Extension Information Technology Policy | May 2020

This is a general policy statement for Information Technology guidance in Extension. The Extension IT group is responsible for IT-purchased equipment, help desk, websites, software, and services across a wide array of platforms and areas of interest. This document is not intended to be comprehensive resource for information but a guide to finding the appropriate policies and help on technology issues for Extension field staff and administration.

SUPERSEDING POLICY:

Where the campus policy is in place for specific technology issues, that policy is superseding and is considered official Extension policy. The following are two guiding documents that inform the remainder of this document:

[Campus Policy on Information Security](#)

[Campus Policy on Appropriate Use of Computers and Network Systems](#)

HELP DESK POLICY:

Extension IT runs a help desk for technology or related problems, questions, or issues. The help desk will respond to phone calls, emails, or web requests Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5pm. The help desk techs may not have an immediate answer for your incoming ticket, but will acknowledge and pursue your issue or find the appropriate party who may solve the issue. Please communicate with the tech by replying to the generated email from our ticketing system, **RT**. For additional, unrelated, or follow-up issues it is best practice to enter a new ticket.

To reach the help desk by email: ExtensionIT-Help@illinois.edu

To reach the help desk by phone: 217-333-9025

To reach the help desk by web submission: https://request.extension.illinois.edu

Please do not contact any of the techs directly but contact the help desk via the methods outlined above.

Concerning Dell: If a Dell computer is determined to have a hardware problem, Extension IT may advise staff to contact Dell and get warranty assistance. The warranty requires Dell to dispatch an onsite tech after they have performed diagnostics with your cooperation. Should a repair be required, do request the onsite tech and do not follow the option to have your computer shipped to a repair center.

HARDWARE POLICY:

We have a goal of providing every Extension staff member with modern, supportable, and secure computing hardware so that every staff member is able to do their job efficiently and to the best of their ability. To that end, Extension centrally funds a large portion of annually purchased hardware and peripheral equipment for use in field offices, campus, and remote locations. **Full time employees** with a majority Extension appointment are eligible for a centrally funded computer (laptop or desktop) once

every four years where funds are available. **New positions** created in Extension are eligible for hardware purchases. If you create and hire staff in a new position, please contact the help desk at least 3 weeks in advance of the employee starting. For vacated positions that refill with **new hires**, do reserve the departed staff member's equipment for the new hire's use. Likewise, please contact the help desk at least 1 week in advance of the new employee starting.

Equipment Replacement Cycles (ERC) are coordinated annually through the Unit County Directors for field staff and Technology Services for administration and affiliated groups (EEC, SeaGrant, etc.) This cycle includes: desktops, laptops, iPads, monitors and periferals.

Help desk supported hardware includes IT-purchased Dell desktops, laptops, or tablets running our exclusive Dell Extension Windows 10 operating system. Support also includes IT-purchased Apple iPads. Support does not include desktops or laptops running Apple, Linux, Unix, or comparable variants.

Inventory and surplus: All offices are to follow the [University policies on inventory and surplusing equipment](). Regardless of the source of funds for the purchase of equipment, it remains the local offices' responsibility to inventory and eventually surplus equipment used by its staff.

Computers from Surplus: Extension staff should not retrieve computers from surplus for any reason. Surplus machines have been securely wiped per University policy and have no supported OS or software installed and are not allowed on the Extension network. Machines from surplus are past the end of their useful life and often have undisclosed hardware issues, for that reason, Extension Tech Services will not support any computer sourced from surplus. If you have computers that came from surplus, they should be securely wiped and returned to surplus.

