Pennsylvania Institute of Technology

Computer Use Policy

Harry M. Meyers, President

New**:** April 16, 2023
Supersedes: November 12, 2019

Applicable Department(s)
Primary/Owner: IT
Secondary: All

Access to a Pennsylvania Institute of Technology network is limited to current employees, students, and board members. Use of any Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computer, the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology network, or other Pennsylvania Institute of Technology information system, whether accessed on campus or remotely, constitutes full acceptance of the terms and conditions of this policy and consent to monitoring (as more fully set forth in section 5 of this Policy). The consequences for not complying with the conditions of this policy could result in revocation of system privileges and may result in further disciplinary actions including student dismissal and employee termination.

Users are expected to be knowledgeable of these and all policies of Pennsylvania Institute of Technology. Care must be taken by users to ensure that accessing the Internet via the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology network does no harm to College interests. Any questions should be directed to the Director of Information Technology.

Except as noted, this policy pertains to:

- All authorized users who utilize Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computers, the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology network, or other Pennsylvania Institute of Technology information systems.
- Access to the Internet via Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computers or network.
- Use of the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology e-mail address or any email accessed through a Pennsylvania Institute of Technology's network.
- Access to computer files on a Pennsylvania Institute of Technology network or stored in individual Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computers.

1. Authentication Process

Users must be authorized through an Information Technology Department assigned username and password. The username and password are the responsibility of the individual to whom they are assigned and should never be shared with anyone.

The user is responsible for unauthorized use of the username and password by other individuals and for any and all actions of those individuals. Users will have access to sensitive and confidential information and will be responsible for the security of this information. Great care should be taken in ensuring that the user is logged out prior to leaving the computer unoccupied.

An e-mail account is assigned to each user.

- Any communication sent from that account is the responsibility of the user assigned to the account.
- The author of a communication from an account accessible to multiple users is responsible for that communication.
- Users are prohibited from allowing other individuals to send e-mail from their account and may not use another individual's account to send e-mail communications for their own purposes.
- The user should know that e-mail communications sent through the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology system are not confidential.

2. Passwords

All user-level passwords (e.g., e-mail, web, desktop computer, etc.) must be changed at least every six months. Passwords should never be written down or stored unencrypted online. Try to create passwords that can be easily remembered. Passwords must not be inserted into e-mail messages or other forms of electronic communication. All passwords must conform to the following guidelines:

- ✓ Passwords must be at least eight alphanumeric characters long.
- ✓ Passwords must have at least one upper case and lowercase letters.
- ✓ Passwords must have at least one digits and extended character set e.g., (o- 9, !@#$%^&*O_+I-=V {}[l:";'<>?,./).
- ✓ Passwords should not be based on personal information, names of family, etc.

3. Usage

Student Usage - Any currently enrolled student with Pennsylvania Institute of Technology may use the computer labs and resource center computer facilities. Guests are not permitted in the computer lab or resource center. These resources are to be used only for school or job-search related activities such as research, homework assignments, and/or resume preparation.

Students are prohibited from using Internet resources or network facilities for solely personal pursuits such as downloading or viewing pornographic web sites, chat rooms, games, for the purposes of sending, receiving, or storing chain mail, advertising or fraudulent materials, and/or using the network for commercial or for-profit activity. Students are also prohibited from annoying other users by such means as broadcasting unsolicited messages, sending harassing, obscene, or offensive messages.

Employee Usage - Limited personal use is allowed. Any personal use is expected to be on the user's own time and is not to interfere with the person's job responsibilities or cause distress, legal problems, or morale problems for other employees.

4. Proper and Ethical Use of the Internet and E-mail

This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with all other Pennsylvania Institute of Technology policies including but not limited to policies prohibiting plagiarism, harassment, discrimination, offensive conduct, and/or inappropriate behavior.

Users are prohibited from using the system for any unethical purposes, including but not limited to plagiarism, pornography, violence, gambling, racism, harassment, or any illegal activity.

Users access the Internet at their own risk while using Pennsylvania Institute of Technology facilities and equipment. E-mail systems and browsers may deliver unsolicited messages that contain offensive content. Pennsylvania Institute of Technology is not responsible for material viewed, downloaded, and/or received by users, nor for content that users may encounter via the Internet.

If users make a connection with web sites containing objectionable content, they must promptly move to another site or terminate the session. Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computer users who discover that they have connected with a web site that contains sexually explicit, racist, sexist, violent, or other potentially offensive materials must disconnect immediately from that site.

