



# Responsible Use of COTC Computing Resources Policy 1.1.3

## Information and Technology Services Department

Applies to: Faculty, staff, student employees, students and any other person using college owned computing resources

### POLICY

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#### General Statement

As a part of the physical, social and educational learning infrastructure that is in-place on the Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) Newark and extended campuses, COTC acquires, develops, and maintains computers, software, computer systems, networks and other Information Technology (IT) related tools. These IT resources are intended to support COTC's academic mission, including direct and indirect support of COTC's instruction, research, service missions and student life activities. In addition, these computing resources support all administrative staff functions required to operate the college. Furthermore, these computing resources are used to support the free exchange of ideas among members of the COTC community, and between the COTC community and the wider local/national communities that we interact with. To support these institutional missions, a very large investment has been made in the college's computing and network infrastructure. The integrity, security, reliability and ethical use of these resources is critical to the college's continuing success and mission.

The rights of academic freedom and freedom of expression apply to the use of COTC's computing resources. However, there are acceptable social and ethical responsibilities/limitations associated with those rights. The use of COTC computing resources, like the use of any other COTC provided resource or related activity, is subject to the normal requirements of legal and ethical behavior based on the moral values of our society and those beliefs and values that we hold as a public higher education institution. Thus, the legitimate use of a computer, computer system, or network resource does not extend to whatever is technically possible. Although some limitations are built into computer operating systems and networks, those limitations are not the sole restrictions on what is permissible. Users must abide by all applicable guidelines contained in this policy, whether or not they are built into the operating system or network, and whether or not they can be circumvented by technical means.

#### Applicability

This policy applies to all users of COTC computing resources, whether affiliated with COTC or not, and the use of those resources on any COTC campus location. In addition, this policy applies whether access is done from a campus facility or when accessed remotely from other locations. Additional policies may apply or augment this "Responsible Use" Policy. Refer to the Information Technology Services (ITS) Department policy area on the COTC website and the Resource section of this document for further information.

### POLICY GUIDELINES

#### I All users of COTC computing resources must:

##### A. Comply with all federal, Ohio, and other applicable law; all generally applicable COTC rules and policies; and all applicable contracts and licenses.

Examples of such laws, rules, policies, contracts, and licenses include the laws of libel, privacy, copyright, trademark, obscenity, and child pornography; the Electronic Communications Privacy Act and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, which prohibit "hacking" and similar activities; COTC's code of student conduct; COTC's harassment policies; and all applicable software licensing agreements. Users will only

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use software that is approved by COTC and for which a legal paid license has been obtained. Users who engage in electronic communications with persons in other states or countries, or on other systems or networks should be aware that they may also be subject to the laws of those other states and countries and the rules and policies of those other systems and networks. Users are responsible for ascertaining, understanding, and complying with the laws, rules, policies, contracts, and licenses applicable to their particular academic and administrative computing needs.

**B. Use only those computing resources they are authorized to use and use them only in the manner and to the extent authorized.**

Ability to access computing resources does not, by itself, imply authorization to do so. The failure of COTC to prevent unauthorized use of the computing resources does not relieve an individual of the responsibility of obtaining authorization prior to his or her use of the computing resource. Users are responsible for ascertaining what authorizations are necessary and for obtaining them before proceeding. Accounts and passwords may not, under any circumstances, be shared with, or used by, persons other than those to whom they have been assigned by COTC. Communicating any information concerning any password, identifying code, personal identification number or other confidential sensitive information without the permission of its owner or the controlling authority of the information is specifically prohibited. Creating, modifying, executing or retransmitting any computer program or instructions intended to obscure the true identity of the sender of electronic mail or electronic messages, including, but not limited to, forgery of messages, alteration of system or user data used to identify the sender of messages is prohibited.

**C. Respect the privacy of other users and their accounts, regardless of whether those accounts are securely protected.**

Ability to access other persons' accounts does not, by itself, imply authorization to do so. Users are responsible for ascertaining what authorizations are necessary and for obtaining them before proceeding.

