offensive.
2. Subverting restrictions associated with computer accounts.
3. Accessing another person's computer account without permission. Users may not supply false or misleading data, or improperly obtain another's password to gain access to computers or network systems, data or information. Obtaining access to an account number or password through the negligence or naiveté of another is considered to be a specifically prohibited use.
4. Physically damaging information technology resources.
5. Using, or encouraging others to use, information technology in any way that would violate this or other College procedures, Board policies, or any applicable state or federal law.
6. Falsely reporting or accusing another of conduct that violates this procedure, without a good faith basis for making such a report or accusation.
7. Using the College network for peer-to-peer sharing of digital files, or downloading of large CD-sized files is prohibited.

IV. Reporting Violations

- A. Any person who violates this procedure is subject to disciplinary action to include removal from the computer station, and may be asked to leave the premises.
- B. Any person reporting a violation of this procedure shall contact the appropriate supervisory personnel, who will advise the college police department.
- C. The College Police Department or supervisory personnel shall document the incident and may initiate a formal investigation and will forward a copy of the report to the proper Vice President for further administrative/disciplinary action, as deemed appropriate.

V. Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action related to violations of this procedure shall be taken in accordance with existing College disciplinary policies and procedures.