

SOUTHWESTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Internet Usage and Equipment Policy 18-11.1

Effective Date

August 14, 2025

Applicability

Users of computer equipment tagged as property of the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board include, but are not limited to, the New Mexico American Job centers and offices.

Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements for individuals using computer equipment designated as the property of the Board. It addresses usage regarding electronic mail, monitoring of electronic mail, the Internet, acceptable use, professional development, rules of Internet use, downloading files, prohibited use, PC policy, new applications, and software copyrights.

Background

The Southwestern Area Workforce Development provides computer equipment at various locations throughout its service area for sub-recipients' and customers' use. This policy safeguards the proper use of the equipment for the purpose of delivering workforce services.

Action

A. Electronic Mail

Users provided with E-mail accounts shall regularly read and respond to E-mail in the same way they respond to telephone calls. In general, E-mail correspondence should be short, concise, and withstand the scrutiny of public disclosure. All E-mails made or received by any user in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of public business are subject to the public records laws, and the user will maintain all such E-mails.

- a. E-mail generated by Outlook within this organization shall be for work-related activity only.
- b. E-mail messages are the property of the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board.
- c. Jokes sent and/or forwarded are not considered Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board business and are prohibited.
- d. Harassing or obscene messages are strictly prohibited.

B. Monitoring of Electronic Mail

As a matter of general policy, the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board will not read electronic mail messages. However, the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board reserves the right to access messages under the following circumstances or when determined by the One-Stop Operator or Administrative Entity:

- a. When necessary to investigate a possible violation of Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board policy;
- b. When reasonable suspicion exists that a user has committed or is committing a crime; or
- c. When the Executive Director requests internal or external investigations and
- d. When necessary to support the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board, supervision, control, and efficiency in the workplace.
- e. When a user ends employment with the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board, the users' mail is accessed for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the public records law.

C. Internet Policy and Acceptable Use

The use of any Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board-provided, publicly accessible computer network, such as the Internet, is a privilege. Unauthorized use of the Internet will result in the loss of access for the user and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board users have an obligation to use their Internet access in a responsible and informed way, conforming to network etiquette, customs and courtesies, and representing the organization in a positive manner.

During working hours, users shall use the Internet for business and work-related communication only. Users may use Internet access during lunch periods and after normal working hours for personal use, provided such use does not violate the Prohibited Use portion of this policy.

Examples of job-related responsibilities include:

- a. Accessing external databases
- b. Searching online public access information
- c. Disseminating documents to individuals or groups
- d. Participating in electronic mail discussion groups on job-related topics
- e. Gaining access to software user support information

The Internet may be used to maintain professional and career development activities. Messages transferred via the Internet are public information. If you desire to transmit confidential communications or sensitive information, do not use the Internet. Users are responsible and accountable for communications on the Internet and shall treat the Internet as a formal communications tool similar to the telephone or any written communications.

Computer network facilities outside the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board may have their own policies governing the use of those resources. When accessing remote computers through Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board facilities, users are responsible for adhering to both the policies outlined in this document and the policies of other relevant organizations.

Downloading of Files

It is prohibited to download from the Internet, including, but not limited to, such programs that install Spyware on the computer. Any form of music file is also prohibited; these files

pose the risk of copyright infringements and the use of resources. Acceptable downloads are work-related documents used in the performance of work duties.

Prohibited Use

Prohibited use of the Internet and Intranet includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Use of the Internet for profit-making activities is strictly prohibited;
- b. Users shall not use these services or resources to slander, defame, harass, discriminate, or sexually offend others;
- c. Users shall not use Internet or E-mail services to conduct non-Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board commercial activity;
- d. Users shall not use the Internet or E-mail service to conduct other inappropriate activities, including but not limited to:
 - i. Unlawful or malicious activities; or abusive or objectionable language
 - ii. Misrepresentation of the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board
 - iii. Activities such as sending frivolous or non-Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board work-related group messages, chain E-mails, jokes, or participating in chat rooms
 - iv. Use of the Internet to access obscene, pornographic, and X-rated materials, or using such computers for gambling, or entering contests
 - v. Use of the Internet or E-mail for communications that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religious beliefs
 - vi. Using systems to transmit or receive sexually explicit or otherwise offensive images, messages or cartoons, threats, political endorsements, sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws, sending E-mail that appears to have come from someone else, subscribing to automatic electronic mailings that are not Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board business, posting on electronic bulletin boards material that violates existing laws or Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Rules and Regulations.

Attempting to monitor or tamper with another user's electronic communications, or reading, copying, changing, or deleting another user's files or software without the explicit agreement of the owner. Files owned by individual users are considered private property, regardless of whether they are accessible to other users.

Activities will not be considered misuse when authorized in writing by the Executive Director for administrative purposes. Downloading of software products from Internet sites is not permitted without the prior approval of the Executive Director.

D. PC Policy

During working hours, computer equipment is to be used only for the purpose for which it is assigned and is not to be used for non-Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board business unless approved by your supervisor. During non-working hours, users may use their Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board-supplied computer equipment for personal, non-business use as long as they comply with the other provisions of these policies.

The following conditions apply to all computer users of the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board. Violations of any of the conditions are considered unethical and may be unlawful. An individual's computer use privileges may be suspended immediately upon the discovery of a possible violation of these policies, and the individual may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Suspected violations will be reported to the Executive Director or the Designee.

New Applications

Users shall not install any applications onto a Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board PC without first requesting that special applications be installed. The software media, installation documentation, and proof of license must accompany the request. The Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board adheres to all applicable software copyright policies and will not install software without a license. All outside diskettes received from third parties must be checked for viruses.

Prohibited Use

Prohibited uses of the PC include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Knowingly or carelessly running or installing on any computer system or network, or giving to another user, a program intended to damage or to place excessive load on a computer system or network. This includes, but is not limited to, programs known as computer viruses, Trojan Horses, and worms;
- b. Storing large files on the system, which could compromise system integrity or preclude other users' right of access to disk storage;
- c. Using your login for any activity that is commercial in nature, i.e., paid for by non-Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board funds. Commercial activities include, but are not limited to, consulting, typing services, and developing software for sale.
- d. Attempts to use other users' IDs without authorization for other than the intended purpose.
- e. Game playing is not allowed on the system during regular working hours.

Software Copyright Policies

It is unlawful to copy software from third parties or provide unlicensed copies of software packages to other individuals. Computer users agree to the proprietary rights of all software. Computer software protected by copyright is not to be copied from, into, or by using Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board computers, except as permitted by law or by contract with the owner of the copyright.

Inquiries

Questions related to this policy should be directed to the Administrative Entity at (575) 744-4857.

Attested

This policy was reviewed and approved by the SAWDB on August 14, 2025.

SAWDB Chair