

THE POSTAL SUPERVISOR

USPS limits personal use of office equipment

Supervisors and managers would do well to familiarize themselves with Management Instruction (MI) EL-660-2000-5, issued April 25. The MI, which is printed here, also may be found on the NAPS bulletin board:

Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment

This management instruction provides postal policy and procedures concerning employees' limited use of office equipment, including information technology, for personal reasons and purposes.

Limited Personal Use Policy

Management at each Postal Service employment installation may permit employees to make limited personal use of postal office equipment, including information technology.

Definition

Limited personal use of postal office equipment, including information technology, means occasional use for personal reasons:

- that is of limited duration, length or size, and that does not interfere with the transaction of official Postal Service business; and
- that results in only minimal, if any, additional expense to the Postal Service, and/or minimal wear and tear on postal office equipment, and/or has only a small-to-moderate transmission impact, and/or requires only small amounts of consumable office products (such as ink, paper, toner, computer memory, etc.).

Some examples of limited personal use include: making a few photocopies; making occasional, short telephone calls

that result in little or no cost; sending an occasional, short facsimile; or, sending a brief e-mail message.

Limitations

Limited personal use of postal office equipment must *not*:

- reduce employee productivity or interfere with official postal business;
- be for the purpose of maintaining or promoting a personal or private business;
- include "Push" technology or continuous data streams;
- be for any illegal purpose, including, but not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to other systems or the dissemination of any discriminatory or hate materials or speech;
- include chain letters or other unauthorized mass mailings;
- be in relation to sexually explicit or sexually oriented materials;
- refer or relate to illegal gambling, illegal weapons and/or terrorist activities;
- be for the purpose of fund-raising, endorsing any product or service, lobbying, or participating in any prohibited partisan political activity; or
- result in the disclosure of any postal information that is not otherwise public.

Office Equipment

The office equipment governed by this policy includes, but is not limited to: personal computers; printers and modems; computer software (including Web browsers); telephones; facsimile machines; photocopiers; consumable office products; and office supplies.

Limitation on Privacy

Employees have neither a right to, nor any expectation of, privacy while using postal office equipment at any time. By using postal office equipment for per-

sonal reasons or purposes, employees imply their consent to the disclosure of the contents of any files or information maintained or passed through that equipment and the monitoring and/or recording of such use, at any time, with or without cause.

Sanctions for Misuse

Use of postal office equipment in violation or excess of the limited personal use permitted by this policy may result in limitations on future use, administrative action, criminal penalty, and/or personal financial liability. ■



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