



CITY OF MERIDEN

POLICIES



**CITY OF MERIDEN
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICIES**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received the following City of Meriden Policies and Code of Ethics:

- Acceptable Internet Use Policy
- Computer Use Policy
- Electronic Communication Policy
- Drug Free Workplace Policy
- Nepotism Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Tobacco Use Police
- Workplace Violence Policy Statement

Employee/Intern Print: _____

Employee/Intern Signature: _____

Date: _____

ACCEPTABLE INTERNET USE POLICY

Acceptable Internet Use Policy: Internet access is intended as a tool to support the City's Internet operations. It is expected that the City's Internet users will employ good judgement and common sense in determining appropriate work related uses of the Internet.

Terms and Conditions: Internet access is available to select employees who have a demonstrated need to utilize the resources of the Internet. Your supervisor must have given permission to you explicitly for access.

Responsibility: Internet users in Meriden are expected to act responsibly in all telecommunications, research, and retrieval functions of the Internet.

- Not all information on the Internet is free. When you are asked to register at a site, make certain you will not be charged a subscription fee. The City is not responsible for fees incurred for on-line subscriptions unless prior authorization is obtained from the Department Head.
- You should exercise common sense when using the Internet. When ever possible, information obtained from an Internet site should be verified for accuracy and timeliness.
- The Internet is a constantly changing environment. Sites become outdated and new services appear all the time. Make every effort to ensure that you are obtaining accurate information for your Department or Division.
- Any Internet problem or security breach is to be reported immediately to the IT Department.
- Always represent yourself as yourself on the Internet, never anyone else.
- Never attempt to access services or sites for which you are not authorized.
- Inappropriate materials or materials not related to the work environment are not to be accessed, downloaded or stored. The City's sexual harassment policy applies to your conduct on the Internet and the use, viewing, communication or downloading of sexually explicit materials is absolutely prohibited. Behavior that is prohibited in the workplace is prohibited in cyberspace.

Communications and Etiquette: Internet users are expected to abide by customary standards of courtesy and generally accepted principles of computing and network etiquette and the City's Ethic Policy.

- Be polite, and as with e-mail, consider the tone of your communications

Acceptable Internet Use Policy (continued)

- Be aware that the Internet is an insecure environment. Never discuss Meriden's business in any manner that might reveal confidential information. Never send proprietary or confidential files over the Internet.
- Do not access external computers in such a way that could be disruptive to others.
- Assume that information at non-governmental sites is private property. While information may be free for your use on line, downloading and printing may be covered by intellectual property laws. Respects copyright laws and use fair use guidelines.

Violations of this policy will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

COMPUTER USE POLICY

The following document is the policy adopted by the City of Meriden concerning the proper use of the City's computer systems. The goal of this policy is to be consistent with other City policies regarding protection of City assets and to promote their proper use. This statement is based on good business practice and serves as a guideline for all City employees to follow when using City-owned computer resources.

Misuse of computer resources may result in the removal or restriction of computer privileges, disciplinary action through and including discharge, or both. The Department Head is responsible for overseeing employees and is responsible for disciplinary action if necessary. The IT Department acts in an oversight capacity to insure system procedures are enforced and adhered to.

1. All employees share in the responsibility to protect City computer resources from physical and environmental damage and are responsible for the correct operation, security, and maintenance of those computer resources.
2. The use of the City of Meriden's computer equipment and/or software for anything other than City related business use is prohibited, except for occasional personal use of short duration expressly approved by the Department Head.
3. In regards to access to any computer system, software, data, or information on those systems, there is no expectation of privacy. The City reserves the right to review, audit, access or disclose any system, data, messages, or mail on any City computer system for any City purpose.
4. All data, files, programs, application software, documents, E-mail, and any other electronic information stored on any computer system owned by the City are considered City property. This includes programs licensed by the City for its use. As City property, all data, files, programs, application software, documents, E-mail, etc., are subject to inspection for purposes of determining compliance with this and other City policies. Employees shall be required to disclose passwords or other security devices upon request of the Department Head, Director of IT, or City Manager.
5. Installation of any unauthorized and/or unsupported software applications onto City-owned computers is not permitted. To eliminate any issues of compatibility and support, all users must use the standard suite of applications as licensed, distributed and deployed by the IT Department. Requests for software applications or tools not considered part of the standard suite of applications must be made in coordination with the IT Department. Software may be loaded onto City computers only if its use has been approved by the IT Department and (1) it is licensed by the City, or (2) it is licensed to an employee of the City.

