

**Functional Series 500: Management Services
ADS Chapter 541 - Information Management**

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541.1 Authority

1. [The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995](#)
2. [Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130](#)
3. [5 USC Sec. 301](#)
4. [E.O. 13011, sec. 3\(a\)\(1\)](#)
5. USG Office of Ethics, "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," sec. 2635.702(a)

541.2 Objective

This chapter provides the Agency's [information management](#) framework to support its mission, goals, and objectives.

The personal use policy establishes [privileges](#) and additional responsibilities for USAID employees consistent with authorities affecting employees in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government regarding the use of U.S. government (USG) office equipment and related [information technology \(IT\)](#) resources. It recognizes employees as responsible individuals who are the key to making government more responsive to its citizens. It allows employees to use [Government office equipment](#) for non-government purposes when such use involves [minimal additional expense](#) to the government, is performed on the employee's non-work time, does not interfere with the mission or operations of a department or agency, or require the installation of software or hardware components that are not Agency standard or Y2K (year 2000) compliant, and does not violate the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.

Specific governing provisions on use of equipment and services, inappropriate [personal use](#) of such resources, proper representation, access management, privacy expectations, sanctions for misuse are addressed in 541.5.2.

541.3 Responsibility

1. Chief Information Officer (CIO): The CIO is designated by the Administrator with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The CIO serves in a leadership role with overall responsibility and authority for approving the Agency-wide information technology budget and has overall responsibility for planning and budgeting activities for information technology-related investments that benefit USAID.

2. Deputy CIO: The Deputy CIO is designated by the CIO and is responsible for assisting the CIO in meeting all management requirements of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996, OMB Circular A-130, and other related statutes and regulations, including the planning and budgeting components of those statutes and regulations.

3. Agency Bureaus/independent offices/overseas organizations: Heads of these organizations are responsible for the information content of Agency corporate information systems, consistent with the policies, standards, and guidelines for such systems established by the Deputy CIO.

Heads of the above organizations are responsible for developing, maintaining, and ensuring the quality of the content of corporate information systems in their areas of program responsibility; for ensuring that data and records contained in information systems are periodically evaluated and, as needed, improved for accuracy, completeness and reliability. Additionally, they are responsible for reporting to M/IRM all corporate information systems (both automated and manual) that are developed, maintained, and operated by each organization.

4. Supervisory managers are responsible for ensuring that information management (IM) resources are used appropriately for official Agency business, and within the authorized personal use policy guidance contained in the associated USAID mandatory reference cited in this chapter.

541.4 Definitions (See [ADS GLOSSARY](#))

Agency organizations
[employee non-work time](#)
Government office equipment
information management
information technology
minimal additional expense
personal use
privilege

541.5 POLICY

The statements contained within the .5 section of this ADS chapter are the official Agency policies and corresponding essential procedures.

541.5.1 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Agency information is a corporate resource and shall be managed as such through the life-cycle of the information which includes the collection, creation, processing, transmission, dissemination, maintenance, archiving, and disposal of the information.

E541.5.1 Information Management – N/A

541.5.1a AGENCY ORGANIZATIONS

Agency organizations shall be delegated authority, as appropriate, by the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Deputy CIO to undertake certain information management functions.

E541.5.1a Agency Organizations – N/A

541.5.2 PERSONAL USE OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IM) RESOURCES

In addition to using office equipment information technology resources related to performing official duties, employees are also authorized limited personal use of such Government resources as a conditional privilege. This personal use of information technology must not result in loss of employee productivity or interference with official duties. Moreover, such use must incur only minimal additional expense (*) to the government and is subject to restrictions in areas such as the following:

- Communications infrastructure costs; e.g., telephone charges, telecommunications traffic, etc.;
- Use of consumables in limited amounts; e.g., paper, ink, toner, etc.;
- General wear and tear on equipment;
- Data storage on storage devices;
- Transmission impacts with moderate e-mail message sizes such as e-mails with small attachments.

(*) Minimal additional expense may be defined further in any specific Agency directive that implements this policy.

E541.5.2 Personal Use of Information Management (IM) Resources

Supervisors and employees must refer to E541.5.2a through E541.5.2e regarding the appropriate and inappropriate uses of Agency information management technology resources.

E541.5.2a Inappropriate Personal Uses

Employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally in the workplace and to refrain from using Government office equipment for activities that are inappropriate. **Employees may, for example, make limited use under this policy of government office equipment to check their Thrift Savings Plan or other personal investments, or to seek employment, or communicate with a volunteer charity organization.** Misuse or inappropriate personal use of government office equipment includes the following:

- **Any use that generate more than minimal additional expense to the Government.**
- Any personal use that may cause congestion, delay, or disruption of service to any Government system or equipment, for example, greeting cards, video, sound or other large file attachments can degrade the performance of the entire network. "Push" technology on the Internet, and other continuous data streams that also degrade the performance of the entire network, are inappropriate uses.
- Using the Government systems as a staging ground or platform to gain unauthorized access to other systems.
- The creation, copying, transmission, or retransmission of chain letters or other unauthorized mass mailings regardless of the subject matter.
- **Use** for activities that are illegal, inappropriate, or offensive to fellow employees or the public. Such activities include, but are not limited to: hate speech, or material that ridicules others on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.
- The creation, download, viewing, storage, copying, or transmission of sexually explicit or sexually oriented materials.
- The creation, download, viewing, storage, copying, or transmission of materials related to illegal gambling, illegal weapons, terrorist activities, and any other illegal activities or activities otherwise prohibited, etc.

