

# USE OF UHD AND STATE OF TEXAS RESOURCES

## USE OF STATE-OWNED PROPERTY

As a general rule, the personal use of any UHD property or asset is prohibited. Incidental personal use of the UHD System e-mail, a state telephone to make a local telephone call, or the Internet is permissible provided the use:

- Complies with applicable UHD policies,
- Does not result in additional cost to UHD, and
- Does not impact available information technology resources.

Direct any questions you might have about the use of UHD property to your supervisor.

### Reference:

UH – Downtown Policy Statement:

01.A.11 – [Ethical and Legal Use of University Property](#)

08.A.07 - [Computer Use Policy](#)

01.C.01 – [Use of Space and Facilities](#)

**Question:** I am a volunteer for a charitable organization in Houston. Can I use the computer in my office and the office copy machine to produce material for the organization?

**Answer:** No. While UHD encourages employee involvement in the community, resources in your UHD office should not be used for personal reasons.

**Question:** My son calls me each day when he gets home from school. Since it's a personal call on a UHD owned phone, am I breaking any rules?

**Answer:** No. As a general rule, the personal use of any UHD property or asset is prohibited; however, incidental personal use of e-mail, telephone, or the Internet that complies with applicable UHD policies, and does not result in additional cost is okay.

**Question:** May I use my computer to look at web sites for personal reasons?

**Answer:** Maybe. Any use, even if it is incidental use or infrequent use, that adversely impacts your job performance, work or productivity is not allowed. Of course any use that violates the law is not allowed. UHD has a limited capacity for Internet use. Your personal use, if excessive, could restrict legitimate business uses of the Internet for other UHD employees, and ultimately resulting in additional cost for the University. Personal use should be kept to a minimum.

**Question:** I am a faculty member. May I use a University computer to write a textbook/software from which I and not the University will profit?

**Answer:** Yes. Writing of professional articles, textbooks, or computer programs is considered part of a faculty member's obligation toward effective teaching and scholarship and public service. Writing a definitive text or research article furthers the interest and reputation of the University as well as the individual.

## COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Employees who use software licensed to UHD and UH System must abide by applicable software license agreements and may copy licensed software only as permitted by the license. Direct any questions you have about applicable software license agreements to your supervisor or Information Technology – User Support Services at (713) 221-3000 or (713) 221-8031.

### Reference:

UH – Downtown Policy Statement

08.A.04 – [Information Systems Security and Access Policy](#)

**Question:** My department does not have enough money to have a copy of a specialized program on every computer. I copied the program from someone else's computer and put it on mine. Is that okay?

**Answer:** No, it is not okay. This may be a violation of federal copyright laws. Check with the UHD Help Desk at (713) 221-3000 or (713) 221-8031 to determine whether a cost effective site license is available for this program.

## INFORMATION SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

UHD information resources may be used only for official state purposes. Every UH System employee has a responsibility for maintaining the security and confidentiality of UH System's information resources and must comply with information security policies and procedures. An employee may access confidential and sensitive information only as permitted by contract, state or federal law or regulation, scope of employment, or approved UH System/UHD policy. Requests for documents under the [Texas Public Information Act](#) should be submitted in writing to the Office of General Counsel (OGC). Because a timeline is triggered when the written request is received, the request must be forwarded to OGC the same day through the appropriate administrator as follows:

- Employment Services and Operations at (713) 221-8072 for employee information,
- The Registrar at (713) 221-8136 for student information,
- Business Affairs at (713) 221-8604 for financial information, or
- The Compliance Officer at (713) 222-5340 for all other information.

**Reference:**

UH System Administrative Memorandum

02.A.31 - [Access to and Maintenance of Staff Personnel Files](#)

UH – Downtown Policy Statement

03.A.22 – [Access to Student Academic Records/Information](#)

08.A.04 – [Information Systems Security and Access Policy](#)

**Question:** Someone asked me for contact information for all College of Business majors so they can send them a free subscription to the Wall Street Journal. Can I use my access to the student records system to provide this information?

**Answer:** No. All requests for electronically stored information must go through the designated application owner, for example:

- The Registrar for information stored in the student records system,
- Employee Services and Operations for information stored in the employee records system, or
- Business Affairs for information stored in the financial data system.

Contact the Information Technology Compliance office at (713) 221-8111 if you have questions regarding the application owner.

## COMPUTER SYSTEM ACCESS AND PASSWORDS

UHD employees may not disclose or share computer codes or passwords, and are responsible for supporting password security standards, including the use of strong passwords, the protection of passwords, and the practice of changing passwords for all accounts at least once every six months. Examples of relevant best practices for password protection include:

- Using more than 6 characters for a password,
- Choosing passwords that are not in the dictionary, are hard to guess and include special characters, and
- Refraining from writing down or storing passwords electronically.

Employees may not access computers, systems or networks without authorization.

**Reference:**

UH – Downtown Policy Statement

08.A.04 – [Information Systems Security and Access Policy](#)

**Question:** When I was out yesterday with a cold, I called the office and asked another UHD employee to check my e-mail and calendar; however, to do this, I had to reveal my password. Was this wrong?

**Answer:** Yes. It is a violation of UH System policy to disclose your computer password. Computer passwords should be considered highly confidential and should never be disclosed to anyone. Data that is protected by passwords would be vulnerable to damage, theft, or disclosure. In emergency situations, a unit manager can contact Employment Services and Operations at (713) 221-8060 to request this type of access.

If you have a computer and an Internet connection, you can access your Outlook calendars and e-mail from home. [Go to the log on and access your account.](#)

**Question:** My neighbor asked me to look up some information on her daughter-in-law using the student information system. Can I do this for her?

**Answer:** No. You may not access or disclose confidential and sensitive information outside of your scope of work as a UHD employee. Your neighbor can go through the UHD Registrar at (713) 221-8136 for the release of allowable student information.

## PURCHASING

No employee may expend UHD funds for any purchase unless the person is authorized to make the purchase in accordance with all institutional purchasing procedures, including procedures concerning Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB). The Purchasing Department ((713) 221-8062) has the authority to purchase supplies, materials, services, and equipment for UHD.

Purchases from or sales to an employee of supplies, materials, services, equipment, or property must have the prior approval of the Vice President for Administration and Finance, except purchases made at a public auction.

### Reference:

UH – Downtown Policy Statement  
05.C.01– [Procurement - General](#)

**Question:** If I reimburse my department, can I take advantage of a vendor's discounted System Administration price to buy an item for my personal use?

**Answer:** No. Discounted prices exclude tax for UH System. For employees to forego sales tax would jeopardize the tax-exempt status of UHD.

**Question:** Our department wants to purchase new furniture. Can we go to any store and purchase the furniture and seek reimbursement.

**Answer:** No. UH System has strict guidelines for purchasing. Purchases over a certain amount must be placed for bid and should include HUB vendors. When in doubt, contact Purchasing at (713) 221-8602.