517 Internet Usage

Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web is provided by GGU to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage.

All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of GGU and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet e-mail messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the Internet remain at all times the property of GGU. As such, GGU reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic, and retrieve and read any data composed, sent, or received through our online connections and stored in our computer systems.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the Internet is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee did not create material, does not own the rights to it, or has not gotten authorization for its use, it should not be put on the Internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material over the Internet has the appropriate distribution rights.

Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed
files are to be checked before and after decompression.

Abuse of the Internet access provided by GGU in violation of law or GGU policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action:

Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images

Using the organization's time and resources for personal gain

Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization

Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission

Sending or posting confidential material, trade secrets, or proprietary information outside of the organization

Violating copyright law

Failing to observe licensing agreements

Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may incur a cost to the organization or initiate unwanted Internet services and transmissions

Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the organization's image or reputation

Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials

Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals

Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person

Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation

Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities

Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling

Jeopardizing the security of the organization's electronic communications systems
Sending or posting messages that disparage another organization's products or services

Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization

Sending anonymous e-mail messages

Engaging in any other illegal activities