

## **IT Policy**

### **Responsible Use of Information Technology Systems and Facilities at Roger Williams University School of Law**

**(Adopted October, 1999)**

#### **Introduction**

This document constitutes the School of Law policy for the management of computer networks, personal computers and the resources made available thereby. The policy reflects the ethical principles of the School of Law Community and indicates, in general, the privileges and responsibilities of those using School of Law information technology systems, facilities, and other computing resources.

#### **Acceptable Use**

##### *Institutional Purposes*

School of Law information technology systems, facilities, and other computing resources are to be used exclusively to advance the School of Law's mission of education, research, and public service. Faculty, staff, and students may use them only for purposes related to their studies, their responsibilities for providing instruction, the discharge of their duties as employees, their official business with the School of Law, and other School of Law- sanctioned or authorized activities. The use of School of Law computing resources for commercial purposes including any sort of solicitation is prohibited, absent prior written permission of the appropriate Official(s). Unauthorized commercial uses of School of Law computing resources jeopardize the School of Law's relationships with network service providers and computer equipment and software vendors.

The School of Law acknowledges that occasionally faculty, staff, and students use School of Law computing resources assigned to them or to which they are granted access for non-commercial, personal use. Such occasional non-commercial uses are permitted by faculty, staff, and students, if they are not excessive, do not interfere with the performance of any faculty, staff member, or student's duties, do not interfere with the efficient operation of the School of Law or its computing resources, and are not otherwise prohibited by this policy or any other School of Law policy or directive.

Decisions as to whether a particular use of computing resources conforms with this policy shall be made by an appropriate School of Law official. In computing resources use matters involving students, faculty, administrators, or staff within the School of Law, the Dean of that school shall be the appropriate official.

### *Impermissible Use*

Computing resources may only be used for legal purposes and may not be used for any of the following purposes or any other purpose which is illegal, immoral, unethical, dishonest, damaging to the reputation of the School of Law, inconsistent with the mission of the School of Law, or likely to subject the School of Law to liability. Impermissible uses (some of which may also constitute illegal uses) include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Harassment;
- Libel or slander;
- Fraud or misrepresentation;
- Destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to the School of Law, or others;
- Disruption or unauthorized monitoring of electronic communications;
- Unauthorized copying or transmission of copyright-protected material;
- Use of the School of Law's trademarks, logos, insignia, or copyrights without prior approval;
- Violation of computer system security;
- Unauthorized use of computer accounts, access codes (including passwords), or network identification numbers (including e-mail addresses) assigned to others;
- Use of computer communications facilities in ways that unnecessarily impede the computing activities of others (such as randomly initiating interactive electronic communications or e-mail exchanges, overuse of interactive network utilities, and so forth);
- Development or use of unapproved mailing lists;
- Use of computing facilities for private business purposes unrelated to the mission of the School of Law or to School of Law life;
- Academic dishonesty;
- Academic Code of Student Responsibility violations;
- Violation of software license agreements;
- Violation of network usage policies and regulations;
- Violation of privacy;
- Posting or sending obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, or offensive material;
- Posting or sending material that is contrary to the mission or values of the School of Law;
- Intentional or negligent distribution of computer viruses.

### *Cooperative Use*

Computing resource users can facilitate computing at the School of Law in many ways. Collegiality demands the practice of cooperative computing. It requires:

- Regular deletion of unneeded files from one's accounts on shared computing resources;
- Refraining from overuse of connect time, information storage space, printing facilities, processing capacity, or network services;
- Refraining from use of sounds and visuals which might be disruptive or offensive to others;
- Refraining from use of any computing resource in an irresponsible manner;
- Refraining from unauthorized use of departmental or individual computing resources.

## **General Policies**

Computer use has become an integral part of many School of Law activities. While much computing occurs on individual computing resources, most information and communication systems reside on central computers and use networks. Distributed resources, such as computer clusters, provide additional computing tools. Procedures for gaining access to and making optimal use of these resources (including the steps to be taken in lodging complaints) are available to users from the University Office of Information Technology.

### *Responsibilities of Users*

The user is responsible for correct and sufficient use of the tools available for maintaining the security of information stored on each computer system. The following precautions are strongly recommended:

- Computer accounts, passwords, and other types of authorization that are assigned to individual users should not be shared with others;
- The user should assign an obscure account password and change it frequently;
- The user should understand the level of protection each computer system automatically applies to files and supplement it, if necessary, for sensitive or confidential information;
- The computer user should be aware of computer viruses and other destructive computer programs, and take steps to avoid being a victim or unwitting distributor of these processes.

Ultimate responsibility for resolution of problems related to the invasion of the user's privacy or loss of data rests with the user.

The computer user should consider whether information distributed using School of Law resources should be protected from unauthorized use by the use of copyright notices or by the restriction of distribution of certain materials to Roger Williams University School of Law users. Information regarding restriction of

distribution of materials may be obtained from the University Office of Information Technology.

### *Security*

Roger Williams University School of Law will assume that users are aware that electronic files are not necessarily secure.

