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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The County of Elgin acquires technology on an ongoing basis for use by employees in conducting County services and activities. This Technology Entitlement Policy has been developed in an effort to provide the best possible technology equipment for County staff while minimizing the total cost of ownership. The County's practice of regularly renewing technology components ensures that hardware is capable of supporting staff needs in a reliable and cost-effective manner.

## **PURPOSE**

This policy defines who is entitled to acquire and use standard technology equipment. This policy defines the IT tools which County staff is permitted to use in the conduct of County services and activities. Corporate Standards for the technology equipment are defined elsewhere and are set by The Information Technology Department.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all County employees, including all permanent, temporary and contract employees exclusive of associated boards and agencies. This policy shall apply to all purchased and leased County of Elgin electronic devices.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Entitlement** – use of a specific device as necessitated by position or job function within the Corporation.

**Access** – a shared or short-term requirement to meet a defined need.

**Corporate Standards** – the recommended type of IT units and the associated software. Standards ensure consistency and commonality, which result in lower support and training costs.

**Highly-specialized printing needs** for the purposes of this policy include the continuous need for:

- Multi-part pre-printed forms
- Special paper
- Card stock
- Printing of private or confidential documents which cannot be directed to a shared printer

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**PDA** or Personal Digital Assistant – a hand-held device intended mainly for mobile access to email, calendar and contact information. These devices may operate in a disconnected mode (where the PDA receives updates only when attached via a cradle to a PC) or in a connected mode (where the PDA receives its updates over a wireless network connection in real time).

## **ADMINISTRATION**

This technology entitlement policy is administered by The Information Technology Department. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is clear, appropriately implemented, meets the objective of the policy and addresses current technology trends.

### **Standards and Support**

All devices must meet Corporate Standards for hardware and software unless there is a legislated requirement or justified use for other equipment. Justification for any exceptions to Corporate Standards must be based on specific requirements involving a process defined in the procedures associated with this policy.

Technical support from County staff is available for only those devices included by the above statement. Support for older hardware may be withdrawn if it becomes more expensive to support than newer models.

Corporate Standards for hardware and software are defined by the Information Technology Department. These standards will be reviewed on a regular basis. Requests for changes to Corporate Standards can be made to the Information Technology Department.

### **Support**

Technical support from County IT staff is available for only those items that meet Corporate Standards or are approved exceptions to Corporate Standards as defined above. Support for older hardware may be withdrawn if it becomes more expensive to support than newer models.

### **Equipment Usage**

The policy defines who is entitled to acquire and use technology equipment, not whether they must use it. For cost or work function reasons, departments may choose not to equip employees with the equipment to which they might otherwise be entitled. Similarly, employees may elect not to use equipment to which they are entitled, subject to their supervisor's concurrence.

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Employees may currently be using equipment to which they are not entitled under this policy. The process for resolving this situation is defined in the procedures associated with this policy. Employees are expected to adhere to the County's Computer Acceptable Use Policy in the use of this technology equipment. Failure to follow these requirements may result in entitlement or access status being reduced or revoked and disciplinary action as described in the Computer Acceptable Use Policy.

All employees are expected to protect the technology equipment in their possession, and the data stored on it, as far as reasonably possible

### **Equipment Acquisition**

The policy defines equipment entitlement. Acquisition of the equipment depends on an approved budget. All equipment acquisition must conform to the requirements of the Purchasing by-laws.

### **Equipment Authorization**

#### **Policy Criteria Met**

Acquisition of all technology equipment that meets the criteria of the entitlement policy requires the approval of the Information Technology Director.

#### **Exceptions to the Policy**

Acquisition of any technology equipment that does not meet the criteria of the entitlement policy requires the approval of the department's Director and the Director of Information Technology. Any request sent for this type of exception must include a statement of justification provided by the department, a statement about why it does not meet the entitlement policy and the implications of proceeding. Comments from the IT department shall accompany the "exception" report. If the exception is approved, the reason for the approval should be documented and forwarded to the IT department for consideration during the regular policy review process.

#### **Exception Reporting**

The IT department will provide a quarterly report to the senior management team listing all approved exceptions to this policy and all approved exceptions to Corporate Standards.

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## **Technology Entitlement**

The following sections describe the entitlement policy for each item of technology equipment where operating budget funds are available. Where they exist, individual employment contracts may override this policy.

### **Desktop Computers**

Sharing of desktop computers is encouraged in situations where space or funding is limited or where justified by the nature of work (e.g. part-time hours). Employees are entitled to a desktop computer when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology:

- their job function requires access to the corporate network, creation of electronic documents or data entry on a daily basis.

### **Desktop Computer Monitors**

Monitors can significantly increase the cost of desktop computers. Wherever possible, the standard monitor should be used for all desktop computers.

Employees are entitled to a flat panel monitor when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology any one of the following applies:

- there is a space restriction which prevents the use of a standard-sized monitor
- they provide over-the-counter customer service to the public and the monitor must be placed on the counter
- there is a specific disability, which prevents the employee from being able to use a standard-sized monitor.

#### **Permitted Exceptions:**

Employees are entitled to a monitor, which exceeds the size of the standard monitor, when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology any one of the following applies:

- their job function requires the display of graphical or mapping data which cannot be properly displayed on a standard-sized monitor
- there is a specific disability, which prevents the employee from being able to use a standard-sized monitor.

