



Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Service

Registered Charity No: 1081381 - Company Reg'd in England & Wales No: 4024662

Boscombe Link, 3-5 Palmerston Road, Bournemouth BH1 4HN.

Tel & Fax: 01202 466130

email: contactus@bournemouthcvs.org.uk

IT POLICY - STAFF USE OF TELEPHONES, E-MAIL AND INTERNET

This document outlines Bournemouth CVS's policy and employee responsibilities for communication sent or received via the organisation's systems, it covers both internal and external communication, including e-mail and text messages.

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of e-mail and the internet through Bournemouth CVS's computer network is encouraged, as its appropriate use facilitates communication and improves efficiency. Used correctly, it is a facility that is of assistance to many employees. However, inappropriate use can cause problems, ranging from minor distractions to legal claims against the organisation.

The organisation reserves the right to monitor in a reasonable manner, as permitted by the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) Regulations, telephone calls, e-mails, internet use and other communications, to access all of the records within systems, and to retain or dispose of those records when and how it desires to do so in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

This policy sets out how Bournemouth CVS expects the system to be used and how this can be achieved, as well as the organisation's response to inappropriate use.

Compliance with these guidelines will be subject to regular monitoring.

2. OVERVIEW

- a) E-mail messages comprise part of Bournemouth CVS's records. All incoming and outgoing e-mails, which previously would have comprised written records, should be printed off or saved to the appropriate folder.
- b) Maintenance of mailboxes is essential.
- c) Virus protection systems must be operational at all times. File attachments to incoming e-mails must not be opened, unless they BOTH originate from someone the recipient knows AND the particular attachment is expected from the particular sender.

- d) Employees use of e-mail is not private and messages may be subject to scrutiny.
- e) Each user will be required to use a unique password to enter their system. The password will be known only to the individual concerned and kept in a sealed envelope in a secure place for access in emergencies only by the system administrator. Under no circumstances may it be shared with anyone else. Such a disclosure would be subject to disciplinary proceedings
 - i) It may be necessary in a person's absence to access their account (if, for example a member of staff is unexpectedly absent or has gone on leave without leaving e-mail forwarding arrangements; or if access is needed in order to carry out repairs or address faults in the user's absence). In these cases, the user will be informed. The user should change their password the next time they access their account.

3. AUTHORISED USE

- a) Office and mobile telephones, fax, e-mail, internet and computer systems are available for communication on matters directly concerned with the organisation's purposes
- b) The style and content of an e-mail should be appropriate to its function. For example, if it is a substitute for a letter, the language used needs to be similar to that used in a letter. If it is a message, it may be appropriate to adopt a less formal style.
- c) E-mail messages should only be sent to those employees for whom they are particularly relevant.
- d) If the message is confidential, the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality. The organisation will be liable for any defamatory information circulated either internally or externally on the system. Therefore there should be no comments in e-mail that could be used against Bournemouth CVS in litigation.
- e) Staff should be aware of the risk of creating or varying contracts by e-mail. Our disclaimer states that contracts will only be created where e-mail communications are followed up with letters signed by the Chief Executive.
- f) Permitted confidential and personal telephone calls or e-mails, such as between trade union representatives and members, will not be monitored or read by managers.

4) UNAUTHORISED USE

- a) Loading of internally or externally produced software and data that has not been suitably virus checked is prohibited.
- b) Loading or using software that is unlicensed is prohibited.
- c) Staff may not use any of the communication systems to send unsolicited internal material to other members of staff, either individually or as groups, on subjects other than those related to the work of Bournemouth CVS.
- d) Any information containing libellous, racist, sexually explicit or other inappropriate material that could constitute bullying or harassment must not be sent or forwarded.
- e) Information must not be sent anonymously, and must not be sent in a way that makes it appear to come from another sender.
- f) E-mails, fax and text messages must not be regarded as secure, and information about the organisation, clients, employees, suppliers, contract tenders, legal matters, financial and similar confidential or sensitive information should not be sent by e-mail except in specific situations where it is authorised.
- g) E-mails, fax and text messages should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. Hasty messages sent without due consideration can cause unnecessary misunderstandings and damage work relationships.
- h) Copyright material, including software, must not be downloaded from the internet unless such downloading is allowed, and where material is downloaded it must be used only as allowed.
- i) The organisation's ID numbers, internet or other passwords and similar information must never be disclosed in e-mails or used on the internet unless such use is authorised.
- j) The organisation will not tolerate the system being used for on-line gambling or for accessing pornography.
- k) Unauthorised or unreasonable use of systems is, or may be, a disciplinary matter, and use of any obscene, racist, unlawful or similar purpose may constitute gross misconduct, justifying instant dismissal.
- l) It is a criminal offence for drivers to use hand-held mobile phones whilst driving. Staff using phones in these circumstances will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Date:

Signed:

Chair of BCVS Board

Chief Executive BCVS

Policy agreed: September 2002
Reviewed: January 2004