NORTHERN NEVADA ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (NNAMHS)

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: EMAIL USE POLICY

NUMBER: NN-HR-29

ORIGINAL DATE: 04/03/03

REVIEW/REVISE DATE: 03/06/08, 11/18/10, 10/17/13

APPROVAL: Cody L. Phinney, Agency Director

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I. PURPOSE

To ensure that NNAMHS maintains policies, practices, and/or guidelines that support adherence to the requirements of the MHDS Email Use policy 4.068.

This policy identifies circumstances under which NNAMHS employees may use state provided e-mail for brief and occasional personal use; provide clarification of specific unacceptable uses of State E-mail accounts; required security measures when e-mails contain protected health information (PHI); and employee responsibility for retaining electronic public records.

In addition to use of State E-mail accounts, this policy addresses use of Internet mail sites from state computers.

II. POLICY

This policy establishes the State E-mail and Internet E-mail use guidelines for NNAMHS employees.
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Employees have no right to privacy with regard to email usage on state system. Abuse of the privilege or violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

III. REFERENCES

1. MHDS 4.040 – Internet Use Policy
2. MHDS 4.068 – Email Use Policy
3. MHDS IT Security Standard 7.002 – Password Standards
4. DHR Prohibitions & Penalties
5. DoIT State IT Security Standard 4.65 – Personal E-mail Access
6. DoIT State IT Security Standard 4.61 - Passwords

IV. DEFINITIONS

1. Employee: includes State employees, contractors, students, interns and residents for which NNAMHS pays for a State email account.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Personal Use of State E-mail Account

Personal use of State provided e-mail account is a privilege, not a right. Employees have no right to privacy with regard to e-mail.

1. Employees must use their State e-mail account for State business; however, brief and occasional e-mail messages of a personal nature may be sent and received.
2. Personal e-mails shall not impede the conduct of state business; only incremental amounts (less than 15 consecutive minutes) of employee time shall be used to attend to personal matters. In no event, should both Internet and e-mail access for personal use exceed 60 cumulative minutes in an 8-hour work shift. These 60 minutes include, but are not in addition to, breaks and lunches.

3. E-mail on state systems can be recorded and stored along with source and destination.
4. When sending an e-mail of a personal nature from a state e-mail account, the employee should use the following disclaimer at the end of the message. *"This e-mail contains the thoughts and opinions of (employee name) and does not represent official NNAMHS policy."*
5. Recorded e-mail messages from state systems are the property of the agency.

B. Clarification on Specific Unacceptable Uses of State E-mail Account

1. Accessing, posting, or sharing any racist, sexist, threatening, obscene, pornographic or otherwise objectionable material (i.e., visual, textual, or audible) is strictly prohibited.
2. Use for commercial advertising or selling/auctioning of any materials.
3. Instant messaging and chat rooms are prohibited.
4. Employees shall not use state systems to subscribe to mailing lists or mail services strictly for personal use.
5. Use for fund raising or public relations activities not specifically related to state government activities.
6. Mass e-mailing to large groups of employees areas of interest that are not state business related. Examples include but are not limited to social causes like animal rights, literacy, environmental, political views, and community based projects.
7. Mass e-mailing to large groups of employees potential computer threats including but not limited to viruses. These types of e-mails must be sent to the help desk to research and if legitimate then the Information Technology department will notify employees.
8. Use for distributing chain letters.
9. Use for sending inappropriate jokes which are sexual, racist, political and/or violent in nature.

C. Required Security for E-mails that Contain Protected Health Information (PHI)

1. E-mail containing PHI that is sent outside the state e-mail system must be encrypted. This includes e-mail that is forwarded to an employee's home or private e-mail account that contains client or staff PHI. In addition, email sent to contracted vendors that contain PHI must be encrypted or de-identified.

D. Access to Internet E-mail Sites

1. It is prohibited to access personal Internet e-mail accounts from a State computer connected to the NNAMHS network. This includes, but is not limited to; mail sites like Yahoo, Charter, MSN, AOL or Hotmail. Consumer use computers that are not connected to NNAMHS network (dial up Internet connection only) may be exempt.

E. Managing Electronic Public Records

1. If an e-mail transmittal is determined to be a public record, NNAMHS employees are required to follow the appropriate records retention schedule.
2. Public records are defined in MHDS Policy #4.068 – E-mail Use Policy, Section II. Types of E-Mail Transmittals and Appropriate Disposition.

F. Other

1. Supervisors with concerns about an employee's inappropriate use of a state e-mail account or access to personal Internet e-mail account must request a review in writing to the Agency Director.
2. The Agency Director will report suspected violations to the DPBH Information Security Officer.