

# General Order

## Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

May 17, 2022

NO.

400-19

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 400-19, dated November 14, 2016

**SUBJECT: COMPUTER REGULATIONS**

### POLICY

Only hardware and software owned by the City of Houston and approved by the department's Office of Technology Services shall be installed and used with department computers. No employee shall install or use any personal or privately owned hardware, components, or software with any department computer. Only the Office of Technology Services may approve any exception to this policy.

This General Order applies to all employees.

### DEFINITIONS

**Computer.** For purposes of this General Order, computer includes, but is not limited to, the software and hardware of any personal computer, laptop computer, tablet computer, smartphone, mobile computing device (MCD), or any other device that is owned or controlled by the department and is capable of accessing network or Internet resources.

## **1 PROCUREMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND REPAIR OF COMPUTERS**

The Office of Technology Services (OTS) is responsible for monitoring and managing all computers that access computer systems and for maintaining the integrity of HPD's computer network and related systems. This includes the following:

- a. Establishing purchasing guidelines for computer hardware, software, and supplies.
- b. Establishing guidelines for the creation of internal databases and software platforms.
- c. Maintaining computer hardware and software.
- d. Servicing and arranging all repairs for computer hardware and components.
- e. Establishing regulations regarding the use of computer hardware and software.
- f. Managing funding for routine maintenance and repair of computers and hardware.
- g. Maintaining inventory of all computer hardware, components, and software as they are received and issued to the department's organizational units.
- h. Establishing security requirements for control of the physical computer equipment and stored data.

- i. Establishing and maintaining a list of approved computer hardware, software, components, and supplies.

Any division or section planning to relocate shall notify OTS in order to effect the safe and proper movement of computer equipment. The divisional technology coordinator shall make this notification to OTS as soon as possible to avoid unnecessary delays or interruptions in computer service. Equipment shall be moved only by those persons designated by OTS. Non-designated employees shall not move any HPD-owned computer equipment.

Unless certified in advance by OTS, equipment shall not be placed onto the HPD network, nor shall any software or other equipment or device be used on the HPD network. No alterations to any computer hardware, except those made by OTS, shall be allowed. The department shall not accept donated computer hardware, software, or components without the prior review and approval by OTS and authorization of the Chief of Police.

Any problems encountered with a computer should be immediately reported to that division's technology coordinator. If the problem cannot be resolved, the Service Desk for OTS should be contacted.

### **Inventory**

Division commanders shall record and maintain a detailed inventory of all computer hardware, software, component resources, and their physical locations, and ensure OTS is notified when their division no longer needs any computer hardware or software.

OTS shall:

- a. Affix a department inventory control number tag to each unit or component as required. The tag's number shall be recorded on the inventory control form and forwarded to the user's work unit for its records.
- b. Assemble, test, and install the equipment at the request of the unit receiving the equipment.
- c. Move available hardware or software within the department to areas where they are needed after being advised the equipment is no longer needed by the current user.
- d. Record any movement or replacement of computers or computer systems, including software, in the Enterprise Management System (EAM).

### **Creation, Procurement, or Repair**

Individual users shall not arrange for creation, procurement, service, or repair of any equipment or software, including through grant funding or donations, without first receiving authorization from OTS. Requests for routine repair and restoration of existing technology shall be directed to the OTS Service Desk. OTS may replace such computer equipment as part of its annual replacement cycles if requested by the division prior to the cycle.

To submit a request for creation, procurement, or non-routine repair of computer hardware or software:

- a. Employees shall send an email request with information to their division commander. The information required in the request includes the division name, item(s) being requested, justification, budget information if applicable, contact name and telephone number, and if the request has a grant or special deadline to expend funding.
- b. To indicate approval, the division commander shall place the word "approved" on the email and forward it to the concerned command office.
- c. To indicate approval, the command office shall place the word "approved" on the email and return the email to the originating division commander.
- d. The divisional technology coordinator shall create a request through the BOSSDesk Ticket System to initiate the project.

Any questions may be directed to personnel at the OTS Service Desk. OTS shall then evaluate the request and contact the concerned division for next steps.

All requests for the purchase of computer hardware, software, and related supplies, with the exception of toner cartridges, CDs, and DVDs, shall be sent to OTS for approval to ensure the items meet department standards. Divisions may obtain flash drives through the Office of Planning & Data Governance. OTS shall maintain a current source list for divisions to use when needed supplies must be purchased from outside vendors. To reduce processing time, employees may utilize the procurement catalogue located on the department's Intranet Portal for ordering standardized equipment and software. After completing the order form, requests shall be submitted via the BOSSDesk Ticket System.

Any computer hardware or software replaced through enhancement or upgrade shall be returned to OTS for disposal in accordance with salvage procedures or placement elsewhere in the department.

## **2 SIMULTANEOUS CONNECTIONS**

Unless otherwise authorized by OTS, no computer shall be simultaneously connected to the police computer network and any network connected outside the Police Department. Such simultaneous connections are a serious breach of computer security and violate federal and state law. Supervisors and commanders shall ensure unauthorized and uncontrolled simultaneous connections do not occur.

Computers or fax machines that have both a modem and a network connection shall be secured against unauthorized access.

## **3 DAMAGE TO COMPUTERS**

Employees shall be held accountable for any laptop or MCD assigned to them and for verifying the computer is in good working order before it leaves the police facility. Laptops or MCDs not working properly shall be immediately returned to radio room personnel for exchange or further instructions.

When laptops or MCDs are not checked out for field use, radio room personnel shall inspect and ensure they are in good working order.

Radio room personnel shall physically inspect each laptop or MCD for obvious damage before accepting its return. If a laptop or MCD is returned with new damage or is not properly working, radio room personnel shall immediately report the situation to the on-duty administrative sergeant who shall determine if an investigation is warranted.

If an issued MCD malfunctions, the employee shall obtain a replacement MCD. Any problems encountered with MCD equipment should be immediately reported to the division MCD training instructor for the appropriate shift. If the problem cannot be resolved or there is an equipment failure, the OTS, Mobile Technology Shop should be contacted for an appointment to make repairs. If no personnel are available to make repairs to the MCD unit, the patrol vehicle shall be placed out of service until such repairs are made to the MCD unit by a service technician.

Employees operating computers shall exercise reasonable care of the equipment. Employees shall be held responsible for any damage resulting from intentional abuse or negligence (e.g., spilled drinks or food, paper clips). Employees who cause damage to computers, including by unauthorized alteration, shall be held responsible, as stated in General Order 400-18, **Responsibility for City and Other Government Property**. Funding for repairs or replacement resulting from negligence by the individual user is the responsibility of the individual or the individual's work unit.



Troy Finner  
Chief of Police