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**Subject:** Computer and Network Policy

**Source:**

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## **Purpose**

To ensure the appropriate use of North Texas Parent and Child Development, Inc. Early Head Start computer and network resources by its employees, independent contractors, and other computer users.

## **Policy**

The computers and computer accounts used by employees are provided to assist them in the performance of their jobs. The computer and network systems belong to North Texas Parent and Child Development, Inc. Early Head Start, and should be used primarily for Early Head Start business purposes. The following policy, rules, and conditions apply to all users of North Texas Parent and Child Development, Inc., Early Head Start computers, network resources and services, wherever the users are located. Violations of this policy may result in the loss of computer and network access and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and/or legal action. Computer users are governed by the following provisions, which apply to all use of computer and network resources and services. Computer and network resources and services include, but are not limited to, the following: servers, workstations, computers, laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs), software, and internal or external communications networks that are accessed directly or indirectly from Early Head Start computer facilities. The term “users”, as used in this policy, refers to all employees, volunteers, parents, family members, independent contractors, and other persons or entities accessing or using Early Head Start computer and network resources and services. All computer users have the responsibility to use computer resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner, and in a manner that is consistent with Early Head Start policies and procedures, and with the Head Start Performance Standards.

### **Computer and Network Use:**

1. Fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating, violent, or unlawful material **may not be** deliberately sent, received, displayed, or stored on any computer or network owned by Early Head Start. Any access to sexually explicit and prurient material or to gambling related material is specifically prohibited. Users encountering or receiving such material should immediately report the incident to their supervisor.
2. The computer and network resources and services of Early Head Start **may not be** used for the display, transmission, or storage of commercial advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive programs, or any other unauthorized purpose. Use of the electronic mail systems to distribute advertisements, jokes, chain letters, or any other personal notices or messages to distribution lists or other groups of more than three people either inside or outside of Early Head Start is prohibited.

3. Users must comply with all relevant federal and state laws regarding political activities of Early Head Start grantees and other publicly funded organizations. Early Head Start computer and network systems may not be used "...in any manner supporting or resulting in the identification of [Early Head Start] with any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate or contending faction or group in an election for public or party office" (Head Start Act, Section 656) or "...for the preparation, distribution, or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television, or video presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before Congress or any State legislature" (Section 503 of Public Law 107-116, and other appropriations acts). In addition, no federal funds, program services paid for by federal funds, Early Head Start agency-owned equipment, facilities, supplies, or employees on program time may be used for voter participation or lobbying activities.
4. Users must exercise reasonable care to prevent loss or damage to computer hardware, software, and information in their possession. This includes, but is not limited to physical damage or loss of hardware or software and the use of reasonable care to prevent the spread of computer viruses, worms, 'Trojan horses', and other malicious code. Users may not connect, disconnect, alter, repair, move, or otherwise modify any Early Head Start computer, monitor, printer, router, switch, or other hardware without prior express authorization to do so from Executive Director. Users must comply with all computer and network related instructions from the Executive Director or designee.
5. Users may not use or install software of any kind onto any Early Head Start computer or network without receiving prior express authorization to do so from the Executive Director. Users must comply with all software licenses, copyrights, and all other state and federal laws governing intellectual property.
6. Users should seek to ensure that adequate network bandwidth is available for activities related to the mission of the agency. Users may not access digital audio and video, including streaming media, without the prior express authorization of the Executive Director. The use of peer-to-peer file sharing networks is specifically prohibited.
7. Users must restrict personal use of Early Head Start computer systems and network resources to scheduled breaks and other non-work hours, except with the permission of their supervisor. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of computer games, chat rooms, Instant Message (IM) systems, and the non work-related use of Internet e-mail, the World Wide Web, and newsgroups.
8. Users must not attempt to access network or Internet systems unless specifically authorized to do so by the operators of those systems. Users must not alter or copy a file belonging to another user without first obtaining permission from the owner of the file.

### **Security:**

1. Early Head Start has the right to take any actions that it believes are necessary to ensure the integrity of its computer and network resources. It may, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director or designee, edit or delete any program, document, or other information stored on any computer or network, including data stored on any personal computer owned by Early Head Start.

2. Users are responsible for safeguarding their passwords for the system. Individual passwords should not be printed, stored on-line, or given to others. Users are responsible for all transactions made using their passwords. Under no circumstances may users allow anyone but themselves to log on to any computer or network owned by Early Head Start using their password. Users must not leave their computers unattended without logging off from the computer or network.

**Privacy:**

1. Early Head Start has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of the computer system, including employee e-mail, to ensure compliance with this policy. Employees should not have the expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or receive on any Early Head Start computer.
2. Users grant permission to Early Head Start to include their name, Internet address, business address, and business telephone number in publicly accessible databases and documents. All other personal information will be considered confidential, and will not be published or released in any form without written permission.

**Confidentiality:**

All information about children and families receiving services from Early Head Start is confidential. No information may be shared with any person or organization outside Early Head Start without the prior written permission of the family, except as mandated by Texas Law and Early Head Start policy. Early Head Start staff and volunteers should strive to protect the privacy of children and families in the program and should view or print confidential family information only when it is necessary to do so to better serve the family.

**Responsibility:**

Early Head Start is not responsible for the actions of individual users. This policy may be amended or revised periodically as the need arises.

I have read and will agree to comply with the foregoing policy, rules and conditions governing the use of Early Head Start's computer and network resources and services. I understand that a violation of this policy may result in the loss of computer and network access and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and/or legal action.

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_