



HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY USE OF INTERNET, COMPUTER SOFTWARE, HARDWARE AND EMAIL

Policy No: NLMHREP010	Effective Date: 01 April 2008
Approved:	Review Date: 01 April 2009

Notwithstanding the review date herein, this policy shall remain effective until such time approved otherwise by Council and may be reviewed on an earlier date if necessary, subject to Labour Law Dispensation or operational requirements.

1. SCOPE

The policy shall apply to:

- All Municipal employees who are supplied with Personal Computers (PCs) as a tool to enable them to perform their functions.
- Full-time Councillors for the period of their tenure as full-time Councillors.
- Individuals working for the associates of Ngwathe.

2. PREAMBLE

Electronic communication is an indispensable business tool within Ngwathe. However, despite its benefits, unrestrained and uncontrolled electronic usage can cause a serious business liability.

It is also understood that Users of Ngwathe's electronic communication system can intentionally or unintentionally infringe copyrights, violate trade secrets and trade marks, defame other people and businesses/institutions, harass individual/s, and commit Ngwathe to contracts. This can ultimately cause damage to Ngwathe, as it is generally liable for the acts of its Users. Therefore, in order to protect both Ngwathe and its Users' interests, it is important that employees are made aware of the limitations placed on their access to Ngwathe's electronic communication systems.

Electronic Mail (e-mail) functions much like ordinary mail. The sender writes an electronic letter and may add, if needed, attachments such as text documents, graphics or spreadsheets. The sender then 'posts' the message by adding the recipient's e-mail address, often selected from an electronic address book. These e-mail addresses may be people, departments or functions and include names and some indication of location.

E-mail uses resources that can be distributed over several data networks. The User's conduct contributes to whether or not the availability and confidentiality of the system is ensured.

RISKS OF E-MAIL

Since e-mail includes both the transmission and handling of sometimes sensitive information, care must be taken to protect the message from unauthorised access.

Threats can include the ability of individuals to change and copy information, or to distribute information to unauthorised parties. Users can also act anonymously, or with a fake identity, and spread information under an assumed name.

The use of e-mail is therefore open to a number of risks, including:

- Inadvertent change or distribution of messages through error or negligence.
- Unauthorised use, processing or distribution of messages.
- Distortion, interruption or unwanted disclosure of messages.
- Unwanted infection with, and distribution of, viruses or other harmful programs.
- Unauthorised disclosure of confidential, proprietary or secret information.
- Copyright infringement.

E-MAIL NAMING STANDARDS

The following naming standards have been agreed to and will apply for all Ngwathe employees:

Category	Format
First Name:	Use only lowercase characters. Use the full first name, i.e., no nicknames, and do not use any middle names.
Initials:	Add the first initial of the surname.
Conflicts:	When defining a new User name, if such a name already exists, then the <i>second character</i> of the surname will be inserted after the first character

SIZE LIMITS OF MAILBOXES AND ATTACHMENTS

The following limits apply for all Ngwathe employees:

- Size limit of 30 MB for mailboxes.
- Size limit of 5 MB for sent mail, inclusive of original message plus attachments.

3. POLICY

The objectives of this policy are:

- To set responsibilities and limitations of the PC Users.
- To foster discipline with regards to Ngwathe's confidential database.
- To give effect to the general protection of Ngwathe's interests in respect of use of the electronic communication systems.

The use of the Internet and e-mail must be consistent with the business goals and objectives of Ngwathe. Notwithstanding the above, the facilities may also be used for private matters, on condition that such use complies with the criteria as set out below, and would be considered by Ngwathe to be reasonable and acceptable. In respect of this reasonable use, staff will be expected to exercise responsible, ethical behaviour when using the facilities. Inappropriate or illegal use of the facilities will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action and possible dismissal.

Use of the facilities is a privilege and not a right; consequently, staff members and/or agents of Ngwathe are expected to strictly adhere to the following User guidelines:

Authorisation

- Only Users, authorised by their line manger or authorised by the Municipal Manager (MM), will be allowed access to Internet and / or e-mail.

Network and Hardware

- No User shall be allowed to attach any equipment to the network or computers without prior authorisation by their line manager in consultation with the Systems Administrator.
- Users shall not be permitted to provide User accounts to any other person.
- The User shall not switch off the computer at the ON / OFF switch or at the wall plug as this can corrupt the Operating System.
- Users should not engage in activities to damage hardware or software, disrupt communications, waste system resources, or overload networks with excessive data.
- Users shall leave their computers switched on at all times as far as possible; but: the User must reboot their PC at least once a week during working hours.

Access and Data

- Access for one User to another User's PC can only be authorised by the User's superior and must be done in consultation with the System Administrator.
- Each User shall be responsible for using his/her common sense and real world ethics to take precautionary measures to avoid violation of the objectives of the Network Policy.
- Users shall not be allowed to give out their login and password to ANYONE.
- Users shall not be allowed to use any other User's login and password to obtain unauthorised access to network resources.
- Financial and Payroll system Users must not leave their systems unattended. The User shall either log out of the program before leaving his office or lock the office.
- Users shall not write down or store their passwords in any physical form.
- Users shall not be allowed to monitor another User's data communication, nor read, copy, change or delete another User's files or software, without the owner's permission.
- Users shall not circumvent data protection schemes or exploit security loopholes.

