# Computing, Network and Telecommunications Usage Policy

**Date Established**: March 26, 2007
**Date Last Revised:** November 22, 2024
**Category**: Information Technology
**Responsible Office**: Office of the Chief Information Officer
**Responsible Executive**: Chief Information Officer

## Summary

This policy provides guidance regarding privileges and responsibilities for the acceptable use of University at Buffalo information technology resources.

## Policy Statement

The University at Buffalo (UB, university) is committed to providing secure and reliable computing, networking and telecommunications services to the campus community. All individuals who use university information technology (UBIT) resources are required to use these resources in an ethical and legal manner, consistent with the educational, research, and public service goals of UB.

All individuals who use UB's computing, network, cloud and telecommunications resources are responsible for the following:

- Abiding by applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and licenses applicable to use.

- Abiding by all applicable UB policies, procedures, and guidelines.

- Using the information technology resources, they are authorized to use and then only in the manner and to the extent which they are authorized.
- Protecting the privacy of others, their accounts, and personal information.

When using UBIT resources individuals must not view, copy, alter, destroy, or distribute another's files without permission from that individual, unless authorized or required to do so by law or regulation. The technical ability to access others' accounts or information does not imply authorization to do so. IT operational staff may be required to access files if directed to do so by Employee Relations, UB counsel, the information security office, or as required to insure proper technical operation of IT systems.

**Unauthorized Use**

All individuals who use UB's computing, network, and telecommunication resources must refrain from:

- Using any account or password assigned to another person

- Sharing any account or password, with any other individual, including family members

- Allowing others to use university owned system information technology

All individuals who use UB's computing, network and telecommunications resources must abide by the security restrictions on all systems and information to which they are authorized to access, and must not:

- Circumvent security

- Change, conceal, or forge the identification of the person using system information technology, resources, including, but not limited to, use of e-mail

- Knowingly download or install software onto university IT resources unless allowed under applicable procedures, or unless prior authorization has been received

- Establish an unauthorized server or background process that services incoming requests from anonymous users for purposes of gaming, chatting or browsing the Web

- Engage in activities that interfere with or disrupt networks, equipment, or service

- Intentionally distribute malicious software

- Install software or hardware that permits unauthorized access to university IT resources

All individuals utilizing UBIT resources must do so only for university academic, research, administrative purposes, or purposes supporting or engaging in the mission of the university.  IT resources may not be used for inappropriate purposes, including:

- Activities which violate federal or state laws and regulations

- Wagering or betting

- Harassment, libel, and slander

- Storage, display, transmission, or intentional or solicited receipt of material that is or may reasonably be regarded as obscene, sexually explicit, or pornographic; this includes any depiction, photograph, audio recordings, video, or written word, except as such access relates to the academic pursuits of a university student or professional activities of a university employee

- "Spamming" through widespread dissemination of unsolicited and unauthorized e-mail or telephone messages

- Using UB resources for personal or private commercial purposes, or for financial gain

- Personal or partisan political activities

**Sanctions**

Using UB computing, network and telecommunications resources to violate university policies, contractual obligations, laws, or regulations is prohibited. UB does not generally monitor or restrict the content of material transported across university networks, posted, or housed on university-owned or managed IT services, or housed within a private domain or non-UB computer attached to a campus network, although it reserves the right to do so at any time. Violators of this policy will be subject to the existing student or employee disciplinary procedures of UB. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
- Loss of computing privileges
- Separation/expulsion from UB

Illegal activities involving UB computing resources will be subject to prosecution by federal, state, or local authorities.

**Web Policy**

UB's website (buffalo.edu) is an official publication of the university. Unless otherwise indicated, all materials, appearing on the top-level web presence or subsequent official unit websites—including text, photographs, videos, graphics and downloadable assets (e.g., PDFs)—are copyrighted and should not be reproduced without written permission from the [Division of University Communications](#). Unit websites linked to the UB top-level web presence may be created by academic departments, programs, centers and institutes, administrative departments, and university-recognized student groups. Individual faculty and staff may create their own websites but must link them through their department's web presence in accordance with their department's established online communications practices.