Computer use policy (continued)

6. All software license restrictions must be honored. Software will not be copied from City computers for personal use. Unauthorized copying constitutes theft. If employees have questions about needing software copies to work at home, they must obtain written approval from the Department Head and Director of IT.
7. Users are responsible for ensuring that backups are made of data files that may be stored on their own computer systems.
8. Configurations of each work station are determined by the IT Department. Only IT personnel are authorized to reconfigure systems, hardware or software. IT personnel may authorize others to install specific approved systems.
9. If unauthorized data or software is found, the IT Department may delete such unauthorized data or software from computer systems after notifying the Department Head.
10. Computers or terminals should not be left unattended in a state which affords inappropriate access to records of the City or otherwise compromises security.
11. Individual user ID's and passwords are initially provided by the IT Department at the request of Division or Department Heads to employees to provide for appropriate access to accomplish job functions. Employees may change their own passwords by following a procedure specified by the IT Department. IT must be notified of any changes in personnel status of persons with user ID's.
12. User ID's and passwords shall not be posted, disclosed, or shared among multiple people. IT personnel may take any appropriate action to insure sufficient security for computer systems and data. Passwords may be disclosed to IT personnel for IT purposes.
13. Users shall not make any deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system performance or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
14. Upon notification of a virus, employees will contact the IT Department as soon as possible. Alarms regarding known viruses will be forwarded to the IT Department. Users will not take it upon themselves to alert the general user community.
15. Unauthorized deletion of any information, data, programs, or software from any computer or computer media is a violation of this policy. Violation of this policy may result in personnel action up to and including termination.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

The City's e-mail system is a tool for internal and external communications; it is paid for and maintained by the City of Meriden. The password assigned to or decided by you does not protect such communications or imply a right to personal privacy. The City can bypass your password. Do **not** expect that your e-mail messages will remain private.

This policy applies to all employees using computers to access City owned networks, mail systems etc.

To protect and comply with various State and Federal laws, the City reserves the right to periodically audit, monitor, review, retrieve, or disclose e-mail both sent and received on the City server at any time and without notice to employees. Employees should not assume that deletion of an e-mail from their computer erases the communication permanently from the City's system. Employees should learn and comply with the City's Records Retention System for e-mail communications.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:

E-mail tone and language is important. It is easy to misinterpret (i.e. caps as shouting, brief sentences as being short with someone). Remember body language often helps listener interpret meaning and is lacking in e-mail.

Reasonable personal use of e-mail is acceptable, however, you have no right to privacy, and even deleted messages may be reviewed.

Vulgarity, obscenities, jokes or pictures that target race, sex or other protected classes such as age or disability will **not** be tolerated by the City. The City's sexual harassment policies apply to your use of e-mail and unacceptable behavior in the workplace is also unacceptable in cyberspace.

E-mail senders should identify themselves and should not falsify their identity in any way.

E-mail should not be used for outside business ventures, political or religious use. **Remember the Code of Ethics always applies.**

CONFIDENTIALITY: Notwithstanding the City's right to retrieve and read any e-mail messages such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees other than designated representatives are not authorized to retrieve or read e-mail messages that are not sent to them. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval by from your Department Head.

Electronic Communication Policy (continued)

CONCLUSION: This policy is intended to ensure that the City's e-mail system is used in an efficient and responsible manner. Failure to comply with this policy may result in appropriate discipline up to and including termination. Employees who discover a violation of this policy or have other complaints should promptly notify the Personnel Department.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

Purpose

To comply with the requirements of the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 (the “Act”) and to establish a safe and healthy workplace that is drug and alcohol free. This policy serves as notification to all employees of the requirements of the Act and the City’s ongoing, good-faith efforts to maintain a drug free workplace by meeting the requirements of the Act.

Definitions

Controlled Substances: Includes, but is not limited to, any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic substance, amphetamine, and marijuana among many others commonly thought of as illegal drugs, as well as certain medications if not taken under a physician’s prescription or according to a physician’s orders. Controlled substances are specifically defined in federal law, Schedules I – V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. § 812) and 21 C.F.R. §§ 1300.11 – 1300.15.

