



# Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications

[ Owner: Office of Human Resources & Office of Computer Operations ]

The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux acknowledges that technology devices are easily accessible and allow swift communication. The electronic communications provide an expanse of resources to those we serve; however, the use of all technology carries with it moral responsibility, care, and concern for those we serve. Based on the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, it is our intention to provide an environment deemed appropriate by the Catholic Church. When using electronic communications, employees must take necessary precautions to limit and restrict imprudent access and use.

The purpose of this directive is to provide employees with guidance on the proper use of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux's information technology resources, including but not limited to:

- The Internet and email
- Diocese assigned computing devices such as cell phone, hand held devices, and portable storage devices
- The Diocese's network and supporting systems

The use of diocesan technology resources is a privilege granted to employees for the enhancement of job-related functions. Violations of this rule may result in the revocation of the privilege. Employees may also face disciplinary action including, but not limited to termination, civil litigation and/or criminal prosecution for misuse of these resources.

## Acceptable Use:

- All employees and volunteers must only use an official diocesan email account when communicating with those we serve regarding official diocesan matters. The use of anonymous email services such as Yahoo, Gmail, Charter, Bellsouth, etc is prohibited. Employees must not forward confidential or sensitive diocesan emails to a non-diocesan email address that they own or control. Email messages are considered public records and are the property of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux at all times.
- Any electronic communication by a diocesan employee to any youth (under the age of 18) must be relative to diocesan ministry/service only and shall only be sent to entire group. Personal information, such as personal address and phone numbers, should not be disclosed. Private electronic communications are not appropriate between adult employee/volunteer and youth.

- Any social media accounts created for diocesan locations, groups, etc. shall be approved by Pastor, Principal, other Administrator, or Diocesan Director of Communications. It is the duty and discretion of the administrator of such outlets to ensure only appropriate content is maintained on the site.
- All employees and volunteers must report to their supervisor at the first opportunity available any youth initiated communication that may be construed as inappropriate.
- No one shall use diocesan resources to access, store, display, edit or record sexually explicit or extremist material.
- Occasional and incidental personal use of diocesan resources is allowed subject to limitations. The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux does not grant any ownership, privacy or expectation of privacy to any person in the content of any messages or other electronic activities involving diocesan resources and equipment.
- Employees must comply with all federal and state laws, diocesan rules and policies and all applicable contract and licenses governing electronic communications.
- Transmission of any written or photographic materials in violation of civil or criminal codes is prohibited, including threatening or obscene materials or any material/programs protected by trademarks or copyright laws.
- Any acts of vandalism including the transmission of viruses are prohibited.
- Use of passwords, hardware and/or services by anyone other than the authorized person is prohibited.
- Only approved computer software may be installed. The diocese reserves the right to delete any unauthorized program.
- Transmission of commercial materials, advertising or political materials is prohibited.
- Histories of use are monitored through firewall, filtering and censoring services provided by the Archdiocese of New Orleans. This system is in compliance with CIPA regulations. Security problems must be reported to Technology Coordinator in your location. If there is no designated technology coordinator, contact the Director of Computer Operations/Technology.
- The inappropriate use of technology will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.