CORNELL UNIVERSITY
POLICY LIBRARY

Security of Information Technology Resources

POLICY STATEMENT

Cornell University expects all individuals using information technology devices connected to the Cornell network to take appropriate measures to manage the security of those devices. In addition, the university establishes roles and responsibilities surrounding the technical procedures required for the security of these devices.

REASON FOR POLICY

The university must preserve its information technology resources, comply with applicable laws and regulations, and comply with other university or unit policy regarding protection and preservation of data. Given the distributed nature of information technologies and complexity of managing the security of information technology devices, the university wishes to set forth a foundation for the alignment of roles and responsibilities with regard to specific technical procedures.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

– All units of the university, excluding the Weill Cornell Medical College

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

– All members of the university community

WEB ADDRESS FOR THIS POLICY

– This policy: www.dfa.cornell.edu/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/informationtech/resources.cfm
– University Policy Office: www.policy.cornell.edu
POLICY 5.4.1
Security of Information Technology Resources

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RELATED RESOURCES

University Policies and Documents
University Policy 4.6, Standards of Ethical Conduct
University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship
University Policy 5.1, Responsible Use of Information Technology Resources
University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents
University Policy 5.8, Authentication to Information Technology Resources
University Policy 6.11.3, Employee Discipline
Campus Code of Conduct
Code of Academic Integrity
Cornell University’s Policy on Abuse of Computers and Network Systems
Securing your Computer

External Documentation
Financial Services Modernization Act
Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA)
New York State Penal Law Article 156 Offenses Involving Computers
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Direct any general questions about this policy to your college or unit administrative office. If you have questions about specific issues, contact the following offices.

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<th>E-mail/Web Address</th>
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<td><strong>Initial Contact for Questions</strong></td>
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<td>Unit-specific</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Clarification</strong></td>
<td>Director of IT Policy</td>
<td>(607) 254-3584</td>
<td><a href="mailto:it-policies@cornell.edu">it-policies@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.it.cornell.edu/policies/">www.it.cornell.edu/policies/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Practices for Configuring and Securing IT Devices</strong></td>
<td>Director of IT Security</td>
<td>(607) 255-8421</td>
<td><a href="http://www.it.cornell.edu/security/computer/">www.it.cornell.edu/security/computer/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computers and Network Systems</strong></td>
<td>Chief Information Officer and Vice President for Information Technologies</td>
<td>(607) 255-8054</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cio.cornell.edu">www.cio.cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Issues</strong></td>
<td>Office of University Counsel</td>
<td>(607) 255-5125</td>
<td>counsel.cornell.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security of Network Systems</strong></td>
<td>Director of IT Security</td>
<td>(607) 255-8421</td>
<td><a href="mailto:security-services@cornell.edu">security-services@cornell.edu</a></td>
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<td>confluence.cornell.edu/display/OIT/IT+S</td>
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<td>ecurity+Office</td>
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## Security of Information Technology Resources

These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy.

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Security Notice</td>
<td>A memo that identifies operational or systemic information technology (IT) deficiencies or omissions that have the potential to pose risk to the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-loss Incident Response Team (DIRT)</td>
<td>A committee that determines and guides the institution's response to the loss or exposure of university data. It is composed of representatives of University Counsel, Risk Management and Insurance, University Communications, Audit, IT Security, IT Policy, and is chaired by the Chief Information Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Security Incident</td>
<td>Electronic activities that result in the damage to or misuse of the Cornell network or a device connected to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewall</td>
<td>Hardware or software that tightly controls and manages the connections allowed to networks or IT devices that it protects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology (IT) Device</td>
<td>Any device involved with the processing, storage, or forwarding of information making use of the Cornell IT infrastructure or attached to the Cornell network. These devices include, but are not limited to, laptop computers, desktop computers, personal digital assistants, servers, and network devices such as routers or switches, and printers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology (IT) Resources</td>
<td>The full set of IT devices (personal computers, printers, servers, networking devices, etc.) involved in the processing, storage, and transmission of information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Support Provider</td>
<td>An individual with principal responsibility for the installation, configuration, security, and ongoing maintenance of an IT device (e.g., system administrator or network administrator).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software Patch</td>
<td>Software that is distributed to fix a specific set of problems or vulnerabilities in such things as computer programs or operating systems. A computer vendor will usually distribute a patch as a replacement for or an insertion in compiled code within computer operating systems or applications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>A college, department, program, research center, business service center, or other operating unit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Head</td>
<td>The individual with administrative responsibility for a unit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Security Liaison</td>
<td>The person whom the unit head designates as the primary contact for the IT Security Director.</td>
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<tr>
<td>User</td>
<td>Any individual who uses an IT device such as a computer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virus</td>
<td>A computer program that typically hides in the background and replicates itself from one IT device to another by attaching itself to existing programs or parts of the operating system. A virus often automatically spreads to other IT devices via the sharing of computer media, mail attachments, or website transfers.</td>
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### RESPONSIBILITIES – ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS

