INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

COMPUTER HARDWARE

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PURPOSE
- This guide establishes the policies for selecting computer hardware within the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER).

BACKGROUND
- In the past, organizational units throughout CDER have decided to use the Personal Computer (PC) or Macintosh (MAC) environment based on their particular needs. This has somewhat complicated the transfer of documents between offices/divisions, the establishment of a CDER-wide network, the ability of CDER systems staff to provide adequate support to all users, and the ability of the Center to receive electronic submissions from industry. Ideally, the use of a single environment (PC or MAC) is preferred.

- However, it is recognized that it would be a hardship to ask either PC or MAC users to switch to a different platform. Such a switch requirement could adversely affect reviewers' ability to complete timely reviews and could affect morale. Indeed, such a switch may not be necessary in the long-term as MAC's and PC's become more interchangeable, and software compatibility is improved. Notwithstanding the possibility of a long-term solution to this problem, it is necessary to establish a policy to govern procurements of equipment until hardware and software compatibility is no longer as issue.

POLICY
- CDER will operate primarily in a PC environment. Current users of MACs will be permitted to retain use of their MACs, and to upgrade their equipment as necessary. Current PC users should not be transferred to MACs except under unusual circumstances. New hires should be provided with a PC unless the new hire has a strong preference for a MAC.

- Because development of CDER software and Local Area Network (LAN)

applications for MACs will lag behind development of new software and applications for PCs, PCs may, therefore, be required in the offices/divisions to enable all staff to obtain the benefits of new applications and technology. For this reason, office/division directors can decide to use the PC environment and require the use of PCs by their staff. However, they may not decide to use the MAC environment exclusively, or force PC users to change to MACs.

- "Private" LANs will be discouraged. If a particular organizational unit wishes to retain a "private" LAN, it must address all of the Division of Information Systems and Design (DISD) security concerns. "Private" LANs will not be permitted if CDER networks provide the major functions of that LAN.

- Electronic submissions (networked or stand alone) must be accepted in all divisions in a PC format. Divisions that have MAC capacity may also accept applications developed for MACs by mutual agreement with the sponsor. However, CDER staff may not require a sponsor to format an electronic submission for MAC. CDER may refuse to accept an electronic submission in a MAC format if the Division does not have the capability to review it on a MAC.

EFFECTIVE DATE   •   This guide is effective immediately.