

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Issued by: RDP Supervisors	Policy No.: OPR 009
		Effective Date: 07/01/2009
<i>Electronic Communications and Website Policy</i>	Approved by: RDP Statewide Director Daniel Regan	Revision No.: N/A
		Supersedes Policy: N/A

- I. **BACKGROUND:** The Rural Development Project (RDP) continues to adopt and make use of new means of electronic communications and information exchange services in order to better serve our sponsor, clients, and staff. RDP also set up a website for the same purposes and in order to provide information about our organization to the general public. Employees may be required to acknowledge receipt of this policy.
- II. **SCOPE:** Electronic communications and information exchange services are defined as, but not limited to, our systems and network, servers and workstations, email, telephones, voicemail, fax machines, external electronic bulletin boards, on-line services, the Internet, the World Wide Web (WWW), and other new technologies.

The website is defined as www.hawaiirdp.org. The website is an integral part of the services RDP provides to our clients; it is a business asset. The website publishes our Policies and Procedures, contains forms commonly used by staff, clients and subcontractors, and posts material relevant to the goals of our project and our project's sponsor, the U.S. Department of Labor.

The RDP's email system is also a valuable business tool. The messages sent and received on the email system, like memos, purchase orders, EICs, job descriptions, or other documents created by employees in the course of their workday, are the property of the RDP.

The electronic communications and information exchange services and the website provided by the RDP are considered the "property of the RDP." As such the primary purpose of their use should be to facilitate and support the business and goals of the RDP and of our sponsor, the U.S. Department of Labor.

This policy is not intended to cover all situations, however it is intended to express the philosophy of the RDP and set forth general principles employees should apply when using the RDP's electronic communications and information exchange services and the RDP website.

This policy applies to all RDP employees including temporary staff and student hires and anyone else who is given access to the RDP's electronic communications and information exchange services. This policy applies to the RDP's electronic communications and information exchange services that are

1. Accessed on or from RDP premises;

2. Accessed remotely;
3. Accessed using RDP computer equipment (hardware) or personal computer equipment (including cell phones); and
4. Used in a manner that identifies the individual with the RDP.

III. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE SERVICES

A. USER POLICY: It is the RDP's policy to encourage the use of our electronic communications and information exchange services because they make our work and interactions with others more efficient and effective. They are also a very valuable research tool and a considerable resource containing information about vendors, customers, technology, and products/services.

The RDP's electronic communications and information exchange services cannot be used for knowingly transmitting, retrieving, or storing any communication that is:

1. Discriminatory or harassing;
2. Derogatory to any individual or group;
3. Obscene;
4. Defamatory or threatening;
5. Engaged in for any purpose that is illegal or contrary to RDP policies,
6. Disruptive, detrimental, or embarrassing to the RDP's business interests or its relationships with clients or contractors;
7. Disruptive, detrimental, or embarrassing to the goals of our sponsor, the U.S. Department of Labor; or
8. In furtherance of a private business or enterprise.

Electronic communications and information exchange services are provided by the RDP primarily for our employees' business purposes. Limited, occasional, or incidental use of electronic media (sending/receiving) for personal, non-business purposes is understandable and acceptable. However, employees are expected to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and not abuse this privilege.

Employees should not assume electronic communications are totally private. Therefore, if an employee has sensitive communications or information to transmit they should use other means.

The RDP requires its employees to use electronic communication in a way that respects the confidential and proprietary information of others. Employees are prohibited from copying and distributing copyrighted material – i.e., software, database files, documentation, or articles using email or other forms of electronic communications media/services unless authorized by license agreements.

In addition, RDP employees are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in:

1. Monitoring or intercepting the files or electronic communications of other employees or third parties;
2. Hacking or obtaining access to systems or accounts they are not authorized to use;
3. Using other people's log-ins or passwords; an identification code shall be used only by the person to whom it is assigned and that individual is also responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the password;
4. Breaching, testing, or monitoring computer or network security measures; unless requested to do so *in writing* by the Principal Investigator and/or Statewide Director
5. Compromising the system or network security or performance within the network or any connected network or system;
6. Hiding the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else;
7. Activity which, in any manner, causes network congestion or significantly hampers the ability of other people to access and use the system;
8. Loading personal software (encryption or other types of software) onto his or her PCs without prior authorization from the IT Manager and the RDP Statewide Director;
9. Introducing any form of computer virus into the network;
10. Broadcasting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious or other non-work related matters;
11. Transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material.

B. RECORDS RETENTION POLICY: The RDP permits the storage of email messages.

IV. RDP WEBSITE POLICY: It is the policy of the RDP to encourage the general public, RDP employees and clients to access our website. It is our policy to ensure that the information contained on our Website furthers our and our sponsor's goals and does not embarrass or compromise our and our sponsor's goals. Therefore, it is RDP policy that

our website contain no images, text, or materials that might be considered indecent, pornographic, obscene or illegal, or discriminatory or offensive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered as harassment.

The content of all postings should relate to the business of RDP, its sponsor, our partners and clients or be information that would be of interest to the general public.

Employees and clients are prohibited from posting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious or other non-business related matters on the website. The posting of commercial or advertising material on the website is also prohibited.

V. RDP WEBSITE POSTING PROCEDURE:

The IT Manager is responsible for updating the website with postings. The website will be updated weekly. Postings can be submitted on-line to the IT Manager. The RDP management reserves the right to refuse to post any item that does not conform to this policy.

VI. VIOLATIONS: Supervisors are responsible for reporting any violation of this policy immediately to the Statewide Director. Where it is believed that a violation of the RDP Electronic Communications and Website Policy has occurred, the employee may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Any employee caught utilizing the RDP Electronic Communications and Information Exchange Services or the website for illegal or fraudulent purposes may face additional civil liability and/or criminal prosecution.

Any employee caught utilizing the RDP Electronic Communications and Information Exchange Services or the RDP website for purposes that are not in the best interests of the RDP and/or our sponsor, the U.S. Department of Labor, as determined by the RDP Statewide Director may also be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.