

Tri-County Regional Centre for Education
POLICY and PROCEDURES

Title	Effective Date	Revision Date	No. of Pages
<p align="center">No.860 <i>PERSONAL USE OF REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY</i></p>	<p align="center">2005 June 07</p>		<p align="center">9</p>

It is the policy of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education to ensure that Regional personnel understand their responsibilities, rights and privileges when using Tri-County Regional Centre for Education owned technological resources.

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The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education recognizes the importance of technological resources in both the education of students and the effective and efficient performance of duties by the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education employees.

Within this context, the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure that regional personnel understand their responsibilities, right and privileges when using Tri-County Regional Centre for Education-owned technological resources.

To the end, the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education expects that:

- the Regional Executive Director of Education (or designate) to inform all regional employees of **Personal Use of Regional Technology Guidelines** appended to this policy;
- all regional employees to read and abide by the **Personal Use of Regional Technology Guidelines** appended to this policy; and,
- the Regional Executive Director of Education (or designate) to regularly review, revise and update the **Personal Use of Regional Technology Guidelines** to ensure currency and consistency with Provincial and Federal legislation, copyright laws and applicable Tri-County Regional Centre for Education policies.



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PERSONAL USE OF REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education Computer and Network Environment

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education has created extensive networks with information, telephone and computing resources for staff and student use. In addition, the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education provides a large and continuously growing number of computer workstations, printers, peripherals, software, training and supplies to all sites. These items are provided to allow you and others in the Region to perform your task effectively in meeting the goals and needs for which the regional Tri-County Regional Centre for Education was established.

By nature, design, and function, the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education computer network and resources must provide a relatively open environment. While automatic and procedural security controls are in place to prevent or reduce unauthorized access to these resources, the primary responsibility for maintaining the security of this information and its resources lies with you, the employee.

Improper use of any of these resources can cause problems related to the needs of some or all employees and students in the Region. Violation of specific local, provincial, and federal laws may call for prosecution under the law including fines and imprisonment. The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education may take disciplinary action against employees for misuse of computer, network, and information resources.

Privacy of Tri-County Regional Centre for Education Records – Student, Staff, and Business Information

Both student and employee records are protected by various provincial and federal laws. It is probable that during your employment with the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education, you will have access to either student or employee and business information that is confidential. It is your responsibility to safeguard this information from unauthorized persons. You shall not seek to use personal or confidential information for your own use or personal gain. You must take all reasonable precautions to ensure privacy is maintained under the law while handling information in any form, including but not limited to voice, electronic (disk file, diskette, CD ROM, DVD, email, etc.) paper, photograph, and microfiche information. Included under this precaution is the disposal of any privacy related materials.

Ownership

It must be understood that the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education business information, telephone, network, computer and software resources, peripherals and supplies are regional Tri-County Regional Centre for Education property, provided to meet Tri-County Regional Centre for



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Education needs. They do not belong to individuals, but are only loaned for the purposes required for your position while you are employed by the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education.

This specifically means that you **MAY NOT** use the computer, its software, peripherals or supplies for commercial, or non-Tri-County Regional Centre for Education purposes. For example, you may not use your Tri-County Regional Centre for Education computer to store or maintain your personal business. Use of your workstation and its software, printers, faxes, copiers, and other peripherals for personal work (for example, in the taking of a university course) may be permitted where approved by your supervisor in advance and when it is done outside your normal work hours.

Use of Telephones, Cell Phones, and Voicemail

Telephones and cell phones are provided to conduct the business of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education. In many cases, voice mail is also provided. These services are intended to provide a means of communication for employees to contact parents and students, agencies, vendors, other institutions and government officials. When using these services, you should always reflect a businesslike and professional demeanour. When you have used a phone for personal use, you must reimburse the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education for any charges incurred. Private use of the phones should be kept to a minimum.

Use of Personally Owned Software or Equipment

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education attempts to ensure that all hardware and software meet specific standards which will operate without causing disruption of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's computer and network resources. Therefore, the use of personally owned software or software that can be downloaded from the Internet, as well as personally-owned computer hardware, is not permitted except where authorized by the Coordinator of Technology.

Use of the Internet

The Internet provides an extremely valuable resource for learning and communicating with people throughout the world. It can be a marvellous tool to enhance student and staff education and productivity. Unfortunately, the Internet also contains a large amount of information that is inappropriate for use in an education institution.

