

## **IDYLLWILD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**POLICY TITLE: Electronic Device Usage**

**POLICY NUMBER: 2040**

**2040.1** Employees may be provided with a business cell phone, laptop, tablet and/or camera for conducting official business. At times, an employee may have to use a personal cell phone, laptop and/or tablet to conduct business on behalf of the department. All uses of cell phones, laptops, tablets and/or cameras while engaged in employment activities and District business shall be done in compliance with this policy and Federal/State law.

**2040.1.1** Personal cell phones, laptops, tablets and/or cameras may have to be used by employees during work hours for essential personal correspondence or for an occasional personal matter. Essential personal communications are defined as calls, texts or emails that are urgent in nature and cannot be made at another time. Examples of essential personal communications are calls, text or emails to arrange for care of a child or other family emergency, to alert a family member of an unexpected delay due to a change in work schedule, or to arrange for transportation or service in the event of car trouble, etc.

**2040.1.2** To the extent possible, personal cell phone, laptop and/or tablet usage should be confined to rest and lunch breaks, and in locations such that the conversation, text/email communication is not disrupting to other employees or District business.

**2040.2 Personal** and District-owned cell phone usage will not be permitted by employees who are engaged in a continuous operation, such as a member on a crew engaged in the normal business of the District.

**2040.2.1 Personal** and District-owned cell phones are to be turned off or set to vibration mode during meetings, training sessions or during work hours.

**2040.2.2 Cell** phones with cameras shall not be used in situations where any individual may have an expectation of privacy. This includes but is not limited to incident scene's, restrooms, locker rooms, training rooms or offices wherein employees or the public may not want cameras utilized.

**2040.2.3 Text** messaging shall follow the same rules as cell phones when being used to communicate during working hours unless specifically authorized for District purposes by a supervisor.

**2040.2.4 Employees** are expected to operate District vehicles and/or equipment in a safe and prudent manner. California law prohibits all drivers from using a handheld wireless phone while driving, unless that cell phone is specifically designed and configured to allow hands-free listening and talking (California Vehicle Code §23123). Drivers under the age of 18 may not use a wireless cell phone or hands-free device at all while driving (California Vehicle Code §23124). California law also prohibits a driver from writing, sending or reading text-based communication on an electronic wireless communications device while driving (California Vehicle Code §23123.5).

- Exemptions to these laws are granted to emergency service professionals if they are operating an authorized emergency vehicle in the course and scope of his or her duties (California Vehicle Code §23123 (d) and §23123.5 (e)).

### **2040.3 E-mail System**

The e-mail system is used to facilitate business-related communication throughout the department. Employees who use the e-mail system should keep the following in mind. The e-mail system is to be used primarily for department business as it relates to the application of your position. Information on the e-mail system is considered proprietary and belongs to IFPD and that IFPD reserves the right to review that material with or without employees' knowledge.

**2040.3.1** Extensive personal use of the e-mail system is discouraged to reduce the amount of e-mail traffic so that department business can take priority. At no time should the system be used to communicate opinions such as politics, social issues, or personal biases.

**2040.3.2** E-mail users should understand that information on the system is not greatly protected and highly confidential and sensitive material should not be placed on the e-mail system; it should be communicated directly to the applicable parties by other means.

## **2040.4 Internet Usage**

Access to the Internet has been provided to staff members for the benefit of the department and the District. It allows employees to connect to information resources. Every staff member has a responsibility to maintain and enhance the department's public image, and to use the Internet in a productive manner. To ensure that all employees are responsible, productive Internet users are protecting the department's public image, the following guidelines have been established for using the Internet.

### **2040.4.1 Acceptable Uses of the Internet**

Employees accessing the Internet are representing the department. All communications should be for professional reasons. Employees are responsible for seeing that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. Internet Relay Chat channels may be used to conduct official department business, or to gain technical or analytical advice. Databases may be accessed for information as needed. E-mail may be used for business contacts.

### **2040.4.2 Unacceptable Use of the Internet**

The Internet should not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. Solicitation of non-department business, or any use of the Internet for personal gain is strictly prohibited. Use of the Internet must not disrupt the operation of department's network or the networks of other users. It must not interfere with your productivity.

**2040.4.3** Employees may dial into ICPD's network from home and use the Internet, for Business purposes.

## **2040.5 Communications**

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, email, audio or images that they place or send over the Internet. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages are prohibited. All messages communicated on the Internet should have your name attached. No messages will be transmitted under an assumed name. Users may not attempt to obscure the origin of any message. Information published on the Internet should not violate or infringe upon the rights of others. No abusive, profane or offensive language is allowed to be transmitted through the system.

Employees shall not use District-issued communication devices or email addresses for personal purposes or purposes unrelated to District employment and business, whether during employment and work hours or after such hours.

## **2040.6 Software**

To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the system there will be no unauthorized downloading of any software. All software downloads will be approved before download and scanned for viruses.

## **2040.7 Copyright Issues**

Copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than this department may not be transmitted by staff members on the Internet.

**2040.7.1** One (1) copy of copyrighted material may be downloaded for your own personal use in research.

**2040.7.2** Users are not permitted to copy, transfer, rename, add or delete information or programs belonging to other users unless given express permission to do so by the owner. Failure to observe copyright or license agreements may result in disciplinary action from the department or legal action by the copyright owner.

### **2040.8 Security**

All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet via cell phone, laptops and/or tablets are the property of IFPD, and should be considered public information. IFPD reserves the right to access and monitor all text messages, emails and files on the computer system as deemed necessary and appropriate. Internet messages via cell phone, laptop and/or tablets are public communication and are not private. All communications including text, emails and images can be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver.

### **2040.8 Harassment**

Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No text messages or emails with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference will be transmitted.

### **2040.9 Violations**

Violations of any guidelines listed above may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Original Approval Date: 10/08/2013

Revised Date: 04/27/2021

Revised Date: 05/25/2021

5/25/2021  
Board Revised Date

  
Clerk of the Board