- Ngwathe licenses the use of computer software from a variety of outside companies. Ngwathe does not own this software or its related documentation, and unless authorised by the software developer, does not have the right to reproduce it except for back-up purposes.

Software

- Ngwathe employees shall use the software only in accordance with the license agreements and will not install unauthorised copies of commercial software.
- Ngwathe employees shall not download or upload unauthorised software over the Internet.
- Ngwathe employees learning of any misuse of software or related documentation within the Municipality shall notify the department manager or Ngwathe's legal council.
- According to applicable copyright law, persons involved in the illegal reproduction of software can be subject to civil damages and criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment. Ngwathe does not condone the illegal duplication of software. Ngwathe employees who make, acquire, or use unauthorised copies of computer software shall be disciplined as appropriate under the circumstances. Such discipline may include termination.
- Any doubts concerning whether any employee may copy or use a given software program should be raised with a responsible manager.

General

- Users should not create, access, display, download, save or transmit any text, file picture, graphic, or sound clip or engage in any conference that includes material which is obscene, libellous, indecent, vulgar, profane, or which advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law.
- Users members should not create, access, display, download, save or transmit threatening, racist, sexist, obscene, offensive, annoying or harassing language and / or materials such as broadcasting unsolicited messages or sending unwanted mail.
- Use of the facilities for private commercial related activities is prohibited.

- Users should adhere to all copyright, trademark, and licensing agreements and laws including seeking permission when required. In particular any use of software must strictly adhere to the terms and conditions of the license. Any unauthorised reproduction and/or use of proprietary software is strictly prohibited.
- Users should not access chat rooms and under no circumstances must information of a confidential or proprietary nature be sent over the Internet.
- Users should be aware of computer viruses and other destructive computer programs, and take steps to avoid being a victim or unwitting distributor of these processes.
- Ngwathe Administrators may deem it necessary to search any computer drive or file system for alleged violations of this policy. In particular, Ngwathe retains the right to randomly monitor and intercept all employee communications, regardless of whether they are of a business or personal nature, including but not limited to e-mail and Internet usage. The monitoring of communications on Ngwathe's communication infrastructures (whether it be Information Communication Technology or any other communication infrastructures operated by Ngwathe) is necessary for the support and maintenance of Ngwathe's communication infrastructures.
- Users must use their best endeavours to ensure that the content of all authorised communications are accurate and concise. Users should use the same care in drafting and sending electronic communications as that afforded to traditional written communication.
- All communications generated, sent, received or stored by electronic means, by Staff are prima facie deemed to be of a business nature and subject to monitoring and interception in terms of the provisions of the Regulation of Interception of Communication and Provision of Communication-Related Information Act 75 of 2002.
- Any information available on Ngwathe Information Communication Technology infrastructures may only be used at the sole discretion of Ngwathe. Users may not disseminate any proprietary information belonging to Ngwathe to third parties by means of the Internet or e-mail system.

Any use of the facilities in direct contravention of the above guidelines will be considered to be a misuse of the facilities. Acts of violations against this policy will be dealt with in terms of the disciplinary procedure of Ngwathe.

DISCLAIMER

Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete or current information. Staff members need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information.

Ultimate responsibility for resolution of problems related to the invasion of a staff member's privacy or loss of data rests with that specific staff member. Ngwathe assumes no liability for loss or damage to data or for any damage or injury arising from invasion of the staff member's privacy, or misuse of the facilities.

E-MAIL POLICY STATEMENTS

- Incidental private use is permitted but this is subject to strict control. Abuse of this privilege may be regarded as misconduct.
- From time to time the use of the e-mail system may be audited.
- All e-mails created, sent, forwarded, stored or printed are Ngwathe's property but this excludes any e-mail where a copyright applies. Ngwathe reserves the right to inspect Ngwathe's e-mail at any time without notice.
- Through using e-mail you will have been deemed to have read, understood and agreed to the policies and procedures relating to e-mail systems contained within these documents.
- Do not, as a matter of course, forward confidential, secret or proprietary information to third parties. Delete any you receive from the e-mail system after having been read.
- Only forward classified/confidential messages to other staff within the same work group and retain them on the e-mail system for a maximum of one month.
- Do not send all messages as confidential as this negates the purpose and adds unnecessary overheads to the e-mail systems.
- Check any e-mail enclosures for viruses, BEFORE opening, particularly if documents containing executable programs are sent. If you open a message and are prompted to "Enable or Disable macros" you should select "Disable" and scan for viruses. If any are found then notify the ICT Helpdesk. If none are found you may utilise the attachment.
- If you get an attachment via e-mail which is unsolicited or of unknown origin, detach it and scan the file using your installed anti virus software. Alternatively delete it.