While it is hoped that employees will enjoy the use of Internet resources, it must be emphasized that these resources are provided at the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's expense to enhance your job function and maximize your job effectiveness. Employees are not to let personal use of the Internet encroach on or displace time spent performing their work duties. In as much as every transaction you complete on the Internet represents to the world the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education and everything it stands for, it is imperative that employees not use the Internet in such a



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way as to bring civil or criminal liability or public reproach upon the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education.

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education strictly prohibits the use of its computing resources to access any pornographic or gambling sites, as well as any sites that may be considered insensitive due to inappropriate content targeting individuals based upon their gender, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and other common forms of discrimination. Accessing web sites of this nature may result in any combination of disciplinary action and/or prosecution and fines including litigation costs and payment of damages under applicable local, provincial and federal statutes.

Use of Computer Resources

The computing resources of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education are used by thousands of students and employees. In order to ensure that these resources are available and working properly, your personal use of these resources must not negatively impact others.

For example, you may not attempt to break into computer systems or their resources to which you have not been granted authorization. You may not attempt to maliciously alter, erase, damage, destroy or make otherwise unusable or inaccessible any data, software, computer, or network system. Attempts or actions of this nature are a felony and may result in any combination of disciplinary action and/or prosecution and fines including litigation costs and payment of damages under applicable local, provincial and federal statutes.

Your Computer Account

In order for you to utilize the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's computer and network resources, you will be assigned a user id and password. Based on your position and your supervisor's authorization, you may be provided with access levels, which allow you to view, create, alter, delete, print, and transmit information.

You are responsible for maintaining the security of your personal account and may not release it for use by any other individual. You must accord your user account the same significance as your hand-written signature. Failure to do so by releasing this information to another individual may be considered false representation and result in disciplinary action.

This means that it is extremely important that you use a password that cannot be guessed by others through knowledge about you. For example, never use personal names such as children or pets or names that begin or end with numbers. Never use your Social Insurance Number, bank PIN or words that can be found in any dictionary, name spelled backwards, or adjacent keys on a computer keyTri-County Regional Centre for Education (i.e., QWERTY). All of the above provide an easy

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way for a hacker to break into a computer system and, using your rights and privileges, cause damage and destruction. You must also never write down your user id or password unless you store it in your personal possession or other location away from your place of work. Even then, you should write it in such a way that no clue is given as to the purpose for its use. Please contact the Technology Services Department if you suspect someone else may have accessed your account. It is a simple matter to change your password in a few seconds, but may take days to reconstruct damaged records or computer systems if someone breaks in with your account rights. Where you have the ability to change your own password, make a habit of periodically changing passwords for these accounts.

You should never leave your workstation unattended while signed on to any account; doing so allows anyone to sit at your workstation and, using your rights and privileges, perform destructive acts. This has been the most common method used elsewhere for students to make changes to their own or others records.

Under certain circumstances, user id's and passwords may be shared by a group of employees where doing so makes information access convenient with a minimum of administrative overhead. Examples include Tri-County Regional Centre for Education-subscribed online services that teachers may wish to access from outside of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education network. Group ids and passwords should be held in confidence and never shared with students. If you suspect that the security of such information has been compromised, notify the computer technician for your work site at once.

Only employees may have direct publishing (write privilege) access to Tri-County Regional Centre for Education servers, including web, mail, and list servers. Those who assume responsibility for posting student work must never delegate this responsibility to students. Do not store passwords where students may have access to them. Periodically change your password.

Computer Viruses

The computer industry faces a continuing onslaught of malicious viruses, worms, and other damaging programs that attack computer and network resources. The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education attempts to maintain anti-virus software in order to minimize the impact of these viruses, but it is your responsibility to take precautions to protect your computer and all others throughout the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education.

For example, avoid opening email attachments from people you do not know. If someone you do know sends you an attachment, contact them and verify what the purpose of the attachment is. Ask them if they are sure no viruses may have invaded their attachment.

Likewise, downloaded software should not be installed without first consulting with the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education Technology Department staff. It is not unknown for even a very respectable company to unknowingly release products which include hidden or unknown viruses.



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Electronic Mail

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education encourages the use of electronic mail (email) to enhance communication and business activities. Users of this service need to be aware however that this technology is still evolving, and policies like this one are necessary to ensure appropriate use and to prevent or limit disruptions to work activity and computer services.

Please read the following sections carefully.

Cautions About The Use Of Electronic Mail

The nature of electronic mail at this date makes it susceptible to misuse. Users need to be aware that sensitive or private information can be easily forwarded to other individuals the originator never intended, both within the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education, as well as externally throughout the world.

In addition, while email accounts may be password protected, it is up to the individual user to ensure that a password is set and that the password is one that cannot be easily guessed or hacked.

