

Responsible Use of Information Technology Policy

Access to University of Wisconsin-Madison information technology (IT) resourcesⁱ is essential to the mission of the University (to create, integrate, transfer and apply knowledge). Use of IT resources must be consistent with the University's mission and with its role as a public agency. Access to University IT resources is a privilege granted to members of the University community which carries with it the responsibility to use University IT resources for University-related activities, exercising common sense and civility. Regulations that govern personal conduct and use of University facilitiesⁱⁱ also apply to the use of IT resources. Violation of University rules governing responsible use of IT resources may result in loss of access privileges, University disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

1. Login and Other Authorizations

Authorization for use of IT resources is provided to each individual for his or her own use. No user may use an authorization which belongs to someone else. In many cases the University has obtained access to these resources exclusively for the use of members of the University community.

2. Securing Credentials

Users must protect the confidentiality of their personal identification codes and passwords and are expected to exercise reasonable care to ensure that their accounts are not used by others.

3. Unauthorized Access

Users may not obtain or use—or attempt to obtain or use:

- passwords, IP addresses or other network codes that have not been assigned to them, or
- unauthorized access to computer accounts, software, files, or any other IT resources.

4. Intellectual Property

Illegal downloading, distribution, copying of materials or other activities that violate intellectual property laws, including copyright, are strictly prohibited.

5. Malicious Activity

Users may not interfere with another person or entity's authorized access to IT resources. They may not alter, disrupt or damage University IT resources in any way or use those resources to alter, disrupt, or damage IT resources of another person or entity.

6. Impersonation and Anonymity

Users of University IT resources may not forge identities or send anonymous messages unless the recipient has agreed to receive anonymous messages.

7. Respect and Protect Privacy and Be Civil

Users of University IT resources are expected to protect others' privacy. They may not use University IT resources to stalk, harass, threaten, or otherwise cause harm to another individual or entity, or to the activities of others.

8. Commercial, Political, and Non-University Activities

Users may not use University IT resources to sell or solicit sales for any goods, services, or contributions unless such use conforms to UW-Madison rules and regulations governing the use of University resources.ⁱⁱⁱ They may not use University IT resources to represent the interests of any non-University group or organization unless authorized by an appropriate University department. Users who are University employees may not use these resources to support the nomination of any person for political office or to influence a vote in any election or referendum.

9. De Minimis Usage

In the interest of making the use of IT resources a natural part of the day-to-day learning and work of all members of the University community, incidental personal use is tolerated. However, one should use non-University sources of email, Internet access, and other IT services for activities of an extensive nature that are not related to University purposes.

10. Managing IT Resources

Users who are University employees must responsibly manage the IT resources in their care, including hardware, software, and digital University information and records.

11. State and Federal Laws

Users may not use University IT resources in a manner that violates state or federal laws.

Authority

Issued by the UW-Madison Vice Provost for Information Technology.

Enforcement

Violation of University rules governing responsible use of IT resources may result in loss of access privileges, University disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

Related Documents

IT Policy Glossary: <https://kb.wisc.edu/itpolicy/glossary>

Contact

Please address questions or comments to: policy@cio.wisc.edu

ⁱ Information Technology Resources are defined as any electronic technologies used in the course of university activities. These include workstation computers, applications, software, databases, networks, laptop computers, mobile phones, printers, etc. This includes any of these resources used for University activities, whether or not they are owned by the University or some other party.

ⁱⁱ As published in the University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code and UW-Madison policies. For example, disruption of University activities, damage to facilities, physical threat, theft or harassment as described in UWS 17 and 18; student academic misconduct in UWS 14; selling, peddling and soliciting in the UWS 18; political activities in UWS 18; and ethical standards for use of facilities by faculty and staff in UWS 8.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Endnote (ii).