- Engaging in any outside fund-raising activity, endorsing any product or service, participating in any lobbying activity, or engaging in any prohibited partisan political activity.
- Use for posting Agency information to external newsgroups, bulletin boards or other public forums without authority. This includes any use **at odds with the Agency's mission or positions, or any use that creates** the perception that the communication was made in one's official capacity as a Federal Government employee, unless appropriate Agency approval has been obtained.
- The unauthorized acquisition, use, reproduction, transmission, or distribution of any controlled information including computer software and data, that includes privacy information, copyrighted, trademarked or material with other intellectual property rights (beyond fair use), proprietary data, or export controlled software or data.
- Use for commercial purposes or in support of "for-profit" activities or in support of other outside employment or business activity (e.g. consulting for pay, sales or administration of business transactions, sale of goods or services).
- **Use to assist relatives, friends, or other persons in commercial or "for profit" activities or other outside employment or business activity.**

E541.5.2b Proper Representation

It is the responsibility of employees to ensure that they are not giving the false impression that they are acting in an official capacity when they are using government office equipment for non-government purposes. If there is expectation that such a personal use may be interpreted to represent the Agency, then an adequate disclaimer must be used. One acceptable disclaimer is – "The contents of this message are mine personally and do not reflect any position of the Government or my agency."

The Standards of Conduct states - "an employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office in a manner that could reasonably be construed to imply that his agency or the Government sanctions or endorses his personal activities." (Section 2635.702(a) of "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," United States Government, Office of Ethics).

E541.5.2c Access Management

Employees have no inherent right to use Government office equipment for personal use. Therefore, the Agency will establish appropriate controls to ensure that the equipment is used appropriately.

E541.5.2d Privacy Expectations

USAID employees do not have a right, nor may they have an expectation, of privacy while using any Government office equipment at any time, including accessing the Internet, using e-mail. To the extent that employees wish that their private activities remain private, they must avoid using the Agency office equipment such as their computer, the Internet, or e-mail. By using Government office equipment, executive branch employees imply their consent to monitoring, recording, or disclosing the contents of any files or information maintained or pass-through Government office equipment. Any use of government communications resources is made with the understanding that such use is generally not secure, is not private, and is not anonymous.

System managers do employ monitoring tools to detect improper use. Electronic communications may be disclosed within the Agency to employees who have a need to know in the performance of their duties. Agency officials, such as system managers and supervisors, may access any electronic communications.

E541.5.2e Sanctions for Misuse

Unauthorized or improper use of Government office equipment may result in loss of use or limitations on use of equipment, disciplinary or adverse actions criminal penalties and/or employees being held financially liable for the cost of improper use.

541.6 Supplementary Reference - N/A

541.7 Mandatory Reference

[Model "Limited Personal Use Policy" of Government Equipment- U.S. CIO Council \(May 19, 1999\)](#)

Glossary Terms for 541

Agency organizations

In USAID/Washington (USAID/W) this includes bureaus and independent offices. Overseas this includes USAID missions, USAID Offices, USAID Sections of Embassy, Offices for Multi-country Programs, Offices for Multi-country Services, etc. (See also Major Functional Series 100).
(Chapters 541, 542, 543)

employee non-work time

Employee non-work time means times when the employee is not otherwise expected to be addressing official business. Employees may for example - use government office equipment during their own off-duty hours such as before or after a workday (subject to local office hours), lunch periods, authorized breaks, or weekends or holidays (if their duty station is normally available at such times).
(Chapter 541)

Government office equipment

Government office equipment and information technology includes, but is not limited to: personal computers and related peripheral equipment and software, library resources, telephones, facsimile machines, photocopiers, office supplies, Internet connectivity and access to internet services, and e-mail. This list is provided to show examples of office equipment as envisioned by this policy. Executive Branch managers may include additional types of office equipment.
(Chapter 541)

Information Management

The planning, control, and operations of the resources, methodology, and tools required to properly capture, store, and deliver information to Agency employees in a timely, accurate, and economical manner.
(Chapter 541)

information technology (IT)

Any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the automatic acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission or reception of data or information by the executive agency. For purposes of the preceding sentence, equipment within an executive agency is associated with corporate or business operations which (i) requires the use of such equipment or (ii), requires the use to a significant extent, of such equipment in the performance of a service or the furnishing of a product.

- IT includes computers, ancillary equipment, software, firmware, and similar procedures and services (including support services), and related resources.

- IT does not include equipment acquired by a Federal contractor incidental to the performance of a Federal contract. IT does not include program-funded IT unless it is used and controlled by USAID. (Chapters 541-551)

minimal additional expense

Minimal additional expense means that employee's personal use of government office equipment is limited to those situations where the government is already providing equipment or services and the employee's use of such equipment or services will not result in any additional expense to the government or the use will result in only normal wear and tear or the use of small amounts of electricity, ink, toner, or paper. Examples of minimal additional expenses include, making a few photocopies, using a computer printer to printout a few pages of material, making occasional brief personal phone calls (within Agency policy and 41 CFR 101-35.201), infrequently sending personal e-mail messages, or limited use of the Internet for personal reasons. (Chapter 541)

personal use

Personal use means activity that is conducted for purposes other than accomplishing official or otherwise authorized activity. Executive Branch employees are specifically prohibited from using government office equipment to maintain or support a personal private business. Examples of this prohibition include employees using a government computer and Internet connection to run a travel business or investment service. (Chapter 541)

privilege

Privilege means, in the context of ADS 541, that the Executive Branch of the Federal Government is extending the opportunity to its employees to use government property for personal use in an effort to create a more supportive work environment. However, this policy does not create right to use government office equipment for non-government purposes. Nor does the privilege extend to modifying such equipment, including loading personal software or making configuration changes. (Chapter 541)