

Nueces County

End-User Devices Acceptable Use Policy

A. Purpose

NUECES COUNTY provides many business tools to its employees and volunteers to enhance their productivity and jobs. We require these systems to be used in a responsible way, ethically, and in compliance with all legislation and other *NUECES COUNTY* policies and contracts. Non-compliance could have a severe, negative impact on the county, its employees, and volunteers.

Risks addressed by the policy:

- Contracts signed for IT services and support that do not meeting regulatory requirements.
- Data loss due to solutions installed or purchased as hosted solutions that do not meet backup and data recovery requirements.
- Solutions purchased departmentally that require assistance from the Information Technology department, but cannot be installed due to existing project timelines.
- Equipment that no longer meets standards and cannot be replaced due to budgetary constraints.
- Management of equipment lost or stolen with sensitive organizational data.

B. Scope

This policy applies to all technology assets, including hardware and software that are owned and operated by *NUECES COUNTY*. These tools include computers and their software, network for internal systems, and access to external resources and potentially other equipment deemed necessary to do the work designated.

C. Definitions

D. Governing Laws & Regulations

E. Policy Statements

1. Acceptable Use

Individuals at *NUECES COUNTY* are encouraged to use the county systems to further the business goals and objectives of the organization. The types of activities that are encouraged include:

- Communicating with fellow employees, volunteers, business partners of *NUECES COUNTY*, and the public within the context of an individual's assigned responsibilities; and
- Acquiring or sharing information necessary or related to the performance of an individual's assigned responsibilities.

2. Unacceptable Use

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Individual use will not interfere with others' use and enjoyment of the systems. Use in a manner that is not consistent with the mission of *NUECES COUNTY*, misrepresents *NUECES COUNTY*, or violates any *NUECES COUNTY* policy/rule is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- i. The contents of messages, downloads, etc. must not be offensive, insulting, or harassing for other employees, volunteers, users, or non-employees, or contain comments that could reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory.
- ii. The systems may not be used to commit illegal or unlawful acts, including copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, illegal gambling, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g. spreading computer viruses).
- iii. Users should not pay access fees or commit county financial resources without formal authorization.
- iv. *NUECES COUNTY* allows limited personal use for communication with family and friends, independent learning, and public service. Systems access at *NUECES COUNTY* is controlled through individual accounts and passwords. Department Heads are responsible for defining appropriate access levels/usage for the persons in their department and conveying that information to the network administrator.
- v. *NUECES COUNTY* prohibits use for mass unsolicited mailings, access for non-employees to *NUECES COUNTY* resources or network facilities, competitive commercial activity unless pre-approved by *NUECES COUNTY*, and the dissemination of chain letters.
- vi. Individuals may not view, copy, alter, or destroy data, software, documentation, or data communications belonging to *NUECES COUNTY* or another individual without authorized permission.
- vii. Users will not violate the policies of any network accessed through their account.

3. Equipment and Software Purchasing

- i. County supplied equipment is owned by *NUECES COUNTY* and is provided for employee use. Because *NUECES COUNTY* is responsible for maintaining equipment, keeping data secure, managing costs, and meeting software publisher compliance requirements, equipment and software must not be purchased by individuals or departments without following the established purchasing procedure as defined by the Purchasing Agent.
- ii. Hardware and software will be supplied based on standards determined by the Information Technology department, with consultation with county departments and offices. Every attempt will be made to supply the most appropriate equipment and software. Standards will be evaluated, updated, and maintained annually at a minimum.
- iii. In many cases, software for professional use is different from single licenses purchased over the web or in retail stores. The Information Technology department reserves the right to not install any of these purchased software packages on equipment as it may not be compatible with other software or patching processes.
- iv. Employees will not be permitted to add or remove software from equipment without express permission from the Information Technology department. Attempts will be made to evaluate these requests in a timely manner and respond accordingly.

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- v. Software hosted by a third party will need to be purchased following the established purchasing procedure as defined by the Purchasing Agent and will be evaluated to ensure the solution meets all of *NUECES COUNTY*'s requirements.

4. Equipment Tracking and Maintenance

- i. To ensure equipment and software is replaced, maintained, and upgraded regularly, *NUECES COUNTY* will be monitoring equipment through an automated discovery tool as part of our asset management solution. All equipment will be scanned by an asset management/discovery tool to view software installed, components within the equipment, and changes to these configurations.
- ii. Location information will also be very important for periodic inventory and equipment condition checks. Any time equipment needs to move to a new location (desk, floor, building), a ticket will be submitted to the Information Technology department for assistance and to update records with the asset manager.
- iii. Devices cannot be reassigned without coordination from the Information Technology department.
- iv. **Remote users** must connect to the network monthly to allow our asset management tools to scan equipment to ensure patches are up to date and equipment is still configured appropriately. Devices that have not connected to the network and therefore are not scanned for more than 90 days will be denied access to the VPN and network. To gain access, users must contact the Information Technology department to reconnect.

5. Security

- i. If possible, location services will be activated for all county devices. The IT department will not attempt to track the current location or previous locations of a device unless trying to locate a lost or stolen device with the approval of the device owner.
- ii. All mobile devices will be encrypted to ensure organizational data cannot be accessed if devices are lost or stolen.
- iii. Any equipment lost or stolen must be reported to the Information Technology department immediately. This will enable us to take action to remove access of the device to the network as well as to start the process of replacing equipment as appropriate.
- iv. Employees or volunteers who leave the county will be required to return all county equipment to their managers. Unless instructed otherwise, employees or volunteers on temporary leave will also return all county equipment to their managers for secure storage until their return to the organization.
- v. All devices returned to the Information Technology department will be evaluated for reuse or disposal. Anything marked for disposal will have data retained for 30 days, and then drives will be removed and destroyed.

F. Non-Compliance

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Revision History

Version ID	Date of Change	Author	Rationale