The major responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy are as follows:

<table>
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<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IT Security Director</td>
<td>Develop a comprehensive security program that includes risk assessment, best practices, education, and training.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identify, analyze, resolve, and report Cornell electronic security incidents.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assist or lead electronic security incident resolution for the university and individual units, and specifically in the Data-loss Incident</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Response Team (DIRT) process.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Issue critical security notices to unit heads and security liaisons.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop, implement, and support university-level security monitoring and analysis.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support and verify compliance with federal, state, and local legislation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Support Provider</td>
<td>Maintain knowledge of information technology (IT) devices under his or her control through identification and understanding of their usage.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Follow safe security practices when administering IT devices under his or her control.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Follow electronic security incident reporting requirements in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Head</td>
<td>Assume final responsibility for the security of IT devices within his or her unit.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identify a security liaison.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implement unit security programs consistent with this policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit IT Manager</td>
<td>Consult with the Associate Chief Information Officer (CIO) regarding campus IT issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Security Liaison</td>
<td>Act as the unit point of contact with IT security director.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implement a security program consistent with requirements of this policy (for example, the implementation of risk assessment, best practices,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>education, and training) and in keeping with the specific IT security needs of his or her unit.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Act as the security coordinator for the local support providers (in units where the unit security liaison is not the local support provider).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement unit procedures and protocols for the reporting of electronic security incidents in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with the unit head, IT manager, director, and other relevant personnel to address critical security notices issued by the director of IT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Security or his or her staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User</td>
<td>Comply with the current policies, requirements, guidelines, procedures, and protocols concerning the security of the university’s electronic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>networks and devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protect IT resources under his or her control with measures such as the responsible use of secure passwords, appropriately establishing an</td>
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<td></td>
<td>administrator password, and timely antivirus updates.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assist in the performance of remediation steps in the event of a detected vulnerability or compromise.</td>
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</table>
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Security of Information Technology Resources

RESPONSIBILITIES, continued

Comply with directives of university officials, such as the security officer and his or her delegates, to maintain secure devices attached to the network regarding software patches and/or virus protection.

Take note of circumstances in which he or she may assume the responsibilities of a local support provider, e.g., by attaching a personal computer to the Cornell network or working remotely from home.

Follow electronic security incident reporting requirements in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.
POLICY 5.4.1
Security of Information Technology Resources

**PRINCIPLES**

**Introduction**

In order to manage information technology (IT) security comprehensively, this policy serves five major purposes.

1. It establishes the principle that every IT device connected to the Cornell network must have at least one individual managing the security of that device.

2. It requires units to designate unit security liaisons (see the Obligations of the Unit Security Liaison segment of procedures).

3. It creates the following five categories of individuals, each with specific obligations regarding the security of IT devices:

   - User
   - Local support provider
   - Unit security liaison
   - Unit head
   - IT security director

4. It delineates specific responsibilities for each category of user.

5. It creates the foundation for the university’s administrative approaches to IT security by aligning roles and responsibilities with technical procedures.

◆ **Note:** All users of IT devices must follow the procedures outlined in the Obligations of Users section of procedures.

◆ **Note:** The focus of this policy is on the security of IT devices and resources, and not on specifics for the management of data or any particular class of data. For information concerning data, please consult University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship, which provides the authority for and guidance towards the development of policy for the preservation and proper management of data in specific functional areas.

◆ **Note:** As a foundational policy, this policy relies on other university policies; see Related Resources for more information about those policies.
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Security of Information Technology Resources

PROTOCOLS — ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS

Obligations of the User

Any individual who uses an information technology (IT) device (see the definitions section of this document) is a user. Each of these devices may or may not have a local support provider assigned to it. Users have different obligations, based upon whether a local support provider has been assigned to a particular device.

