



Information Technology Policy Manual

Office of Legislative Council

In effect as of November 1, 2015

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Note: Laptops and mobile devices operate under different policies. See section 8.

1. General

- 1.1. The legislative computer systems are maintained and operated to further the mission and functions of the Vermont General Assembly.
- 1.2. The Legislative Information Technology department is part of the Office of Legislative Council and is directly managed by the Deputy Director for Information Technology and the Director of the Legislative Council. It is overseen by the Legislative Information Technology Committee and the Legislative Council Committee.

2. Appropriate Use

- 2.1. The legislative computer system is intended to support the business of the General Assembly and its members.
- 2.2. Users of the computer system may not use the system for unlawful purposes.
- 2.3. Members and staff may not use the computer system for campaign or personal business activities.

3. Security

3.1. Authorized Users

- 3.1.1. The legislative computer system may only be used by members of the Vermont Legislature, legislative staff, contractors under the supervision of legislative staff, and paid or unpaid interns hired or appointed by the Legislature or a Legislative department.
- 3.1.2. The legislative computer system may not be used by any other person, including family or friends of members and staff of the Vermont Legislature, paid or unpaid interns hired by individual members, and members of the public.

3.2. Logins

- 3.2.1. A login account to the legislative computer system will be created whenever a new member of the Legislature is elected or appointed, or when a new member of the staff is hired.
- 3.2.2. Users will be granted the level of access to applications, services, documents, and data that is appropriate for the user's department and position.
- 3.2.3. In order to have the login account created before the employee begins work, departments must notify the legislative IT department at least two working days before the employee's start date.

3.3. Passwords

- 3.3.1. Users of the computer system must treat user IDs and passwords as confidential information and not release them to any unauthorized person. This includes login passwords, e-mail passwords, and remote access passwords.
- 3.3.2. The Legislative IT staff does not have the ability to find out the current password for a user who has forgotten it, but can create a new password for the user upon request.
- 3.3.3. Login passwords will expire after 365 days, and cannot be reused.

3.4. Remote access

- 3.4.1. Remote access to the legislative computer system is provided to those users who have a business need for remote access.
- 3.4.2. All appropriate use policies for the legislative computer system apply equally to remote access.

3.5. Termination of employment

- 3.5.1. It is the responsibility of each legislative department to notify the Legislative IT department when an employee is terminated or otherwise leaves the General Assembly.
- 3.5.2. All state-owned computer equipment provided to a member or employee of the General Assembly, including laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, and similar devices, must be returned to the IT department upon separation from the General Assembly or termination of employment.
- 3.5.3. Login accounts will be deactivated when a member of the General Assembly or a staff person is terminated or otherwise leaves the employment of the Legislature.

4. Data

- 4.1. Users are encouraged to save their work frequently during the course of the workday. The Legislative IT department will be unable to recover data lost from an unsaved document.
- 4.2. All work-related data must be stored on network drives, not on the local workstation.
- 4.3. Personal data files (including data files from users' non-legislative workplaces) should not be stored on the legislative computer system or on individual workstations. The Legislative IT department cannot guarantee either the integrity or the confidentiality of personal data.
- 4.4. For legislative staff, all work-related documents should be stored within the document management system, with the exception of documents for which there is a technical reason that prevents such storage.
- 4.5. Members of the General Assembly should store work-related documents in their My Documents folder.

- 4.6. The Joint Fiscal Office maintains a non-DM directory structure which predates the legislative computer system. Documents and spreadsheets relating to this structure may be stored outside the document management system.

5. E-mail

- 5.1. E-mail messages, appointments, and tasks are retained for 180 days following receipt, and then automatically archived unless deleted by the user. *Note: This policy may be suspended during litigation holds.*
- 5.2. E-mail messages are considered a public record, and are subject to discovery requests. It is the user's responsibility to retain all e-mails related to a discovery request.
- 5.3. The entire e-mail environment is backed up systematically for disaster recovery purposes. However, restoration of individual e-mail messages is virtually impossible due to the structure of the e-mail database.
- 5.4. The Legislative e-mail system scans incoming messages for characteristics typical of bulk commercial e-mail, often called "spam." Messages which resemble spam are stored in users' "Junk Mail" folders for 30 days, and then automatically discarded. Users should review this folder periodically to check for legitimate messages incorrectly identified as spam.

