



E-MAIL AND INTERNET POLICY

Mind in Croydon has invested in the necessary resources to provide certain employees with the facility to use e-mail and to access the Internet which is beneficial in enabling them to undertake their duties more effectively. These facilities may only be used for business purposes except in certain circumstances outlined below.

These guidelines are to be regarded as a code of conduct for all employees and failure to observe them may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct, and will be dealt with according to Mind in Croydon's normal disciplinary procedure.

Any employee who experiences problems concerning abuse of the electronic communication facility, should in the first instance approach their immediate line manager.

USE OF E-MAIL

- E-mail should normally only be used to communicate internally with colleagues and externally to clients and suppliers, on business related issues. Messages to family or friends, and others are permitted, but must be of a serious nature and be as brief as possible. The mailing of jokes containing sexually explicit or otherwise offensive material, either internally or externally may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- No e-mail may contain any references to other individuals which might be construed as libellous.
- No e-mail communication, which might be regarded as harassing or insulting, may be sent using Mind in Croydon's system. Complaints about the performance or service of other departments or individuals must be made on a face-to-face basis or in a formal letter, as is normal and courteous practice.
- Mind in Croydon recognises that it is not always possible to control incoming mail. Any material which would be considered as non-businesslike, sexually explicit or offensive should be deleted at once. Any employee who finds that they are receiving such communications from known sources is responsible for contacting that source in order to request that such communication is not repeated.
- E-mail may be used for the despatch of formal documents such as contracts or proposals, but it should be borne in mind that documents issued this way are just as legally binding as those sent conventionally. All such items must be followed up with a formal hard copy in the usual manner. **However, please remember that e-mail can be intercepted on the Internet and if confidentiality is an issue, avoid it.**
- If employees receive virus warnings via e-mail, they should take no action whatsoever other than informing the Office Manager immediately
- E-mails sent internally may be sent in an informal style, but staff are asked to observe the normal courtesy that they would extend in written memos.
- E-mails which are sent to recipients outside Mind in Croydon should be composed in a businesslike manner.
- Unsolicited e-mails must not be sent at any time. Any 'junk' mail received should be deleted.
- It is a disciplinary offence to access another individuals' e-mail facility by using their password without their express permission.

- Computers, networks, e-mail systems etc are the property of Mind in Croydon. E-mails are not the property of staff and as such there can be no expectation of privacy.

USE OF INTERNET (WORLD WIDE WEB)

- Employees should not access, view, receive, download, send or store material from sites such as those relating to pornography, racism, terrorism, cults, hate speech, illegal drugs or other inappropriate sites. To do so may be considered an act of gross misconduct. The only possible exceptions to this are for employees who need to access such sites in relation to work. For example, someone in the counselling service may need to go to a site about gambling addiction or a member of staff may have good reason to go to a site about the effects of illegal drugs. Visits to such sites however should be limited strictly to work-related issues.
- The Company accepts that employees may find it convenient to browse the Web for their own personal reasons during their own time (e.g. lunch break). If you decide to buy anything over the Internet you are advised that, if you give credit card details or other sensitive information, ensure that you have a secure connection. Goods may be received on company premises but this should be kept to a minimum and if in any way it interferes with the smooth running of the office employees may be asked to cease the practice.
- Employees should not generally join any mailing lists or solicit any information on the Internet unless there is a business need to do so. Should they wish to take part in such activities in a private capacity, they should consult their Line Manager first who may give permission on a case by case basis
- It is forbidden to access an external computer or external network (excluding the www) without authorisation or to compromise the performance or privacy of any computer system.
- It is forbidden to place any Mind in Croydon Limited material on any publicly accessible website unless authorised by the Chief Executive
- You should be aware that those viewing Web pages can be identified by the site owners.
- Mind in Croydon reserves the right to view and monitor all e-mail and internet access. Should this be found to be inappropriate it may be viewed as gross misconduct

Reviewed and Updated by the Board of Mind in Croydon
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