Typically, university-owned IT devices located in campus workspaces have local support providers assigned to them. On the other hand, personally owned computers used to connect to the Cornell network from any location (home, off campus, residence hall or other on-campus location) usually do not.

◆ Note: If you cannot perform or do not understand any of the obligations assigned to users, contact the IT Service Desk, at itservicedesk@cornell.edu.

Obligations of a User Whose Device Does Have a Local Support Provider

1. Understand and comply with current policies, requirements, guidelines, procedures, and protocols concerning the security of the university’s electronic networks and devices (see the related documents section of this document).

2. Comply with guidelines and practices established by the local support provider for the IT device.

3. Contact your local support provider whenever a questionable situation arises regarding the security of your IT device.

4. Report all electronic security incidents to your local support provider immediately, as detailed in University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.

Obligations of a User Whose Device Does Not Have a Local Support Provider (If you cannot perform or do not understand any of the obligations below, contact the IT Service Desk, at itservicedesk@cornell.edu)

1. Understand and comply with current policies, requirements, guidelines, procedures, and protocols concerning the security of the university’s electronic networks and IT devices (see the related documents section of this document).

2. Update campus-wide security applications, including antivirus software and operating system updates, in a timely fashion.

3. Protect the resources under your control with the responsible use of secure passwords and by appropriately establishing an administrator password.

4. Assist in the performance of remediation steps in the event of a detected vulnerability or compromise.
5. Comply with directives of university officials, such as the IT security director, unit security liaison, or local support provider(s), to maintain secure devices attached to the network.

6. Follow electronic security incident reporting requirements in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.

The local support provider is responsible to do the following:

- Be knowledgeable and comply with the current policies, requirements, guidelines, procedures, and protocols concerning the security of the university’s IT resources.

- Follow appropriate best practices guidelines for configuring and securing IT devices. See www.it.cornell.edu/security/computer/.

- Understand and document the specific configurations and characteristics of the IT devices he or she supports to be able to respond to emerging IT threats and to support security event mitigation efforts appropriately.

- Understand and recommend the appropriate measures to provide security to the resources under his or her control, including, but not limited to the following:
  - Physical security to protect resources such as keys, doors, and/or rooms maintained to the level of security commensurate with the value of the resources stored in those locations.
  - Administrative security to protect resources such as:
    - Full implementation of the most current authentication and authorization technologies utilized by the architecture of the university network and/or its technology resources.
    - The most recently tested and approved software patches available.
    - The most contemporary and available virus protection.
    - Configuration of secure passwords on all IT devices (eliminating all default or administrative passwords).
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PROCEDURES, ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS, continued

5. Follow electronic security incident reporting requirements in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.

◆ Note: Local support providers should be mindful of potential responsibilities they may have as custodians of administrative data transmitted or stored on IT devices under their control. Please consult University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship, for further guidance.

Obligations of the Unit Security Liaison

The unit security liaison is the person designated by the unit head as the primary contact for the IT security director. For further guidance or clarification, contact the IT security director.

The unit security liaison is responsible to do the following:

1. Act as the unit point of contact with the IT security director.

2. Implement a security program consistent with the requirements of this policy (for example, the implementation of security assessment, best practices, education and training), consistent with university guidelines and practices and in keeping with the specific IT security needs of his or her unit. This will include the following:

   a. Identify the IT resources under his or her control.

   b. Oversee compliance with all IT security regulations under federal, state, and local law.

   c. Provide proper information and documentation about those resources.

   d. Participate in and support security risk assessments of his or her IT resources, including the following:

      o The degree of sensitivity or importance of the data transmitted or stored on those resources.

      o The criticality of its connection to the network and a continuity plan in the event that it must be disconnected or blocked for security reasons.

      o The vulnerability of a particular resource to be used for illegal or destructive acts.

      o The vulnerability of a particular resource to be compromised.

      o The plan to be followed in the event of disaster for recovery.

      o The measures routinely taken to ensure security for each device.
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PROCEDURES, ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS, continued

3. Act as the security coordinator for the local support provider(s) within his or her unit (in units where the unit security liaison is not the local support provider) including the following:
   a. Developing intermediate and harmonizing processes between university and unit policy and procedure.
   b. Assisting the IT Security Office in the investigation of security issues and incidents, and, in the case of a loss or breach of institutional data and information, representing the unit in the Data-loss Incident Response Team (DIRT) process.
   c. Disseminating information and communications about security policy, procedures, and other information from the IT Security Office to users within the unit.

