

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Town of Uxbridge's computer and other electronic systems, including, but not limited to, electronic mail ["email"] and the Internet, are to provide an efficient and effective means of internal and external communications, and to improve work productivity and work product. This policy addresses access to and the disclosure of information from such electronic systems.

Among other things, this policy is intended to guide Town of Uxbridge employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions as well as contractors in the performance of their duties.

This policy serves as notice to the employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors of the Town of Uxbridge that all data, including any that is stored or printed as a document, is subject to audit and review. There is no expectation of personal privacy in the use of the Internet and email systems when using computers or services provided by the Town of Uxbridge.

Finally, this policy serves to delineate acceptable uses of the Internet and email systems by Town of Uxbridge employees [collectively also referred to as "employees"], volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors while using government-owned/leased equipment, facilities, Internet addresses, domain names, and/ or email services registered to or provided by the Town of Uxbridge. It seeks to ensure that the use of the Internet and email systems by Town of Uxbridge employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors, while conducting work for the Town of Uxbridge and/or while using Town of Uxbridge provided systems is consistent with the Town of Uxbridge values and policies, all applicable laws, and the individual user's job responsibilities and member duties.

**Statement of Policy:**

The Town of Uxbridge promotes Internet and email use that enables employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors to perform Town of Uxbridge missions and encourages its employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, contractors and contractor personnel to develop Internet and email skills and knowledge. It is expected that employees will use the Internet and email to improve their job knowledge; to access scientific, technical, and other information on topics which have relevance to the Town of Uxbridge; and to communicate with their peers in other government agencies, academia and industry on matters of relevance to their work for the Town of Uxbridge.

(a) **Responsible Use:** Users are advised not to use the Internet or email systems for any purpose which would reflect negatively on the Town of Uxbridge or its employees or any volunteer, officials, members of a Board, Committee, and Commission, or contractor.

(b) **Property of the Town of Uxbridge:** The Town of Uxbridge's electronic mail and Internet systems are business tools. These systems shall be used in a professional manner for legitimate business purposes only and, at all times, remain the property of the Town of Uxbridge.

(c) **Scope:** This policy applies to:

(1) All technical resources that are owned or leased by the Town of Uxbridge that are used on or accessed from Town of Uxbridge premises, or that are used for Town of Uxbridge business. This policy also applies to all activities using any Town of Uxbridge-paid accounts, subscriptions, or other technical services, such as Internet access and email, whether or not the activities are conducted from Town of Uxbridge premises.

(2) Expressly excluded from this policy is the use of the Town's guest Wi-Fi.

(2) All full or part-time employees of the Town of Uxbridge, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors who are authorized by their supervisors to use Town of Uxbridge resources.

(d) Information is Not Private: The Town of Uxbridge computers and the data stored on them are, and remain at all times, the property of the Town of Uxbridge. As such, all messages created, sent, or retrieved over the Internet or the town's electronic mail systems are the property of the Town of Uxbridge, and should not be considered private information. Employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors have no right to privacy as to any information or file transmitted through or stored on the Town of Uxbridge's computer systems, electronic mail, or other technical resources, expressly excluding the Town's guest Wi-Fi.

(e) Use with Respect for Others: Access to the Internet, except via the Town's guest Wi-Fi, via Town of Uxbridge resources and use of Town of Uxbridge provided email must only be for Town of Uxbridge purposes. To that end, the use shall not disrupt or interfere with the work of other network users, adversely affect the operation of the Internet or the Town of Uxbridge's own internal network, or misrepresent the interests of the Town of Uxbridge.

(f) Monitoring and Disclosure: The Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to access, retrieve, read and disclose any data, messages or files stored on Town of Uxbridge-funded systems for any purpose. Employees should be aware that, even when a message is erased or a visit to a web site is closed, it is still possible to recreate the message or locate the web site. The Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to monitor use of these systems to prevent abuse, enforce other policies, and access information. Access may occur in, but is not limited to, situations indicating: (1) impropriety, (2) violation of Town of Uxbridge policy, (3) legal requirements, (4) suspected criminal activities, (5) breach of system security, or (6) to locate substantive information or monitor employee performance and conduct. The contents of these systems may be disclosed by Town of Uxbridge Management within or outside of the Town of Uxbridge without employee or user's permission. Furthermore, all communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. The Town of Uxbridge has unlimited access to protect the security of these systems or the Town of Uxbridge's property rights.

(g) Consent: All Town of Uxbridge employees, who are provided with access to the Town of Uxbridge's email system, Internet, or other electronic systems are required to abide by the Town of Uxbridge's policy contained here and in other relevant documents. All volunteers, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors who are provided access to the Town of Uxbridge's email system are required to abide by the Town of Uxbridge's policy contained here and in other relevant documents.