6. Software & Hardware

- 6.1. State House computer system workstations are provided with a standard software suite. The standard software suite is considered complete for members of the Legislature and staff to perform their job duties, and is fully supported by the Legislative IT department.
- 6.2. The IT department will purchase and install software other than the supported suite ("third-party software") on a user's workstation upon the request of his or her department supervisor, if required for performance of the user's job duties. Third-party software will have only limited support from the IT department.
- 6.3. Personally owned software is not permitted on any legislative computer system workstation or server. Unauthorized software installed on legislative workstations may be removed without warning.
- 6.4. Users may not modify workstation hardware. Workstations may be modified, relocated, or replaced by the IT staff as needed to support the operations of the computer system as a whole.

7. Support

- 7.1. Support is available during regular business hours from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, but may be scheduled in advance if needed for events at other times. After-hours support will generally be provided remotely.

- 7.2. When emergencies occur outside regular business hours, the IT staff will provide remote or on-site support as required.
- 7.3. Due to limited support resources, requests for support may need to be prioritized, with the most critical requests attended to first.
- 7.4. Commercial software applications are purchased “off-the-shelf,” and configured to incorporate the software’s features into the legislative process. In most cases, the IT staff cannot modify the software’s behavior beyond that point.

8. Mobile Devices

- 8.1. Laptops, iPads, and other equipment may be issued to members and staff of the General Assembly. This equipment is owned by the State of Vermont, and is intended to support the business of the General Assembly. Equipment reserved for use by outside organizations must be signed out by a legislative staff member who will remain responsible for the equipment.
- 8.2. In addition to legislative business, members may use equipment to correspond with constituents and personal use. Staff may also use equipment for limited personal use. However, members and staff should not use the equipment for campaign or private business purposes.
- 8.3. This equipment is for the use of the user to whom it is issued, and may not be transferred to other users, family members, or members of the public.
- 8.4. Upon separation from the General Assembly, the user must return the device directly to a member of the legislative IT department and sign the return portion of a receipt. The user will be given a copy of this receipt for his or her own records and to confirm that the equipment was returned.
- 8.5. Users are responsible for replacing lost equipment. Equipment broken or damaged under normal use may be replaced by the IT department. In the case of theft, the IT department will replace the equipment upon receipt of a copy of the police report.
- 8.6. The IT department is not responsible for recovering, duplicating, syncing, or transferring personal, non legislative data to or between devices.
- 8.7. The IT department is not responsible for restoring personal purchases of applications, multimedia content, or any other software on an issued device.
- 8.8. The IT department is not required to provide additional accessories for use with legislative equipment. Accessories provided on initial issue that are damaged or lost may be replaced by the IT department, if supplies are available.
- 8.9. In the event of a litigation hold, public records request, or any event that requires content to be obtained from a device, the IT department may require an issued device to be returned immediately. If required, a replacement device will be issued to the user.

9. Support of Personally Owned Equipment

- 9.1. A limited amount of support will be provided for personally owned laptop computers and mobile devices used in support of legislative business.
- 9.2. The legislative IT staff will attempt to configure laptop computers and other wireless devices to access the State House wireless system. **Configuration of personally owned equipment is at the owner's risk.**
- 9.3. The legislative IT staff cannot support Windows versions older than Windows Vista, Macintosh OS X versions older than 10.6, or some specific iOS and Android devices (due to differing vendor implementations).
- 9.4. Assistance will be provided to users in accessing outside e-mail and other online services. Such assistance will be limited to providing a connection to the online site. Assistance with using the features of the site will not be provided.
- 9.5. In the event a user requires additional support with a personal device, the IT department may provide them with a list of commercial service providers.