4. Implement unit procedures and protocols for the reporting of electronic security incidents in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.

5. Work with the unit head, the unit IT manager, director and/or other relevant personnel to address critical security notices issued by the director of IT Security or his or her staff.

Note: The unit security liaison may want to take specific measures toward the protection of data stored or transmitted on the IT devices under his or her management and/or be mindful of any potential responsibilities as custodians of administrative data. Please consult with University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship, for guidance.

Obligations of the Unit Head

Unit heads or individuals with responsibility for administrative units (e.g., vice presidents of administrative units, deans, department heads, etc.) have overall, local responsibility for the security of IT resources under their control. For further guidance, contact your unit security liaison or the IT security director.

The unit head’s oversight responsibilities in relation to security IT resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Identify a unit security liaison to the IT security director, who may in some cases also be the local support provider (depending upon the size of the unit and discretion of the unit head).

2. Ensure that, through the unit security liaison, a security program is implemented for the unit consistent with requirements of this policy (for example, the implementation of security assessment, best practices, education and training), consistent with university guidelines and practices and in keeping with the specific IT security needs of his or her unit.
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**PROCEDURES, ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS, continued**

3. Provide administrative control over continuity of support over all the IT devices in the unit such that, for example, a change in employment of an individual local support provider does not result in the abandonment of responsibility over IT devices attached to the network.

4. Oversee the creation and implementation of procedures for the reporting of electronic security incidents in accordance with University Policy 5.4.2, Reporting Electronic Security Incidents.

◆ Note: Unit heads may want to take specific measures toward the protection of data stored or transmitted on the IT devices under their management. Please consult with University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship, for guidance.

**Obligations of the IT Security Director**

The IT security director is the university officer with the authority to coordinate campus IT security. The following are obligations of the IT security director:

1. Develop a comprehensive security program that includes risk assessment, best practices, education, and training.

2. Strive for proper identification, analysis, resolution, and reporting of Cornell electronic security incidents; assist or lead electronic security incident resolution for the university and individual units, specifically in the DIRT process.

3. Issue critical security notices to unit heads and security liaisons.

4. Develop, implement, and support university-level security monitoring and analysis.

5. Support and verify compliance with federal, state, and local legislation.

**Violations**

Legitimate use of a computer or network system does not extend to whatever an individual is capable of doing with it. Although some rules are built into the system itself, these restrictions cannot limit completely what an individual can do or can see. In any event, each member of the community is responsible for his or her actions, whether or not rules are built in, and whether or not they can be circumvented.

It is an explicit violation of this policy to do any of the following:

1. Knowingly or intentionally maintain insecure passwords on IT devices attached to the network (e.g., absence of administrative password, password written and stored in insecure location, shared passwords, etc.).

2. Knowingly or intentionally attach misconfigured IT devices to the network.
POLICY 5.4.1
Security of Information Technology Resources

PROCEDURES, ITHACA CAMPUS UNITS, continued

3. Knowingly or intentionally compromise an IT device attached to the network or intentionally use an application or computing system with a known compromise.

4. Knowingly or intentionally, (or negligently after receiving notice from an IT officer or professional), transmit any computer virus or other form of malicious software.

5. Knowingly or intentionally access or exploit resources for which you do not have authorization.

6. Knowingly or intentionally perform network or system scans on resources not authorized by the IT security director, unit head, unit security liaison, or local support provider.

Enforcement

Suspected violations will be investigated by the appropriate office, and disciplinary actions may be taken in accordance with the Campus Code of Conduct, applicable regulations, or other university policy.

Reporting Suspected Violations

All violations of this policy must be reported to the IT security director. The IT security director will refer these cases for disciplinary action to the following officers:

- If the alleged violator is a student, the judicial administrator.
- If the alleged violator is a non-academic employee, the Office of Human Resources, Workforce Policy and Labor Relations.
- If the alleged violator is an academic employee, the associated dean of the college, director of the library, or director of the research center.
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