Users of electronic mail systems should be aware that electronic mail in its present form is generally not secured and is extremely vulnerable to unauthorized access and modification. The University Office of Information Technology will make available to interested persons information concerning reasonable methods for attempting to protect information on central computing resources from loss, tampering, unauthorized search, or other access. Levels of obtainable security will vary depending upon the system involved.

Information on procedures appropriate to each resource will be available in the University Office of Information Technology.

### *Privacy and Confidentiality*

With reasonable cause, the School of Law reserves the right to inspect and examine any Roger Williams University School of Law owned or operated communications system, computing resource, and/or files or information contained therein at any time. All users should know that the system administrators do perform periodic security checks of the campus information technology systems, facilities, and other computing resources.

When sources outside the University or School of Law request an inspection and/or examination of any Roger Williams University School of Law owned or operated communications system, computing resource, and/or files or information contained therein, the School of Law will treat information as confidential unless any one or more of the following conditions exist:

- When approved by the appropriate Official(s) or the head of the Department to which the request is directed;
- When authorized by the owner(s) of the information;
- When required by federal, state, or local law;
- When required by a valid subpoena or court order.

Note: When notice is required by law, court order, or subpoena, computer users will receive prior notice of such disclosures (viewing information in the course of normal system maintenance does not constitute disclosure).

### *External Networks*

Members of the School of Law Community who use networks, facilities, or computers not owned by the School of Law shall adhere to this Responsible Use Policy and all policies and procedures established by the administrators of non-School of Law networks, facilities, or computers they use (policies and procedures can usually be obtained from the network information center of the network in question). Whether or not an external policy exists, the Roger Williams University School of Law Responsible Use Policy shall remain in effect and shall be adhered to by members of the School of Law community at all times.

### **Sanctions**

Violations of this Policy shall subject users to the regular disciplinary processes and procedures of the School of Law for students, staff, administrators, and faculty and may result in the imposition of appropriate penalties under those regular School of Law procedures. When a user is alleged to be abusing network or other information technology systems, facilities, or resources in a manner that jeopardizes the functioning of the system or the vital interests of the School of Law, any or all of that person's computing privileges may be suspended immediately to protect the resources and to assure reliable service to the rest of the School of Law community. Serious violations of this Responsible Use Policy may result in the permanent loss of the violator's computing privileges.

Illegal acts involving School of Law computing resources may also subject violators to prosecution by local, state, and/or federal authorities.

### **Disclaimer**

As part of the services available through Roger Williams University School of Law campus networks, the School of Law provides access to a large number of conferences, lists, bulletin boards, and Internet information sources. These materials are not affiliated with, endorsed by, edited by, or reviewed by Roger Williams University School of Law, and the School of Law takes no responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the content found within these information sources. Moreover, some of these sources may contain material that is offensive or objectionable to some users.

### **Existing School of Law Rules and Regulations**

This policy is intended to be an addition to existing School of Law rules and regulations and does not alter or modify any existing School of Law rule or regulation.

### ***Definitions***

The following terms shall have the following meanings when used in this document.

**Administrator** - The person having executive authority over one or more computing resources.

**Central Computing Resource** - Computers and peripherals purchased, maintained and operated by the School of Law or University Office of Information Technology (OIT) and made available to the School of Law community.

**Communications System** - Any University and School of Law voice, video, or data network and the components of such networks.

**Departmental Computing Resource** - Computers and peripherals purchased by the OIT, a School of Law department or an administrative unit primarily for the use of personnel within that entity.

**Harassment** - Any verbal or other conduct which has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's or group's educational or work performance or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment (whether or not based upon race, color, gender, disability, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or age). Sending unwanted and/or offensive e-mail or messages may constitute harassment. Harassment also includes making unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors which might be perceived as explicitly or implicitly affecting educational or employment decisions concerning an individual. All forms of harassment constitute violation of this responsible computer use policy, and may also violate other School of Law rules and regulations.

**Individual Computing Resource** - All computers and peripherals purchased by the OIT, School of Law departments or administrative units, primarily for the use of an individual member of that entity, and which can be made available to other individuals or groups. Also, computers personally owned by faculty, staff or students which use University and School of Law resources on-campus and/or off-campus.

**Networked Computing Resource** - All computers and peripherals connected to any University or School of Law network.

**School of Law** - The Roger Williams University Ralph R. Papitto School of Law.

**School of Law Community** - The aggregate of individuals employed by and/or enrolled as students at Roger Williams University School of Law, as evidenced by valid identification.

**Shared Computing Resource** - Computers and associated peripherals that are commonly used, simultaneously, by more than one person.

**System Administrator** - The person or group who has system privileges and is responsible for the operation and security of one or more networked computing resources.

**Unit** - The individual, group or organization responsible for performing a function within the School of Law community.

**University** - Roger Williams University

**User** - Any individual who has access to a School of Law computing resource.

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*Please direct questions regarding this policy to:*

*Office of the Dean  
Roger Williams University  
Ralph R. Papitto School of Law  
Ten Metacom Avenue  
Bristol, RI 02809*