SECTION 51

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

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51.0 PURPOSE
51.1 POLICY
51.2 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION
51.3 PROCEDURES
51.4 PROHIBITED USES
51.5 PASSWORDS
51.6 AUDITING
51.0 PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the use of electronic devices while insuring that the rights of both the employees and the Department are protected.

51.1 POLICY
Members of the Palos Verdes Estates Police Department are allowed access to electronic systems as tools to aid in the accomplishment of their assigned duties. Employees shall comply with all existing laws and regulations related to the use of electronic devices.

51.2 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION
Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, all data files such as text, documents, sound, still images, video images and applications. Devices and systems includes, but is not limited to, the Internet, the World Wide Web, fax machines, telephones, modems, PCs, printers and terminals.

51.3 PROCEDURES
It is permissible to use the Department electronic communication systems for incidental personal purposes; however, this does not include uses requiring substantial expenditures of time which interferes with job responsibilities, uses for profit, or uses that would otherwise violate department policy.

A. ELECTRONIC MAIL
E-mail is provided to facilitate communications. E-mail users shall read their messages on a regular basis and should review and delete obsolete messages.

Employees shall not use Department e-mail or electronic messaging systems to infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of third parties; to distribute defamatory, fraudulent, or harassing messages; or otherwise to engage in any illegal or wrongful conduct.

E-mail messages or attachments shall not contain any material that is illegal or which would be reasonably deemed sexually offensive or offensive based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, creed, or physical or mental handicap.

Users shall not attempt to access another’s e-mail account.

In the event a user receives inappropriate e-mails, that user is to inform the sender immediately to stop sending such content. If the sender continues, the recipient user shall notify a supervisor.
B. **INTERNET**

Internet access is provided as a benefit and convenience to all employees for resource sharing and investigative purposes. Employees are not to conduct personal business for the purpose of profit using Department or City resources.

Except upon the specific direction the Chief of Police or the Sergeant assigned to the Investigations Division, no member will intentionally access, display, transfer, or store in any form, any electronic communication that is illegal to possess or which would reasonably be deemed offensive in any way. If any member of this department is assigned to routinely access such material in order to fulfill the requirements of an assignment, it will be with the authority of the Chief of Police.

C. **WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES**

Web pages and links to web pages controlled by Palos Verdes Estates PD shall not contain material that is for campaign related purposes. PVEPD web pages will not be used for personal purposes, advantage or gain. Therefore corporate and commercial logos will be generally prohibited.

D. **CELLULAR PHONES**

Employees that are issued cellular phones for their assignments are permitted to use the cell phone for personal calls as long as they do not exceed the allowable minutes per month. If an employee exceeds the allotment with personal calls, he will be expected to reimburse the City for that usage.

51.4 **PROHIBITED USES**

Department equipment shall not be used for inappropriate personal, social, or unofficial purposes. Inappropriate uses include, but are not limited to:

A. Transmission of sensitive or confidential information to unauthorized persons or organizations.

B. Transmission of obscene or harassing messages to any other individual.

C. Any illegal or unethical activities or any activity that could adversely affect the Department.

D. Installation of software or communications equipments components without approval from the Chief of Police.
E. Alterations, changes or relocation of Department equipment without prior approval from the COP.
F. Use of software not specifically licensed to the Department.
G. Alterations or deletion of hardware or software configurations without prior approval from the COP.
H. Viewing pornography by accessing an alternate mail site.
I. Retention of pornographic material on a City owned machine.

51.5 PASSWORDS
Employees are not to disclose their personal passwords to anyone. If an employee suspects that others know their password, then that employee shall change his password.

51.6 AUDITING
Periodic audits of electronic communications may be conducted by a supervisor to determine if Department policy is being followed, or if remedial training and/or disciplinary action is necessary.