Application

Any individual who is employed by, who conducts business for the City or on the City’s property, or is applying for a position with the City, must abide by this Policy. Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements may be subject to additional requirements in conjunctions with such agreements, such as drug testing.

Policy Statement

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance, whether the employee is on or off duty, in City workplaces, vehicles and City-owned residences, or while conducting City business off City worksites, is strictly prohibited. It is prohibited for any employee to be under the influence of a controlled substance, including alcohol and prescription drugs used inappropriately or not prescribed for him/her by a physician, while on the job or in the workplace. All employees are expected and required to report to work on time and in appropriate mental and physical condition for work. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Violations may also have criminal consequences.

Notification Requirements

As mandated by the Act, employees, as a condition of employment, must abide by this Policy and must report any conviction under a criminal drug statute. This report must be made in writing within five (5) days after the conviction to the employee’s Department Head and to the Director of Personnel.

Drug free workplace policy (continued)

Within 10 days of receipt of a report of a conviction, the City will notify any applicable federal granting/contracting agency of the violation. Such notice must include the convicted employee's position/title and the applicable grant or contract identification number.

Penalties for Violations

As a condition of employment, any employee who violates this Policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, and/ or referred to a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program and required to demonstrate satisfactory participation in such program. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be disciplined in accordance with the terms of such agreement. The Act requires that appropriate personnel actions must be taken within 30 days of receipt of a report of a conviction.

Awareness Program/ Treatment Services

The City, in compliance with the Act and with the goal of maintaining a drug free environment, has established the following Drug Free Awareness Program to help make employees aware of the dangers of drug abuse and the available counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs.

- a. Employees needing help in dealing with drug and/or alcohol dependency are encouraged to use the City's Employee Assistance Program ("EAP") and health insurance plans, as appropriate. Employees are encouraged to contact the City for more information on available programs and to obtain contact information for current providers.
- b. The City will provide on-going training and education for employees through its EAP program. Such training and education will include information about available drug counseling and employee assistance programs.

Nepotism Policy

In situations where family members are supervised by each other it is important for supervisors to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. As in all supervisory situations favoritism, harassment, and any other inappropriate supervisory behavior cannot be tolerated.

In all situations where a family member is supervised by another family member, the department head or supervisor when issuing discipline or adjudicating a grievance shall meet with the Director of Personnel and follow any recommendation.

In situations where it would be inappropriate for the supervisor or department head to discipline someone, such a violations that may be cause for suspension or termination, another supervisor or the Director of Personnel shall act in their capacity at such meeting.

Any supervisor who enters into a romantic relationship or cohabitates with a subordinate must disclose such relationship within 30 days to the Director of Personnel.

At no time shall a Department Head make a decision to promote their family member without disclosing the relationship and getting approval from the Director of Personnel

In situations where a department head has discretion over appointments, they shall use such discretion in a way that does not cause family members to be supervised by each other.

Any complaints regarding nepotism should be immediately reported to the Director of Personnel or City Manager and will be promptly investigated.

Failure to follow the above rules may be cause for discipline up to and including termination

Family member / close relative is defined as spouse, child, parent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, brother, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, first cousin, stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, stepchild, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparents and grandchildren. Relationships include those through marriage and adoption.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT – It is the policy of the City of Meriden that sexual harassment in the Workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees/interns of the City of Meriden, whether management personnel or non-management personnel, are expected to avoid any behavior or conduct toward any other employee/intern that could be interpreted as sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined generally as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature”. Thus, no employee/intern should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical or be led to believe that an employment opportunity or benefit will in anyway depend upon “cooperation” of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may include such actions as: sex oriented verbal “kidding”, “teasing”, or jokes; Repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; continued or repeated verbal abuse of sexual nature; graphic or degrading comments about an individual or his or her appearance; the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; subtle pressure for sexual activity; physical contact such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another’s body; or demands for sexual favors

Conduct of this type is improper if:

- a) Submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment;
- b) Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as basis for employment decisions affecting the person involved;
- c) The conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual’s work performance or environment.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior which is not welcome, which is personally intimidating, hostile, or offensive which debilitates morale, and therefore interferes with our work effectiveness.

Appropriate management and supervisory personnel shall promptly investigate all complaints of sexual harassment, including interviewing the complainant and the person (s) alleged to have engaged in sexual harassment. All involved parties should be spoken with privately to afford them the opportunity to voice any complaints or concerns. If, as a result of the investigation, it is found that the complaint has merit, the appropriate management and supervisory personnel shall take prompt corrective action.

