

# Management Instruction

## Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment and Information Technology

This management instruction (MI) provides Postal Service™ policy and procedures for employees' limited use of office equipment, including information technology, for personal reasons and purposes.

### Overview

#### Policy

Management at each Postal Service employment installation may permit employees to make limited personal use of Postal Service office equipment, including information technology, provided such use *does not*:

- Reduce or otherwise adversely affect the employee's productivity during work hours.
- Interfere with the mission or operations of the Postal Service.
- Violate the Standards for Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (5 CFR 2635).

#### Definition

Limited personal use of Postal Service office equipment, including information technology, means occasional use that meets the following criteria:

- Is of limited duration, length, or size, and does not interfere with employees' official duties or the transaction of Postal Service business.
- Results in minimal, if any, additional expense to the Postal Service or minimal wear and tear on Postal Service office equipment; uses a small amount of storage data; has only a small-to-moderate transmission impact; or requires only small amounts of consumable office products (such as ink, paper, toner, and computer memory).

Some examples of limited personal use:

- Making a few photocopies.
- Making occasional, brief telephone calls that result in little or no cost.
- Sending an occasional facsimile of a few pages.
- Sending a brief e-mail message.

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# Procedures

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## Equipment Covered by This Policy

The office equipment governed by this policy includes, but is not limited to: personal computers, personal digital assistants (including BlackBerry® devices), peripherals (such as printers and modems), computer software (including Web browsers), telephones, cell phones, facsimile machines, photocopiers, scanners, label writers, consumable office products, office supplies, library resources, Internet connectivity, and e-mail.

## Limitations on Personal Use

Limited personal use of Postal Service office equipment *must not*:

- Reduce employee productivity or interfere with official Postal Service business (e.g., congest, delay, or disrupt any Postal Service system or equipment).
- Be for the purpose of maintaining or promoting a personal or private business.
- Be for the purpose of posting unauthorized commercial or advertising materials.
- Include receiving news feeds, “push” data updates, or continuous data streams unless the material is required for official Postal Service business.
- Be for any illegal purpose, including, but not limited to:
  - Gaining unauthorized access to other systems.
  - Disseminating any discriminatory or hate-based materials or speech.
  - Reproducing or distributing copyrighted, trademarked, proprietary, or export-controlled data or software.
- Include chain letters or other unauthorized mass mailings.
- Be in relation to sexually explicit or sexually oriented materials.
- Refer or relate to illegal gambling, illegal weapons, and/or terrorist activities.
- Be for the purpose of fundraising, endorsing any product or service, lobbying, or participating in any prohibited partisan political activity.
- Be for the purpose of using applications and/or software that have not been approved by the Postal Service and that occupy or affect official computer or network processing time.
- Result in the disclosure of any Postal Service information that is not otherwise public.

## Limitations on Privacy

Employees have neither a right to, nor any expectation of, privacy while using Postal Service office equipment or information technology at any time. By using Postal Service office equipment or information technology, including the Internet and e-mail, for personal reasons or purposes, employees imply their consent to the disclosure of the

contents of any files or information maintained or passed through that equipment and to the monitoring and/or recording of such use, at any time, with or without cause.

The Corporate Information Security Office and the Privacy Office have established policies and procedures to conduct monitoring, which are contained in MI AS-870-2007-7, *Electronic Messaging*.

## Sanctions for Misuse

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Use of Postal Service office equipment in violation or excess of the limited personal use permitted by this policy may result in limitations on future use, administrative action, criminal penalty, and/or personal financial liability.

For advice on how to avoid violating this policy and the prohibitions on misuse of government property contained in the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, call the Postal Service's Ethics Helpline at 202-268-6346 or send an e-mail to [ethics.help@usps.gov](mailto:ethics.help@usps.gov).