**Use of the Internet:**

The Town of Uxbridge provides Internet access to employees for their use in performing their duties for the Town of Uxbridge. All employees of the Town of Uxbridge are responsible for using Internet resources in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. It is the Town of Uxbridge's policy that the Internet resources, like other Town of Uxbridge assets, be used for the benefit of the Town of Uxbridge. All Internet use should be congruent with the Town of Uxbridge's overall government policies. The Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to monitor and/or log all network activity, with or without notice, including all web site communications, and therefore, users should have no expectations of privacy in the use of these resources. Use of the system in violation of this or other Town of Uxbridge policies is prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

(a) Uses that are acceptable and encouraged:

- (1) Communications and information exchanges directly relating to the mission, charter and work tasks of the Town of Uxbridge,
- (2) Announcements of Town of Uxbridge procedures, meetings, policies, services, or activities;
- (3) Use for advisory, standards, research, analysis, and professional society or development activities related to the user's Town of Uxbridge job-related duties.
- (4) Use in applying for or administering grants or contracts for Town of Uxbridge research programs.

(b) Uses that are unacceptable: It is unacceptable for a user to access, use, submit, publish, display, download, save, or transmit on the network, or on any computer system, any information which:

- (1) Violates or infringes on the rights of any other person, including the right to privacy;
- (2) Misrepresents themselves in order to gain access to any other Town Resources or materials, or in order to deceive anyone interacting with Town Resources or materials;
- (3) Contains defamatory, false, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, pornographic, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, or otherwise biased, discriminatory, or illegal material;
- (4) Violates Town of Uxbridge regulations prohibiting sexual harassment;
- (5) Restricts or inhibits other users from using the system, or the efficiency of the computer systems;
- (6) Encourages the use of controlled substances or uses the system for the purpose of criminal intent;  
or
- (7) Uses the system for any other illegal purpose.

(c) It is also unacceptable for a user to use the facilities and capabilities of the system to:

- (1) Conduct any non-approved business;
- (2) Solicit the performance of any activity that is prohibited by law;
- (3) Transmit material, information or software in violation of any local, state or federal law;
- (4) Conduct any political activity;
- (5) Conduct any non-Town of Uxbridge-related fund raising or public relations activities;
- (6) Engage in any activity for personal gain or personal business transactions; or
- (7) Make any unauthorized purchases.

(d) Copyrighted Material: Users may download copyrighted material, but its use must be strictly within the agreement as posted by the author or current copyright law. The federal Copyright Act at 17 U. S. C. 10 1 et seq. (1988), protects and prohibits misuse of all original works of authorship in any tangible medium of

expression. This includes a prohibition on plagiarism (using someone else's ideas or writing and passing it on as one's own).

(e) Email: Internet email is considered network activity; thus, it is subject to all policies regarding acceptable/unacceptable uses of the Internet as well as the Town of Uxbridge's email policy. Users should not consider Internet email to be either private or secure.

(f) Passwords: Access to the Internet may require a password and authorized employees are prohibited from giving their password to any other person, except as provided in this policy. The password remains the property of the Town of Uxbridge, and all passwords must be disclosed to the Information Systems Manager.

**Uses of Email System:**

The Town of Uxbridge provides an email system to employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions for their use in performing their duties for the Town of Uxbridge. All employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions of the Town of Uxbridge are responsible for using the email system in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. It is the Town of Uxbridge policy that the email system, like other Town of Uxbridge assets, be used for the benefit of the Town of Uxbridge. All email use should be congruent with the Town of Uxbridge's overall government policies. The Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to monitor and/or log all network activity with or without notice, including all web site communications, and therefore, users should have no expectations of privacy in the use of these resources.

(a) The Town of Uxbridge's email system is for official Town of Uxbridge business and it shall be unacceptable to use the system for unrelated purposes, including but not limited to, the following:

- (1) To send or receive "chain" or similar type "letters."
- (2) To send or receive documents in violation of copyright or other laws.
- (3) To knowingly open mail not directed to you. Except to the extent that Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to access and review all electronic uses and records, email messages are confidential.
- (4) To send messages in violation of the Town of Uxbridge's security policies.
- (5) To forward electronic messages without a legitimate business purpose or where it is the clearly expressed desire of the sender to restrict additional dissemination.
- (6) To send messages that are false or misleading, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, pornographic, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive, discriminatory, or illegal, including but not limited to sending messages under an assumed name or with the intent to obscure the origin of the message.
- (7) To solicit or proselytize for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-job-related solicitations.

(b) Avoid "carbon copying" individuals who have no direct involvement or "need-to-know." Likewise, email to all users should only be used on very rare occasions when every person on the system has a direct need to know.