SOFTWARE POLICY:

We support a small portfolio of software across all supported hardware. Software support includes: Windows 10, program purchasing/licensing, installation, and troubleshooting. Software support is generally limited to commonly available free software and products available to campus staff by [Webstore](). For training, see the **Training Policy** section of this document**.**

Supported software includes but is *not limited* to:

- Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Access, Skype for Business
- Adobe Acrobat, Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere, Audition
- Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Oracle Java, Adobe Flash,
- Apple iTunes
- Zoom.us
- Box.com
- Canva.com
- Intuit Quicken
- Cisco AnyConnect (VPN)
- Malwarebytes Anti-Malware, Windows Defender

TRAINING POLICY:

We support field staff by providing training, in-person and remote, as well as maintain access and guidance to training resources that are available for campus and College of ACES staff. Training on software, hardware, security, and emerging issues in technology or education is provided on request. If you have training needs, please contact the Director of Information of Technology directly to plan with session topics and specific dates in mind.

Ongoing training for staff is captured in various formats and can be found on the Extension portal under both Information Technology and Professional Development.

Campus training opportunities can be found:

FAST3 Training Services - https://techservices.illinois.edu/services/training-services-fast-3

Lynda.com - https://web.uillinois.edu/Lynda

We also offer a Lynda Book Club training session once a month. The Book Club features a software to study via Lynda courses and the hour session usually entails a demonstration of tips and answers. Previous recorded sessions are available here.

WEBSITE POLICY:

We provide support for all existing websites and business applications under the [XYZ].extension.illinois.edu and [XYZ].extension.uiuc.edu domain names. Site support in this context consists of server hosting, bug fixes, web stats, and providing access to content or provide content updates through the help desk ticketing system. All requests for website support should follow the outlined help desk method above.

Requests for websites: Extension staff can download and fill out the website request form to start the process for a new website. New websites must be approved by the program leader for the content area and county director or regional director of the requesting staff member(s). Website requests must demonstrate that the suggested content does not already exist on the Extension domain, and must clearly outline the purpose, goals, audience, functions, and expected lifetime of the requested site.

Requests for access: Website content or code access can be requested as outlined above. Put in a help desk ticket with the specific request along with an approval in writing from the program leader, principle investigator, or county director responsible for the website in question.

Requests for new features: If a website is not meeting functional needs, staff can request new functions or features by using the help desk ticketing system. Request for new features will be evaluated by the web development team for impact, ease of implementation, and overall workload and will communicate will all stakeholders before any new feature is approved for development.

Mobile App development: Extension web development team does not program apps at this time. If you need an iOS or Andriod app developed, the web development team will act as your consulting project manager and work with you to secure a 3rd party app developer, like AITS.

3ʳᵈ party website development: We recognize that Extension web development can't meet all project development needs and deadlines all the time. If you have a project that needs immediate development, Extension Web Development will act as your consulting project managers to help you find a 3ʳᵈ party web developer for your project. You will be required to secure funding and follow the [technical and branding requirements guides here](#). Regardless of development source, websites must conform to standards for WCAG 2.0 Accessibility, University of Illinois and Extension web standards and branding guidelines, and on premise hosting and technical support models.

NETWORK POLICY:

We support all field offices' local connection in cooperation with various Internet Service Providers… expected performance here

ISP and office moves: When switching Internet Service Providers or moving office locations, Units are expected to contact Extension IT for consultation at least a month in advance of the change. For ISP changes, we will need to evaluate the available providers in your locations and will provide feedback on the best course of action to take.

For office location moves, we will provide the same feedback as an ISP move as well as evaluate the IT needs of the new building in regards to internal wiring, WiFi coverage needs, and location of IT equipment. IT does not move IT equipment (computers, monitors, keyboards, etc.) from the previous location to the new location, but will install and configure all network equipment needed at the new location.

USER ACTION ITEMS:

In summation of this document, we thank you for serving Extension and are dedicated to help you doing your work to the best of your ability. The following is a list of action items for each policy as to how you can help us help you!

- Contact the help desk
- Send information for new hires one week in advance
- Maintain your inventory and surplus
- Send requests for software installs
- Use and request the online and in-person trainings available
- Use our websites and request fixes and features
- Report any network failures and expected moves