



U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D.C. 20530

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MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE EMPLOYEES

FROM: Stephen R. Colgate  
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for Administration

SUBJECT: Personal Use of the Internet

We have received a number of inquiries about personal use of the Departmental Internet. As you may be aware, the Department of Justice allows personal use of most office equipment where there is negligible cost to the Government and no interference with official business. Any personal use of Department property is subject to the overriding expectation that employees will give the government an honest day's work. This is covered in Justice Property Management Regulation, (JPMR) 41 C.F.R. pt. 128. Personal use of the Internet is governed by the same rule.

In general, basic access to the Internet does not result in increased cost to the Department, and employees accordingly may use the Internet for matters that are not official business. For example, use of Internet e-mail is permitted because it does not result in an additional cost. However, an employee making personal use of Internet e-mail should make it clear, when appropriate, that his or her e-mail is not being used for official duties.

On the other hand, employees are not authorized to make personal use of any of the Internet sites that result in an additional charge to the Government. These are generally identified as such when the user attempts to access them. It is the employee's responsibility to be aware whether an additional cost is involved.

Also, the Internet contains material, such as sexually explicit material, that is not appropriate for the workplace. The Department expects employees to conduct themselves professionally in the workplace and to refrain from using Departmental resources for activities that are offensive to co-workers or the public.

Employees should also be aware that they have no expectation of privacy while using any Government-provided access to the Internet. The Department views electronic mail messages to be Government records, and it may have access to those messages whenever it has a legitimate Governmental purpose for doing so. Please also remember that all Internet communications identify the user to all sites accessed. Specifically, the sender is identified by his or her complete Internet address, including the "usdoj.gov" domain.

Finally, under DOJ regulations, a supervisor or component may limit or revoke personal Internet use for any business reason.

If you have any questions about specific use of the Internet, please contact your supervisor.