- (c) Avoid "forwarding" email to a third party unless necessary (see "carbon copying"). When forwarding, explain the reason for the forwarding action and edit out any potentially inappropriate content. If in doubt about the appropriateness of forwarding a given piece of mail, check with the originator for guidance.
- (d) When sending an email requiring "action," be sure to indicate which "TO" addressee(s) is/are to take the action.
- (e) Do not "say" anything in an email message that may be deemed unprofessional. Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images they transmit.
- (f) Avoid contentious exchanges through email.
- (g) Confidential and sensitive information, such as performance reviews, disciplinary and/ or corrective actions, attorney-client privileged information, personnel information, and health or medical information should not be communicated via email unless through a secure server.
- (h) Communications which would be inappropriate under other Town of Uxbridge policies are equally unacceptable if delivered via electronic communication. These communications may include, but are not limited to, harassing or discriminatory comments, breaches of confidentiality, and insubordinate statements.
- (i) Use your common sense in determining when to use email, in what is said, and to whom. Remember that no electronic communication is private and the Town of Uxbridge reserves the right to monitor and review all communications originating from or entering its computer systems.

**Security and Virus Protection:**

- (a) Email and/ or internet access may utilize passwords for security; however, employees should be aware that the reliability of such tools for maintaining confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Additionally, all passwords must be made known to the Town of Uxbridge, through the Information Systems Manager.
- (b) To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the system, employees are not permitted to download any software onto their computer or any drive in that computer or on the network. When downloading a file or opening an email attachment, users must scan all materials with Town of Uxbridge provided virus protection software. Additional consideration of policies established by the Information Systems Manager should be used in determining how to handle potentially damaging emails or files.

**Enforcement:**

This policy is intended to be illustrative of the range of acceptable and unacceptable uses of the Internet and email systems provided by the Town of Uxbridge and is not necessarily exhaustive. Questions about specific uses should be directed to the employee's supervisor or Chair of each Board, Committee and Commission. The supervisor and Chair shall consult the Town Manager to determine if any policy violation has occurred.

Immediately upon implementation of this policy, supervisors and Chairs will be responsible to provide a copy of this policy to, and collect signed consent forms from all employees, volunteers, officials or any member of a Board, Committee or Commission who currently have access to the Town of Uxbridge's Internet or email systems.

Prior to authorizing new access, the supervisor and Chair are responsible to provide a copy of this policy to, and collect signed consent forms from all employees, volunteers, officials, or any member of a Board, Committee, or Commission who will have access to the Town of Uxbridge's Internet or email systems.

The supervisor and Chair will review alleged or suspected violations of the policy and clear violations may result in disciplinary actions or subject to removal as an employee, volunteer, official, member of a Board, Committee, or Commission. Any user violating these provisions, or applicable local, state or federal laws are subject to immediate loss or restrictions of internet/ email privileges, additional disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment or removal from a Board, Committee or Commission, and/ or criminal prosecution.

**Consent Agreement:**

As a condition of employment, all Town of Uxbridge employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors must acknowledge that all computer and electronic systems, including but not limited to, electronic mail and Internet network activity are the property of the Town of Uxbridge, and therefore, they should not consider any activity to be private. Current users of the Town of Uxbridge's Internet or email systems must sign the consent form provided, within thirty (30) days of receiving a copy of this policy. New employees, volunteers, officials and members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors shall be given this policy upon their hire and shall be required to sign the Consent Form prior to obtaining new access to Internet or e mail systems provided by the Town of Uxbridge. By signing the consent form, users acknowledge that they have received a copy of the policy, read it, and understand the Town of Uxbridge's Policy and the potential penalties for non-compliance.

**Severability:**

If any provisions of this Agreement, or application thereof to any person or circumstances, is held unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the remaining provisions of this Agreement and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances, other than those to which it is held invalid, shall not be affected thereby.

Adopted by Steven Sette, Town Manager  
December 16, 2019

**Consent Form on Use of Email, Internet,  
and other Electronic Systems**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Town of Uxbridge's Policy for employees, volunteers, officials, members of Boards, Committees and Commissions, and contractors Use of E-Mail, Internet, and other Electric Systems and agree to comply with all of its terms and conditions. I understand and agree that all computer and electronic activity, including but not limited to, electronic mail and Internet network activity, being conducted with Town of Uxbridge resources is the property of the Town of Uxbridge.

I acknowledge and consent to the Town of Uxbridge's right to monitor, log, access, and review all such activity, with or without notice. Therefore, I have no expectation of privacy in the use of these resources. I understand that such monitoring may include printing and reading all electronic mail and data entering, leaving or stored on the Town of Uxbridge's equipment.

Further, I acknowledge that all email and use of internet and electronics of the Town of Uxbridge is a public record and may be requested at any time.

Finally, I understand that violation of this Policy may subject me to discipline, up to and including termination of employment by my employer and/or removal from a Board, Committee, and Commission.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee/Member Name

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee/Member Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dept/Board/Committee/Commission