

615.6 Limited Personal Use

Use. DR 3300-1, Telecommunications & Internet Services and Use, authorizes the limited personal use of telecommunications resources by USDA employees in the workplace on an occasional basis, with prior supervisory approval, provided that the use occurs during the employees' non-work time, involves minimal expense to the government, and does not interfere with official business. Government office equipment, including information technology, includes, but is not limited to, the following: personal computers and related peripheral equipment and software, library resources, telephones, facsimile machines, photocopiers, office supplies, Internet connectivity, and access to Internet services and e-mail. Some examples of inappropriate personal uses of Government property, facilities, or services follow:

- (a) Accessing bulletin boards or other public forums without agency approval.
- (b) Installing and/or using any software unless authorized by management. This includes home use software (such as Real Player), screen savers, games, etc.
- (c) Developing a book for publication.
- (d) Developing appeals for altruistic causes without agency approval.
- (e) Using the equipment related to other employment or consulting for personal gain.
- (f) Sharing assigned computer ID and password with another user, or share with a user who is not authorized to have access to that application or program.
- (g) Creating or transmitting chain letters.
- (h) Creating/viewing/downloading of the following:
 - (1) Sexually explicit or sexually oriented materials.
 - (2) Gambling.
 - (3) Activities related to commercial or other non-government business purposes.
 - (4) Sites depicting, encouraging, or espousing the use of violence.
- (i) Use that could cause congestion, delay, degradation, or disruption of service to any government system or equipment.
- (j) Unauthorized acquisition, use, reproduction, transmission, and distribution of computer software or other material protected by copyright laws, trademark, or other property rights.

Compliance. Any questions an employee may have regarding authorized or official use of equipment in an office should be directed to the employee's supervisor who may contact the Security Officer for answers. The agency reserves the right to remove from its information systems any material it views as offensive or potentially illegal. This includes information that may constitute sexual, ethnic, or racial harassment, including electronic mail, internal mail, and Internet access. Illegal information is strictly prohibited and is cause for disciplinary action which may include termination. Use of good judgment in complying with this policy will help prevent computer security problems and assure the protection of agency data. The agency shall protect the information we rely on to perform our duties. The first time an employee is found to be using government equipment for inappropriate use will result in a counseling session. Subsequent incidents of misuse may result in disciplinary action, such as denying the employee access to that equipment/system or in the removal of the employee from the agency.

Privacy. Employees, partners, and contractors who use USDA telecommunications do so with the understanding that such use serves as consent to monitor any type of use, including incidental and personal uses. NRCS may implement monitoring tools to detect improper use. Managers and supervisors are also authorized to access any electronic communication done using government equipment. NRCS has taken disciplinary action, up to and including removal, against employees found to be improperly using government equipment.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above privacy information and agree to comply with it and will access only authorized data.

Print User's Name

User's Signature & Date

Return this signed form to the IT staff for retention.