Because of backup procedures in force with the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's computer services, the fact that you have deleted an email message does not necessarily mean that it cannot be retrieved.

Users of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's email services need to be aware that use of these services is a privilege granted with the expectation that it will be used for business purposes and in a professional and courteous manner similar to other forms of communication. All email sent or received by individuals through Tri-County Regional Centre for Education employee accounts is the property of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education and may be requested by your supervisor and examined with just cause.

There is no guarantee that email received was in fact sent by the purported sender, since it is a simple matter, although a violation of this policy, to disguise the sender's identity. Furthermore, email that is forwarded may be modified by the forwarder. As with any document, if you receive a message which appears unusual or which you feel may be questionable, check with the purported sender to verify authorship and authenticity. While encryption of email is a potential solution to ensure authenticity, it is an emerging technology that is not in widespread use and rather difficult to use consistently. Technology will mature such that it becomes practical and easy to use in the near future.

While the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education does not have the time nor inclination to monitor or read individual email messages, in the event that questionable or inappropriate use is suspected or known, such email may be examined and may be cause for disciplinary action ranging from revoking your email account up to termination. Users should also be aware that in the general



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course of business, System Administrators and email operators can require observation of messages in order to verify system operation.

Email – Personal Use

Private or personal non-commercial use of Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's email is permitted as long as it is not excessive and does not interfere with the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's normal business practices and the performance of the individual's tasks. Individuals should exercise sound judgement and sensitivity to others when exchanging personal messages in the workplace.

Email – Provincial, Federal, And Copyright Laws

In addition to this policy, use of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's email services is subject to all applicable federal and provincial communications and privacy laws as well. In particular, users need to be aware that attaching programs, sound, video, and images to email messages may violate copyright laws, and data files containing employee and/or student information is subject to all privacy laws.

Email Restrictions

Electronic mail originating from Tri-County Regional Centre for Education's mail clients may **not** be used for:

- Unlawful activities
- Commercial purposes
- Personal financial gain
- Use that violates this policy or other provincial and federal policies
- Any form of harassment
- Any form of material that could be considered pornographic in nature
- Chain letters, sending or forwarding
- Spam mail, that is, to exploit list servers or other broadcast systems which amplify widespread distribution of unsolicited email
- Mail bombs, that is, to re-send the same email repeatedly to one or more recipients with the intent to interfere with the recipient's use of email.
- Any other use which interferes with computing facilities and services of Tri-County or its employees



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Email and Representation

Users shall not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions or otherwise making statements on behalf of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education unless they are appropriately authorized, explicitly or implicitly, to do so. Where appropriate and based on context, and appropriate disclaimer would be, “These are my own statements and views and do not represent those of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education or any of its schools”.

Email – False Identity

Employees shall not employ a false identity in sending email or alter forwarded mail out of the context of its original meaning.

Email – Misuse of Computing Services

Email services shall not be used for purposes that could reasonably be expected to cause, either directly or indirectly, excessive strain on the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education’s computing facilities, or cause interference with others’ use of email, email systems, or any computing facilities or services. For example, attaching large files over 1 megabyte and sending these to multiple users or repeatedly to the same user is a violation of this policy.

Email – Security And Confidentiality

The confidentiality of electronic mail cannot be assured. Users should exercise extreme caution in using email to communicate confidential or sensitive material.

Email – Virus Dangers

As mentioned, proper precautions must be taken to guard against the infection of computers and files by viruses. Likewise, using email attachments to distribute viruses and/or worms and other damaging software is commonplace today. You should never open email or attachments unless you are expecting them. Even if someone you know well sends you an attachment, ask him or her before you open it if they are using the latest anti-virus software. If they aren’t certain or don’t know, contact Technology Services. Technology Services will arrange to install a licensed anti-virus software package.

Email – Archiving And Retention

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education maintains an ongoing backup schedule of computer data in order to ensure that these facilities may be restored to use in the event of damage and/or destruction. Because of this practice, email may be stored on backup media for extended lengths of



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time. Messages, which a user assumes to be deleted, may be able to be restored if demanded by the appropriate authority.

Each user should consider whether they want to archive their personal messages to their workstation's hard drive or other disk media on some sort of regular basis, as there is always the possibility that information may be lost due to software or hardware problems. The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education has internal policies in place for the length of time email is retained on-line. This schedule is 30 days for current email, after which it is placed into the user's "trash" where it may still be recoverable for a short time. Thus, users should be careful not to consider email as a long-term filing system.

While the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education maintains a backup of all email, it is not feasible nor our practice to restore lost or damaged email.

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