Faculty who must access such sites for research or course content purposes must have written approval from the Director of Information Technology.

Users are prohibited from using the system for profit-making activities and/or for business use other than Pennsylvania Institute of Technology business.

Users must not intentionally write, compile, copy, propagate, execute, or attempt to introduce any computer code designed to self-replicate, damage, compromise security, or otherwise hinder the performance and/or security of any Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computer system.

Any posting to public forums such as newsgroups must include the following disclaimer that the views are those of the user and not Pennsylvania Institute of Technology: *"Any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent Pennsylvania Institute of Technology."*

Users are prohibited from entering into any contract or agreement on behalf of Pennsylvania Institute of Technology through e-mail or on the Internet, except as expressly authorized.

Disclosure of any information classified as confidential through any means of electronic communication to any party not entitled to that information is prohibited. In general, users should exercise the same restraint and caution in drafting and transmitting messages over such communication methods as they would when writing a memorandum. In addition, the user should assume that their message will be saved and reviewed by someone other than the intended recipient.

Information classified as confidential includes personally identifiable information from student education records, such as social security numbers, transcripts, grade reports, exams and papers, class schedules, financial aid information, and/or

disciplinary records. If this information must be shared in to conduct day-to-day business, proper precautions must be taken to encrypt the information. Please direct any questions regarding the safeguarding of the exchange to the Director of Information Technology prior to exchanging the information.

5. Electronic Data and Communications Are Not Private or Personal; Pennsylvania Institute f Technology May Monitor, Delete, and/or Disclose Messages and Files.

Pennsylvania Institute of Technology reserves the right to examine e-mail, personal file directories, web browser bookmarks, logs of web sites visited, computer system configuration, network activity, and any other information stored on Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computers at any time and without prior notice. Use of the system constitutes acceptance of such monitoring.

All users who utilize Pennsylvania Institute of Technology computers, systems, and/or networks do not have a personal privacy right regarding any item sent, received, created, and/or stored on or from the College's computer equipment, e-mail, Intranet, or Internet systems**. The College monitors and inspects the use of computers, e-mail, Intranet and Internet.** The College engages in this monitoring to measure the cost, the use of College resources, and the management of the College's gateway to the Internet. Any attempt to tamper with or disrupt this monitoring process will result in disciplinary and corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

All messages, images, and files created, sent, or received over the College's computer equipment, e-mail, Intranet, and/or Internet systems are the College's property and should *not* be considered private or personal information. The College reserves the right to access, review, copy, and/or delete every message and file on the College's computer equipment or e-mail, Intranet, and/or Internet systems for any purpose and to disclose them to any party, inside or outside the College, it deems appropriate. This includes whether the message contains College-related or personal information.

Despite the existence of any passwords, users should not assume that any electronic communication or document is private. Highly confidential information or data should be transmitted in other ways.

6. Mass E-Mail and Distribution Lists

Information Technology Services will create and maintain distribution lists at the request of appropriate Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members or their designee. The requesting ELT member or designee will be considered the owner of the list and will authorize security privileges to individuals who send e-mail to that list. To minimize the administrative effort associated with maintaining large static distribution lists, they will be kept to a reasonable size and will not exceed 25 members. Any mass e-mail, specified as and e-mail that is sent to more than 150 users at the same time, must be sent outside of regular College business hours unless specifically authorized as "time sensitive."

7. Software Installations

Users are not permitted to install software on any computer owned by Pennsylvania Institute of Technology without prior authorization by the Director of Information Technology. In most cases approved software for educational, business, and/or administrative uses will be installed by the Information Technology Department. Additional software may be requested by completing a helpdesk request.

8. File Sharing

Each person shall be responsible for adhering to copyright laws. Downloading, viewing, storing, distributing, and/or sharing of copyrighted material without permission is absolutely forbidden. Almost all music, films, and/or pictures are copyrighted; the fact that they are available on the Internet does not mean that you can use them. In addition to college sanctions, such as course failure or dismissal, persons who are convicted of copyright infringement are liable to severe criminal and civil penalties. Fines of thousands of dollars have been levied on college students who have illegally downloaded films and music.

No individual is permitted to operate a file server on Pennsylvania Institute of Technology's network without explicit permission. Individuals may not operate a file server, including peer-to-peer network connections, on Pennsylvania Institute of Technology's network.