

## Penndel Mental Health Center (PMHC) Internet and E-mail Usage Policy

To ensure all employees understand their responsibilities, the following guidelines are established for using agency e-mail and Internet access. Any improper use of the Internet or e-mail jeopardizes the agency's legal standing and will not be tolerated.

- A. **Acceptable uses of agency e-mail and Internet access.** The agency provides Internet and e-mail access for business usage. Every staff member has the responsibility to maintain and enhance the agency's public image and to use agency e-mail and access to the Internet in a manner that reflects well on the agency. The agency recognizes there will be occasional personal use on lunch breaks and during nonworking hours (with the approval of management), but this shall not be excessive or unreasonable. Personal use should not interfere with PMHC operations, nor should it cause any harm or embarrassment to PMHC.
- B. **Unacceptable uses of agency e-mail and Internet access.** The agency e-mail and Internet access may NOT be used for the following: chat rooms, pornographic material, messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual's race, age, disability, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference. No abusive, profane, or offensive language is to be transmitted or retransmitted. Solicitation of nonagency business, or any use of the agency e-mail or Internet for personal gain, is prohibited.
- C. **Communications.** Email and Internet use is a privilege, which means it can be revoked at any time. Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images that he/she places or sends over the agency's e-mail and Internet system. All messages communicated on the agency's e-mail and Internet system should contain the employee's name. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any messages that are not sent to them. PMHC requires that all communications sent by employees via the agency's e-mail and Internet system do not disclose any client/patient, confidential or proprietary agency information per HIPAA regulations. Departments are instructed to contact the IS Department if transmitting client information for HIPAA compliant procedure and support.
- D. **Downloading.** Employee users are prohibited from downloading software of any kind from the Internet or disk without prior approval from the IS Director or his/her designate. This precaution is taken to prevent computer viruses and other internet dangers from being transmitted through the agency's e-mail and Internet system and corrupting the system. If any known viruses are found, they must be reported to the IS Director immediately.
- E. **Copyright issues.** All employees must respect all copyright laws and may not copy, retrieve, modify, or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission of the owner of the copyright. If an employee has questions about any legal issues, he/she must speak with the IS Director or his/her designate before proceeding.

- F. **Security.** All messages created, sent, or retrieved over the agency's e-mail and Internet are the property of the agency. By using the agency's computers, all employees waive any right to privacy in the use of e-mail and Internet access and consent to access and disclosure of e-mail messages and Internet usage by the agency. PMHC has the right to monitor and will monitor usage patterns in its e-mail and Internet communications with or without prior notice to ensure compliance with internal policies and general management of information systems. Employee users must abide by all federal and state laws with regard to information sent through the Internet.
- G. **Violations.** Any employee who abuses the privilege of agency-facilitated access to e-mail or the Internet can be subject to corrective action up to and including termination. If necessary, the agency reserves the right to advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal violations. Failure to comply with laws and this agency policy will result in discipline up to and including termination.

## **E-MAIL/INTERNET USER AGREEMENT**

I have received a copy of Pennadel Mental Health Center's E-Mail and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that use of email and the Internet constitutes acceptance of this policy. I have read the above document and agree to follow all policies and procedures that are set forth herein. I further agree to abide by the standards set in the document for the duration of my employment with Pennadel Mental Health Center. Furthermore, I understand that this document can be amended at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director/Manager's Signature