

# **ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DALLAS COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND INTERNET USE POLICY**

## **Summary**

### *Definitions:*

1. The term “Communication(s) Assets” as used herein shall include but not be limited to computers, computer systems and networks, software and related connections, equipment, telephonic access and voice mail.
2. The term “User(s)” as used herein shall include any person who has access to, responsibility for and uses any Communication Assets.
3. The term “Diocesan Entity” as used herein shall include the Diocese, the Chancery Office, each Parish and its school, each Mission, each Chapel, Diocesan High Schools, seminaries in the Diocese, Catholic Charities of Dallas, Inc. and St. Joseph Residence, Inc.
4. The term “Employee(s)” as used herein shall include lay employees of a Diocesan Entity and Clergy and Religious assigned to a Diocesan Entity.

All Communication Assets, as well as any data files, software, or communications created, transmitted by or received from or stored in the systems in the course of Diocesan Entity work, are the property of the appropriate Diocesan Entity. To ensure use of the Communication Assets is consistent with legitimate business interests, the Diocese and each Diocesan Entity reserves and may exercise the right to inspect, review, audit, intercept or access all matters on the Diocesan Entity e-mail, voice mail, and computer systems at any time, with or without notice. Electronically generated material is stored, and may be retrieved and inspected, even if it has been “deleted” by the user.

Employees are responsible for all use of the Communication Assets in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. Every Employee has a responsibility to report any violation of this Policy to law enforcement agencies or the Diocesan Risk Manager, or both, as appropriate. No Employee should undertake an investigation or seek to retrieve files or data.

Communication Assets are not to be used in any way that may be immoral, illegal, unethical, disruptive, in violation of Diocesan policies and guidelines, invidious to others, or harmful to morale. Items prohibited and which are considered disruptive or invidious include sexually explicit materials or those which contain threats of violence or defamatory comments that invidiously address a person’s age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin or disability. Use of Communication Assets for harassment is also prohibited.

Incidental and occasional personal use of Communication Assets is permitted, but they are not to be used for any commercial purposes. All personal files, data and recordings will be treated in the same manner as business and work-related files, data and recordings.

Employees are prohibited from retrieving or reading any e-mail or voice mail not addressed or directed to them without proper authorization. Violation of Diocesan policies, or inappropriately accessing computer files, data and recordings in violation of this Policy are grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Use of Communication Assets and the Internet are governed by the following policy:

## I Use

Diocesan Entity Communication Assets are to be used only for legitimate Diocesan Entity purposes. Users may be provided access to Diocesan Entity Communication Assets to assist in the enhancement and performance of their employment and duties. Users may also be provided with access to the Internet. All Users have a responsibility to use Diocesan Entity Communication Assets and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner. Abuse of the Communication Assets or the Internet, may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination, and civil and/or criminal liability.

## II Computer Use Restrictions

**Use of Communication Assets.** Communication Assets may not be used to disseminate, view or store commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive code (e.g., viruses, trojan horse programs, etc.) or any other unauthorized materials. At all times Users are responsible for the professional, ethical and lawful use of Communication Assets. Personal use of Communication Assets is a privilege that may be revoked at any time. Accessing, downloading, possessing or transmitting Child Pornography is absolutely prohibited. All Employees are obligated by law to immediately notify the authorities of a violation of the Child Pornography laws.

Occasional limited appropriate personal use of Communication Assets is permitted if such use does not a) interfere with the User's or any other Employee's job performance; b) violate any other provisions, guidelines or standards of this Policy.

**Illegal Copying.** Users of Diocesan Entity Communication Assets may not download, store, copy or reproduce material protected under copyright law or make that material available to others for copying. Users are responsible for complying with copyright law and applicable licenses that may apply to software, files, graphics, documents, messages, and other electronic material Users wish to download or copy. Users may not agree to a

license or download any material for which a registration or user fee is charged without obtaining the express written permission of the appropriate administrative superiors.

**Communication of Confidential Material.** Unless expressly authorized to do so, a User is prohibited from reproducing, copying, sending, transmitting, or otherwise distributing proprietary information, data, or other confidential information belonging to a Diocesan Entity. Unauthorized reproduction or dissemination of such material may result in severe disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment, as well as substantial civil and criminal penalties under state and federal laws.

**Accessing the Internet.** To ensure security and avoid the spread of viruses, Users accessing the Internet through Communication Assets must do so through an approved Internet firewall or other security device. Bypassing security by accessing the Internet directly by modem or other means is strictly prohibited.

**Frivolous Use.** Communication Assets resources are not unlimited. Users must not deliberately perform acts that waste the Users' time, other's time, computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. Prohibitions include, but are not limited to sending mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet playing games, engaging in online chat groups, uploading or downloading large files, accessing streaming audio and/or video files, or other non-business-related uses of the Internet.

**Virus Detection.** Files obtained from sources outside the Diocesan Entities, including disks brought from home, files downloaded from the Internet, newsgroups, bulletin boards, or other online services, files attached to e-mail and files provided by other Users, customers or vendors may contain dangerous computer viruses that may damage the Communication Assets. Users may never download files from the Internet, accept e-mail attachments from outsiders, or use disks from outside sources, without first scanning the material with an approved virus checking software. If a User suspects that a virus has been introduced, the supervisor must be notified immediately.

### III

#### **No Expectation of Privacy**

Employees are provided with Communication Assets and Internet access to assist them in the performance of their duties. There should be no expectation of privacy in anything created, stored, sent or received using Diocesan Entity Communication Assets or personal laptops or personal computer equipment used on Diocesan Entity facilities. The Diocesan Entity Communication Assets may be used only for purposes set out in this Policy.

**Waiver of Privacy Rights.** Users of Diocesan Entity Communication Assets expressly waive any right of privacy in anything created, stored, sent or received using the

Communication Assets or Internet access provided by a Diocesan Entity. Users consent to allow appropriate personnel access to and review of all materials created, stored, sent or received by the User through any Diocesan Entity provided Communication Assets. This also applies to privately-owned equipment used on the Diocesan Entity's premises.

**Monitoring of Computer and Internet use.** The Diocesan Entity retains the right to monitor and log any and all aspects of its Communication Assets including, but not limited to, Internet sites visited by Users, chat rooms, newsgroups, file downloads, and all communications sent and received by Users.

**Blocking Sites with Inappropriate Content.** The Diocesan Entities have the right to utilize software that makes it possible to identify and block access to Internet sites containing sexually explicit or other material deemed inappropriate in the workplace.

**ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DALLAS**  
**COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND INTERNET USE POLICY**  
**Acknowledgement of Understanding**

I have read and agree to comply with the terms of this policy governing the use of computer assets. I understand that violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination and civil and criminal penalties.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name

*The User must sign and date this form and return it to his or her Diocesan Entity's personnel administrator for retention.*