**D. Respect the finite capacity of COTC's computing resources and limit use so as not to consume an unreasonable amount of resources or interfere unreasonably with the activity of other users.**

COTC may impose limitations applicable to use of available COTC computing resources. The reasonableness of any particular use will be judged in the context of all of the relevant circumstances.

**E. Refrain from using COTC provided computing resources for personal purposes or for personal financial or other gain.**

Personal use of COTC computing resources for other purposes is permitted when it does not consume a significant amount of those resources, does not interfere with the performance of the user's job or other COTC responsibilities, and is otherwise in compliance with this policy. Further limits may be imposed upon personal use in accordance with individual supervisory discretion and procedures.

**F. Refrain from stating or implying that you speak on behalf of COTC and from using COTC trademarks and logos without authorization to do so.**

Affiliation with COTC does not, by itself, imply authorization to speak on behalf of COTC. Authorization to use COTC trademarks and logos on COTC computing resources will be done in accordance with



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**G. Refrain from accessing, transmitting, copying or saving unsolicited or inappropriate information that contains pornographic, obscene, indecent, lewd or lascivious material or other material that explicitly or implicitly refers to sexual conduct.**

Using campus computing resources to transmit unsolicited information or view material that is pornographic or contains profane language or panders to bigotry, sexism, or other forms of discrimination is prohibited.

### PROCEDURES

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### Enforcement

Users who violate this policy may be denied access to COTC computing resources and may be subject to other penalties and disciplinary action, both within and outside of COTC. Violations will normally be handled through COTC disciplinary procedures applicable to the relevant user. For example, alleged violations by students will normally be investigated, and any penalties or other discipline will normally be imposed by the Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. However, COTC may temporarily suspend or block access to an account, prior to the initiation or completion of such procedures, when it reasonably appears necessary to do so in order to protect the integrity, security or functionality of COTC or other computing resources, or to protect COTC from liability. COTC may also refer suspected violations of applicable law to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

### Security and Privacy

COTC employs various measures to protect the security of its computing resources and users' accounts. Users should be aware, however, that COTC cannot guarantee such security. Users should therefore engage in "safe computing" practices by establishing appropriate access restrictions for their accounts and guarding their passwords. Users also should be aware that their use of COTC computing resources is not completely private. While COTC does not routinely monitor individual usage, normal operation and maintenance of computing resources requires certain monitoring activities. Results of monitoring, including the contents and records of individual communications, may be disclosed to appropriate COTC or law enforcement agencies. Communications made by means of COTC's computing and network resources are subject to Ohio's Public Records Statute to the same extent as if made on paper. COTC may also specifically monitor the activity and accounts of individual users of COTC computing resources, including individual login sessions and communications, without notice, when:

A. the user has given permission or has voluntarily made them accessible to the public, for example by posting to a publicly-accessible Web page



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- B. it reasonably appears necessary to do so to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of the institutions computing resources or to protect COTC from liability
- C. there is reasonable cause to believe that the user has violated, or is violating, this policy
- D. a user account appears to be engaged in unusual or unusually excessive activity, as indicated by the monitoring of general activity and usage patterns; or
- E. when it is otherwise required or permitted by law

Any such individual monitoring, other than that specified in "A", required by law, or necessary to respond to perceived emergency situations, must be authorized in advance by the President, COTC or their designee.

COTC, at its discretion, may disclose the results of any such general or individual monitoring, including the contents and records of individual communications, to appropriate COTC personnel or law enforcement agencies and may use those results in appropriate COTC disciplinary proceedings.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Position, or Office	List of Responsibilities
Information Technology Services Department	To ensure the availability/integrity of a secure and reliable IT infrastructure that meets the computing needs of the institution.
Users of Computing and other IT Related Devices	To adhere to the policy and guidelines as explained in this document.

### RESOURCES

- COTC Harassment Policy 2.1.20
- COTC Ohio Ethics Policy 2.1.35

### CONTACTS

Individual or Office	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
ITS Help Desk	Information and Technology Services Department	740-366-9244	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@cotc.edu">helpdesk@cotc.edu</a>

### HISTORY

All changes must be listed sequentially, including edits and reviews.

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