



Name	HR06 Internet and Email Policy
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Responsible Officer	Director of Corporate Services
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1 Purpose

This policy specifies the rules concerning use of Litchfield Council’s Internet and Email systems by employees to ensure these systems are appropriately used for Council purposes only. This policy also explains that reasonable private use is permitted.

2 Principles

- To set out clear rules and procedures in relation to the use by employees of Council’s Internet and Email systems to ensure these systems are appropriately used for Council purposes only.
- To ensure the rules relating to Internet and email use are applied consistently across Council.

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Internet	Both the network and the means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers and servers. When two computers are connected over the Internet, they can send and receive all kinds of information such as text, code, files, graphics, voice, video, and computer programs.
Email	Both the system of and the action of sending messages from one individual to another via telecommunications links between computers or servers, often using dedicated software.

4 Policy Statement

4.1 Policy: General

- Access to Council’s Internet and Email systems is permitted for Council use and communications purposes only. Limited personal use is permitted where the content and purpose is not in violation of Council policies.
- The use of such systems in a manner which breaches the law or reasonable standards of decency is strictly prohibited.
- Council will monitor Internet and Email usage for security and record keeping purposes. All email sent from or received at a Litchfield Council owned email address is stored permanently.
- Employees are prohibited from copying software that is protected by copyright or licensing agreement.

- The introduction of software to the network is prohibited unless authorised in advance by the CEO, Director of Corporate Services or their delegate.
- Use of Council's Internet and Email is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use, including violation of this policy, may result in cancellation of this privilege or disciplinary action, including termination of employment in cases of serious misconduct.
- User names and passwords or not to be shared, and are provided for the exclusive use of individual employees. Sharing of user names and passwords may result in disciplinary action, including termination.
- Detailed policies on use of Internet and Email are provided below.

4.2 Internet and viruses

- 4.2.1 Access to the Internet will be allowed for Council purposes on the understanding that:
- Some material that can be accessed on the Internet is inaccurate.
 - Some material is deemed inappropriate for Council use and should not be accessed.
 - Use of the internet for non-Council related activities is a privilege, not a right. Where management determines there is evidence of excessive use impacting the business of Council, access rights may be suspended without notice and, where justified, disciplinary action may be taken, including termination of employment.
 - Users may inadvertently infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of third parties by downloading material from the Internet. Accordingly, each user must consider whether downloading is necessary and lawful in each case. If in doubt, users should contact their Manager prior to commencing the download.
- 4.2.2 Viruses
- All downloaded material must be scanned for viruses before use.
- 4.2.3 Policy: Software, shareware, or freeware
- No software, shareware or freeware may be installed on any computer without the prior written consent of the Director of Corporate Services or their delegate. All software installed must be tested for compatibility with Council's standard software suite.
 - A register of approved software will be maintained by the Director of Corporate Services.
 - If any problems occur with software, these must be immediately reported, along with any error messages displayed.
 - Where there is particular software installed, it must be owned and registered to Council, and installed by the designated network controller.
 - Any foreign software found on any computer which is not on the register will be removed and disciplinary action may be taken, including termination of employment.
- 4.2.4 Unacceptable Use
- The use of Company Internet and email facilities for the following purposes is strictly prohibited:
- Distribution or saving of material that is illegal in Australia or the country of destination.

- Distribution or saving of material that negatively reflects upon a particular race, gender, religious belief, nationality, marital status or sexual orientation or any other ground provided for by state or federal law or which is likely to cause offence.
- Distribution of copyright material without permission of the author(s).
- Distribution of material that may negatively reflect on Council's reputation, or the issuing of unauthorised statements as being attributed to Council.
- Carrying out, or attempting to carry out impersonation, misrepresentation of identity, forgery, substitution of mail, headers or any other identification marks.
- Using Company computer systems for gambling or soliciting for personal gain or profit.

4.3 Email

4.3.1 In general, all Email is confidential. However, Council monitors Email usage for security and record keeping purposes. The following points must be noted:

- All messages sent over Council's network are the property of Council.
- Users should be aware that Council may be required to disclose (discover) in litigation any email stored on Council's system that is relevant to the litigation.
- Users should bear in mind that they are using Council's email address when they send mail outside Council. If the mail is personal (and this should be kept to an absolute minimum), the user should make it clear that the message is not sent on behalf of Council, and the purpose and content must comply with Council's Code of Conduct for Employees.
- Users should not use Email as their sole method for distributing documents and graphics as this creates multiple copies. Users should consider best practice when required to distribute such documents.
- All email sent in place of other correspondence on behalf of Council should comply with Council standards for correspondence.

4.3.2 Prohibited Practices

- Using Email for illegal or wrongful purposes is prohibited under Council's email policy.
- Users may not use Email to infringe the copyright or intellectual property rights of third parties, to distribute defamatory, offensive, fraudulent or harassing messages, or otherwise engage in any illegal or wrongful act.
- Sending Email from another user's email address or impersonating another user is unethical, unacceptable and prohibited.
- Use of Email for commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, or promotions or for political purposes is unacceptable and prohibited.
- Distribution of electronic chain letters, for example pyramid selling schemes and advertising on behalf of any third party is unacceptable and prohibited.

4.3.3 Email Security

- The security of documents or messages sent via Email cannot be guaranteed once they leave Council. Therefore, confidential material must not be sent to unauthorised persons.

- Careless Email messages potentially expose Council to liability if a third party intercepts confidential or commercially sensitive information. Therefore, all documents and mailing addresses must be checked before the email is sent to avoid these serious mistakes.

4.3.4 Email Etiquette

- Appropriate language should always be used. Offensive or inflammatory language should be avoided. Courtesy and politeness is required.
- Messages should be concise and clear.
- Email messages over two or three screens in length are better sent as a document attached to the Email. The message should only be a summary of the document.
- Email in capitals is generally interpreted as shouting, and is offensive.
- Typographical errors are not acceptable. Always use the spell check facility before sending email.
- Over-use of the “cc” facility should be avoided if this does not lead to productive action or necessary information sharing.

4.3.5 Storage of Email Messages

- All email remains stored permanently on the email server. Management of the contents of an employee’s inbox with MS Outlook (the email management software provided by Council) is the responsibility of the individual.

5 Associated Documents

Litchfield Council Human Resource Policies

6 References and Related Legislation

Local Government Act
Fair Work Act