- Employees are responsible for ensuring that they are utilising the most up-to-date anti-virus software. Employees must apply updates sent via e-mail as soon as they are received. The ICT Helpdesk should be contacted if any update message is unclear or if you are unsure as to how to apply the update.
- Make sure that the intended recipient of your message has suitable tools to work on any enclosed document(s).
- Transmission of any material in violation of any laws, regulation, or management policy is prohibited. Avoid unnecessarily large distribution lists.
- Check your mailbox regularly for received mail.
- Ensure that the content of your message cannot be misconstrued and that there is nothing unlawful about the transmission or content of your message.
- From time to time, certain disclaimers may be required for messages requiring confidentiality, legal privilege etc. Request assistance from Ngwathe's legal advisor.
- It is prohibited to display or transmit:
 - Offensive, defamatory, discriminatory or harassing material.
 - Sexually explicit or other offensive images or jokes.
 - Unlicensed copyright material.
 - Non- business related video and image files.
 - Any message which would be deemed unlawful pursuant to the applicable law of any governing jurisdiction.
 - Confidential, proprietary or secret information outside without authorisation.
 - Advertisements.
 - Chain letters.
- Do not send or forward e-mail notices concerning virus or harmful code warnings to other employees.
- Avoid sending messages with attachments larger than 1 MB (5 MB being the absolute limit). Large attachments can be compressed (with a utility such as WinZip).
- Do not send a large number of e-mail messages to a single address as it may disable the destination mailbox.
- Do not "broadcast" e-mail messages unnecessarily.
- Do not create or participate in pyramid schemes.

- When using electronic mail to communicate with people on the Internet:
 - Do not automatically forward internal mail to an Internet site.
 - When sending or forwarding e-mail to the Internet, do not include the names or User IDs of any Ngwathe employees unless required.
 - Do not use auto-reply functions to respond to your Internet mail. If you use auto-reply functions such as Out of Office message option for your normal Ngwathe internal mail when you are away, be sure to select the option that excludes sending the notices to Internet Users.
- Employees shall not use an electronic mail account assigned to another individual to either send or receive messages.
- Employees should regularly move important information from electronic mail message files to word processing documents, databases, and other files, as e-mail messages may be erased periodically, either accidentally or as part of normal archiving and file maintenance functions.
- If employees receive unwanted and unsolicited e-mail (also known as SPAM), they shall refrain from responding directly to the sender. Instead, they should contact the ICT Helpdesk.
- Employees shall not employ scanned versions of hand-rendered signatures to give the impression that an electronic mail message or other electronic communications were signed by the sender.
- E-mail is a vital communications tool for Ngwathe. Employees should therefore access their e-mail inbox at least once per day. Unopened e-mail older than one calendar month will be deleted from the server. Contact the ICT Helpdesk should further information relating to accessing e-mail be required.
- It is the responsibility of individual employees to manage their own e-mail once they have downloaded it. It is suggested that unwanted e-mails are regularly deleted (in-box, sent items and deleted items) and important e-mails are moved to appropriate folders. Important attachments should be saved in an appropriate folder within the “My Documents” folder and saved to a network server for backup. Contact the ICT Helpdesk should further information regarding the management of e-mail be required.
- The System Administrator reserves the right to delete e-mails, with prior authority from the line manager, if space becomes an issue, but Users on leave/away will be taken into consideration in this regard and the User in question will first be informed before deletion takes place.
- Private e-mail correspondence should be limited to a minimum, the quantum will be regulated.

- Address books should be backed up at least once a month. Contact the ICT Helpdesk should further information regarding the back up of the address book be required.
- Every outgoing message should contain a disclaimer at the end e.g. “All views expressed herein are the views of the author and do not reflect the views of Ngwathe Municipality unless specifically stated otherwise. The information is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking action on any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than those intended recipient/s is prohibited. If you received this message in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from your computer.” Please contact the ICT Helpdesk for further assistance if you are unsure as how to automatically add this disclaimer to the end of all your e-mail messages.

4. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Role	Responsibility
Municipal Manager / Director Corporate Services (subject to its delegations if any)	
Council	
Line Manager	
Human Resources	
Labour Representatives	

5. AUTHORITY

Formulation Policy : Municipal Manager
 Authorisation Policy : Council
 Ownership and Maintenance Manager : Director Corporate Services

Appendix A

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that all e-mail and Internet facilities are a resource operated and managed by Ngwathe. I understand that any misuse of the facilities, may result in Ngwathe taking appropriate disciplinary action against me. All disciplinary actions instituted for misuse of the facilities, shall be consistent with current disciplinary policies and procedures. Irrespective of internal disciplinary proceedings, Ngwathe reserves the right to proceed with legal action, both civil and criminal, against me for any alleged violations of current laws.

I hereby state that I have read and will abide by this policy:

Signature _____ Date _____

Name: _____

Ngwathe reserves the right to revise this policy, as it deems necessary.

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DISCIPLINARY CODE

Nature of Misconduct	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence
1. Causing Disruptions	Written Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
2. Disclosure: unauthorised information; either personal or confidential	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
3. Illegal activities	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
4. Illegal attachments and installations on PCs	Dismissal		
5. Leaving Financial and Payroll System on PC Unattended	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
6. Misrepresentation	Final Written Warning	Dismissal	
7. Electronic vandalism	Dismissal		