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Employees are entitled to two monitors on one desktop computer, when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology:

- their job function requires the use of a specialized application that requires this (e.g. a GIS or CADD application)

### **Notebook Computers**

Notebook computers are a resource that should be shared within departments for short term needs (such as meetings and presentations) whenever possible. If the need is for access to e-mail and calendars only, then alternative solutions (e.g. PDA or Internet access to County e-mail) should be explored.

Employees are entitled to a notebook computer on a long-term basis when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology:

- their job function requires access to the corporate network, creation of electronic documents or data entry on a regular basis.

AND any one of the following applies:

- their job function requires regular access to the corporate network during normal work hours from a location which does not enable them to use a standard desktop PC
- their job function requires work from several different locations during normal work hours
- their work outside of normal work hours exceeds 10 hours per week

### **Printers**

Printers are a resource that should be shared. All printers shall be networked. This will ensure that networked employees have access to a wide variety of printing resources and that printers will be used in the most cost effective manner.

All printer acquisitions require prior consultation with the Information Technology Department to evaluate needs and determine the best fit for the requirements.

Networked employees are entitled to:

- access a shared networked printer within a reasonable walking distance for all their printing needs.

Employees are entitled to a networked printer located on or adjacent to their desktop when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, any one of the following applies:

- their job function includes highly specialized printing needs on a daily basis and these cannot be accommodated on a general shared printer

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- they have special needs with regards to mobility or location

Employees are entitled to a local, non-networked printer when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, any one of the following applies:

- they have no network access at their location
- their job function includes highly specialized printing needs, which cannot be accommodated on a shared printer.
- they have special needs with regards to mobility or location

### **Colour Printers**

The need for colour printers must be clearly justified in any area or section, given the high cost of printing in colour. Where possible, "proofs" should be sent to external printers in digital format to avoid the need for producing high quality colour images internally. High quality/high volume colour printing jobs should always be printed by external printers. Images can be transferred to external printers digitally without the need for printing colour "proofs" internally.

All printer acquisitions require prior consultation with the Information Technology Department to evaluate needs and determine the best fit for the requirements. Choosing the appropriate technology can significantly reduce the total cost of ownership for these devices.

All colour printers must be networked and available for access by a large group of networked users. No desktop-style colour printers (e.g. HP DeskJet) are permitted. Colour printers must be shared by a minimum of 30 users.

When colour printers are available, employees should be careful about sending print jobs to these printers. Only printing which requires colour should be sent to these colour printers.

Employees are entitled to a networked colour printer located in their section when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, all of the following apply:

- their job function includes the need for printing colour documents which should not be printed externally
- a minimum of 30 users share the printer
- Permitted Exceptions:
  - where a group with less than 30 users is physically isolated from other staff, but has a legitimate need for printing colour documents, which should not be printed externally.

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## **Scanners**

Scanners are a resource that should be shared within the department. However, since most scanners require a direct connection to a PC, this sharing can be problematic for users.

Depending on their intended use, scanners can require a significant investment in data storage to accommodate the scanned images.

All scanner acquisitions require prior consultation with the Information Technology Department to evaluate needs, and determine the best fit for the requirements and ensure compliance with Corporate Standards. In the event of a disagreement between the employee and IT with respect to the scanner required, the employee's Director is authorized to make the final decision.

Employees are entitled to a scanner when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, all of the following apply:

- their job function requires frequent scanning of documents received from external sources
- there has been a prior needs analysis conducted in conjunction with Information Technology.

## **Cellular Phones**

Cellular phones are a resource that should be shared within departments for short term needs whenever possible. Cellular phone models and features will be defined in Corporate Standards.

Cellular plans will be selected based on usage patterns in order to minimize cost. These plans will be reviewed quarterly and changed as required.

Employees are entitled to a cellular phone when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, any one of the following applies:

- their job function involves working away from a land phone on a daily basis.
- their job function includes being on-call. The shared use of cell-phones should be considered first (e.g. where employees in a group share on-call responsibilities)
- their job function includes being available for emergencies either during normal working hours or outside of normal working hours.
- they must have access to phones for health and safety purposes.
- their job function involves working from multiple locations during normal business hours.

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## Exceptions

- Employees who fit the criteria, but have a temporary project-driven need should use units from a shared pool for the duration of the project.

Cellular phone models and features will be defined in corporate standards. Cellular plans will be selected based on usage patterns in order to minimize cost. These plans will be reviewed quarterly and changed as required.

## PDA's

Personal Digital Assistants (PDA's) may be used in a disconnected mode and in a continuously connected wireless mode. Different Corporate IT standards apply to devices used in the two modes.

Employees are entitled to a PDA when, in the written opinion of their Director and with the approval of the Director of Information Technology, any of the following apply:

- their job function involves regular attendance at meetings and their calendars are managed by an Administrative Assistant. The use of a PDA ensures that calendars are synchronized.
- their job function requires mobile computing and the PDA is a notebook replacement.
- their job function involves working from multiple locations and the PDA is a notebook replacement.
- their need is for remote access to email only and the PDA is a notebook replacement.