

Security Policy on Portable Computing Devices Policy Number: 680

Portable computing devices may enhance productivity, but without proper management and security controls, they can expose the County of Cottonwood to security breaches and significant legal compliance issues. Portable computing devices are prone to loss and theft and are commonly used outside a secure environment, making data residing on them vulnerable to attack.

Definitions:

Portable Computing Device: Laptop personal computers, tablet personal computers, personal digital assistants or other such devices capable of storing data and/or connecting to a County network or system. This definition includes memory sticks and other flash memory devices.

“Not Public” data: Any data collected, created, maintained or disseminated by a county agency which has a classification other than public. This includes confidential, private, nonpublic or protected nonpublic data as those terms are defined in the Minnesota Governmental Data Practices Act or any other relevant state or federal statute.

The County of Cottonwood shall implement controls to reduce theft and loss of portable computing devices and data stored on them.

1. Users shall store “Not Public” data in secure County locations.
2. Users who have a business need to remotely access “Not Public” data shall use a secure remote access method provided by the County of Cottonwood.
3. Users shall refrain from storing “Not Public” data on a portable computing device unless there is an authorized business need. This storage should be on a temporary basis only and encrypted using approved encryption techniques if possible. Written authorization (see authorization form in “Forms” section of Personnel Policy) will be given by the department head, or in the case of a department head, by the County Board.
4. All portable computing devices used to store “Not Public” data shall be secured with a strong password and protected with appropriate physical security.
5. Department heads shall communicate to staff the appropriate classifications of all data, as defined by the Minnesota Data Practices Act or other legal guidelines.
6. Department heads shall communicate procedures to report all losses of portable computing devices.
7. The County shall provide physical security resources to safeguard portable computing devices that will be used to store “Not Public” data. Examples include, but are not limited to: cable locks for laptop computers and desks or cabinets with locks.
8. Define procedures to justify when there is a legitimate business need to store “Not Public” data on a portable computing device.
9. Users must not store “Not Public” data on a portable computing device unless there is an authorized business need.
10. Users must remove “Not Public” data temporarily stored on a portable computing device after the business use is completed.
11. Users must never leave a portable computing device unattended in an insecure area or vehicle.
12. Users must report theft or loss of portable computing devices immediately according to County procedures.
13. This policy shall apply to all individuals or entities employed by or working on the behalf of the County of Cottonwood, including those who provide technical support for these devices.