Individual students may create their own websites in hosting environments provided by UBIT, in accordance with university policy and the terms of service articulated by UBIT.

**Incidental Use**

As a convenience to the UB community, limited incidental personal use of information resources is permitted. Faculty and staff are responsible for exercising good judgment about personal use in accordance with this and other UBIT, UB, and SUNY policies and ethical standards for state officers and employees. In general, state officers and employees are charged to pursue a course of conduct that will not raise suspicion among the public that they are engaging in acts in violation of the public trust. Incidental personal use must comply with the following:

- It cannot be illegal
- It cannot interfere with an UB employee's job responsibilities/work
- It cannot adversely affect the availability, integrity, or reliability of UBIT systems or cause harm to the activities of others using the IT systems
- It cannot be inconsistent with UB's status as a state entity and its non-profit, tax-exempt status
- Any personal use of university IT resource is done so at the individual's own risk; the university is not responsible for providing any assistance or support as related to personal use of university IT resources.

**Abuse of University Resources**

Misuse of UB computing, network and telecommunication resources must be reported to [abuse@buffalo.edu](mailto:abuse@buffalo.edu).

# Background

UB recognizes that information technology resources are valuable assets. Community members must act responsibly when using these resources to protect their integrity, confidentiality, and availability.

# Applicability

This policy applies to all individuals using UB computing, network, and telecommunications resources accessed from both on-campus and remote locations. UB computing, network, telecommunications resources include host computer systems, university managed cloud services, university sponsored

computers and workstations, software, non-public data, and communications networks controlled, administered, or accessed directly or indirectly.

## Definitions

**Circumventing Security:** Attempting to subvert any system's security measures. This includes the act of using computer programs or devices to intercept or decode passwords or similar access control information.

**Computing, Network, and Telecommunications Resources** includes, but are not limited to, computing devices, servers, networks, email, software, printers, scanners, video distribution systems, telephone systems, and other computing hardware and software, whether owned by UB or contracted from a third party.

**Harassment, Libel, and Slander:** The communication of false information about a person, a group, or an entity. UB's computers or networks may not be used to libel, slander, or harass any person, group, or entity.

## Responsibility

**Computer, Network, and Telecommunications Administrators**
- Manage and support university IT resources.
- Assign, limit, and revoke access to UB's computing, network, and telecommunications resources in accordance with this and other relevant policies.
- Remove content in accordance with this and other relevant policies.
- Access computing, network, and telecommunications resources including individual accounts as required to maintain IT systems and uphold university policies and/or in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- Assist in the investigation of computing, network, and telecommunications misuse.

**Information Security Officer**
- Investigate reports of computing, network, and telecommunications misuse.

**Vice President and Chief Information Officer**
- Establish and maintain this policy.

## Contact Information

| Contact | Phone | Email |
|---|---|---|
| Vice President and Chief Information Officer | 716-645-7979 | vpcio@buffalo.edu |
| Information Security Office | 716-645-6997 | sec-office@buffalo.edu |

# Related Information

**University Links**

[E-Discovery Policy](#)
[UB Network Connection Policy](#)
[Website Privacy Policy](#)
[UBITName Password Policy](#)
[Personal websites at UB](#)

**Related Links**

[New York State Freedom of Information Law](#)
[N.Y. Veh. & Traf. Law § 1225-c Use of mobile telephones](#)
[N.Y. Veh. & Traf. Law § 1225-d Use of portable electronic devices](#)
IT Accessibility Laws and Policies [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
[Privacy Act of 1974](#)
[State University of New York Privacy Policy](#)
[State University of New York Use of Facilities by Non-Commercial Organizations Policy (Document 5603)](#)

# History

November 2024
- Full review. Updated the policy to:
  - Rename the policy from *Computing and Network Use* to *Computing, Network, and Telecommunications Usage*
  - Revise the Policy Statement
  - Add Background, Applicability, Definitions, and Responsibility sections