Such actions may include discipline up to and including termination of the offending employees/ Intern(s).

Sexual Harassment Policy (continued)

Any employee/intern of the City of Meriden who feels that he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment should notify his or her supervisor, department head, Director of Human Resources, or City Manager at the very earliest opportunity. If the complaint is found to have merit, corrective Disciplinary action will be implemented. If the complaint is found to be of insufficient merit, all involved parties will be so notified.

No Retaliation

Retaliatory action against an individual who files a complaint in good faith will not be tolerated and may subject an offending employee/intern to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

However, the City also recognizes that false accusations of harassment or their unlawful conduct can be damaging to an accused employee/intern and disruptive to our agency's operations; knowingly making false accusations may constitute misconduct for which disciplinary action may be imposed.

All employees/interns deserve equal treatment and to work in a pleasant, supportive environment.

If you are the victim of, or witness harassment, please call Deborah Moore, Human Rights Advocate, Marci Nogueira, Director of Human Resources or your department head and report the situation immediately and we will investigate and if necessary, issue corrective action. Also you can contact Connecticut commission on Human Rights & Opportunities at the numbers listed below.

Deborah Moore – Human Rights Advocate (203) 630-4045
Marci Nogueira – Director of Human Resources (203) 630-4107

Connecticut Commission on Human rights & Opportunities

West Central Region, 55 West Main Street, Suite 210, Waterbury, CT 06702-2004
(203) 805-6579

Capitol Region, 1229 Albany Ave, Hartford, CT 06112 (860) 566-7710

TOBACCO USE

The City recognizes the serious health risks associated with the use of all tobacco products and E-cigarettes. Thus, the purpose of this policy is to promote a healthy work environment. The following provisions will apply to the use of all tobacco products and E-cigarettes:

- No tobacco or e-cigarette use in city vehicles
- No tobacco or e-cigarette use in city buildings
- No tobacco use on city time (except breaks / lunch)
- The use of tobacco products is permitted exclusively in areas customarily designated for smoking.
- The use of tobacco products in these areas is permitted during lunch breaks and specified union breaks only.
- Employees must properly dispose of all waste products associated with use of any tobacco product.
- Failure to adhere by these guidelines will result in disciplinary action.

The City periodically provides assistance to any employee who would like to receive treatment for tobacco addiction. Please contact the City of Meriden Department of Health and Human Services for more information.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY STATEMENT

It is the City of Meriden's policy to promote a safe working environment for its employees. However, the City of Meriden recognizes that violence is a growing problem in the workplace. The City of Meriden is committed to working with its employees to maintain a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive in the City of Meriden, no employer is immune. Every employer will be affected by disruptive behavior at one time or another.

Any violence, threats, intimidation and other disruptive behavior in our work place will not be tolerated; that means, all reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. Such behavior can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that cause physical harm or bodily injury to any employee of the City of Meriden. Such behavior is unacceptable and individuals who commit such acts maybe removed from the premises and maybe subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties or both.

In accordance with this policy, except as required as a condition of employment, no employee shall bring to any City worksite any weapon or dangerous instrument. Weapon is defined as a firearm, including a BB gun, whether loaded or unloaded, any knife, switch blade with or without an automatic spring release device, a stiletto or martial arts weapon. Dangerous instrument means any instrument, article or substance that, under the circumstances, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury.

The City of Meriden is committed to a policy of zero tolerance for incidents of workplace violence. Therefore, any employee found engaging in any such conduct or possessing any weapon or dangerous instrument at any City worksite will be subject to termination in accordance with Union contracts.

We need your cooperation to implement this policy effectively and maintain a safe working environment. Do not ignore violent, threatening, harassing and intimidating or other disruptive behavior. If you observe or experience such behavior by anyone at the City of Meriden, whether he or she is a City of Meriden Employee or not, report it immediately to a supervisor or manager. Supervising managers who receive such reports should seek advice from Marci Nogueira, Director of Human Resources, regarding investigating the incident and seek appropriate action.

(PLEASE NOTE: THREATS OR ASSAULTS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION BY SECURITY OR POLICE SHOULD BE REPORTED FIRST TO THE POLICE AT 911).