dcstm

Department:
Community Safety and Transport Management
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NDP 2030

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

ADDENDUM TO THE INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY USER ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT POLICY

INPUT TO DEPARTMENTAL REMOTE WORK POLICY

ICTRWP VERSION 1.1

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INPUT TO DEPARTMENTAL REMOTE WORK POLICY

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1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Departmental policies

- ICT Security Policy
- ICT User Account Management Policy

2. PREAMBLE

Bullet 5 *"Data and Information Security"* of the approved ICT User Account Management policy, states that "Departmental data is considered sensitive and confidential; therefore, all system users or any other authorised user(s) must treat it as such. Users are therefore expected to exercise caution when disseminating/ disclosing information from the Departmental systems to prevent unauthorized access to Departmental information"

3. INTRODUCTION

Department of Community Safety and Transport Management utilises remote access facilities for Departmental staff members and stakeholders to convene meetings using electronic means (Virtual Meetings). Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilitates virtual meetings by providing employees with the necessary:

- Access credentials
- Installation of Virtual meeting software
- Issuing of meeting invites and access codes
- Anchoring meetings
- Providing necessary technical support for access and participation in the meeting
- Recording of meetings, and
- Overall administrative tasks necessary for facilitating and hosting successful virtual meetings.

The above serves as the basics for affording participants the opportunity to follow the proceedings and participate in virtual meetings.

4. RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY

The policy was motivated by the emergence of Covid-19 which requires an alternative approach on how things have been done. And further, in adapting to the new normal and embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) going forward.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR ARRANGEMENT OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

A request for Information Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate a virtual meeting should be sent at least two (2) days in advance to enable proper management of scheduling. To this end the meeting requestor completes the necessary form designed to capture:

- The title of the meeting
- The date and time
- The names of invitees
- Their email and cell phone contacts

It is the responsibility of the meeting requestor/convenor to ensure that the invitees are in possession of or have access to the necessary computing resources (laptop, desktop, cellphone).

6. PREPARATIONS
6.1 BEFORE THE VIRTUAL MEETING

- The Chairperson of the intended virtual meeting shall share the purpose and agenda of the meeting with participants prior to the meeting.
- Information Communication Technology (ICT) shall be informed at least two (2) days in advance about the intended virtual meeting.
- Emergency requests for virtually meeting shall be facilitated, provided there are IT officials available to convene / facilitate such a meeting
- All documents intended for use in the virtual meeting shall be forwarded to the Directorate Information Communication Technology (ICT) at least three (3) hours prior the meeting to enable sharing.
- It is the responsibility of the meeting requestor/convenor to inform virtual meeting invitees about the meeting.

- A virtual meeting access invite shall be issued by Information Communication Technology (ICT) at least eight (8) hours before the meeting.
- Participants should login at least 15 minutes prior the scheduled meeting time.
- Participants should, by default, have their sound and video muted, and unmute only when given permission by the Chairperson of the meeting to speak.
- Participants should make use of the hand raising feature to call for attention so that permission to speak may be granted by the Chairperson of the meeting
- The use of the video feature should be limited to the sharing of documents

6.2   THE AGENDA

Virtual meetings, by their nature, come at a cost to data. Long meetings may cause participants to run out of data and thus cause disruptions to the proceedings. In setting the agenda, the convenor should target to conduct the meeting in as much efficient manner as possible. To this end, the agenda should set out the topics to be covered, the amount of time assigned for each item and the person responsible for delivering the presentation. If there are participants that are invited only for a specific agenda items, it is advisable to place such items at the beginning of the meeting to allow people to drop off (leave the meeting) when done. The Secretariat/Chairperson must ensure that participants receive the agenda and relevant documents or presentations at least two days prior to the meeting in order to ensure a smooth flow of the meeting.

The Secretariat/Chairperson hosting the meeting must ensure that s/he communicates with members who will be participating in the meeting and confirm their attendance before sending the list of attendees to Information Communication Technology (ICT).

6.3 VIRTUAL MEETING DEPENDENCIES

The meeting convenor shall ensure that all participants are in possession of or have access to requisite enabling tools (laptops, tablets, 3G Cards, internet access etc.) to participate in virtual meetings.

Participants are advised not to wait until five minutes before the meeting to find out they cannot connect to the internet, do not have the correct browser to connect to the meeting,

microphones do not work, or the correct software is not loaded. It is recommended that participants must check with their Information Communication Technology (ICT) to ensure that appropriate software permissions (who can share presentations, who can admit users into the meeting etc.) are in place before the meeting begins.

The Secretariat/Chairperson must ensure that all required information to connect to the meeting is shared with participants on time. Those participants who will be presenting or have responsibility for agenda items should be contacted ahead of time to ensure it is clear who will be making the presentation.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) shall make sure that the appropriate technical support is always available for virtual meetings.

Meeting requestor/convenor should notify Information Communication Technology (ICT) of the meeting date/time, the technology being used, and ensure that an appropriate method of contact (phone number, text message, etc.) is agreed upon should help be required.

Any failure of the technical infrastructure that may occur during the virtual meeting which may affect the Virtual Meeting shall be communicated by the Chairperson to all participants in the meeting. The Chairperson may decide at his/her own discretion, considering the potential impact on the decision-making process within the Virtual Meeting, whether or not meeting must be suspended or cancelled due to such technical failure.

6.4 VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOLS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Confidentiality and sensitivity of information must be considered, and conversations must not be conducted in a manner that participants or content of the meeting will be overheard. Chairperson shall ensure that confirmation of confidentiality is declared in all meetings.

The Secretariat/Chairperson must ensure that meeting organizers are notified of who will or will not be attending. This allows the appropriate number of people expected for a meeting and does not keep attendees waiting for a participant who never logs on.

Participants are urged to log into the meeting early to ensure that all software and connections are working correctly.

Limit background noise – Mute microphones when not given the platform to speak. Be aware of background noises (heavy breathing, children, traffic, etc.) and avoid subjecting the rest of the participants to these as much as possible.

Participants are urged to identify themselves when joining a virtual meeting. Knowing who is participating in a meeting and who is speaking is critical to a successful meeting.

Virtual attendees do not have access to body language and other non-verbal cues to help determine intent. Speakers should speak slowly, clearly and avoid addressing in-person attendees to the exclusion of those participating virtually. Do not speak while others are talking and avoid interrupting speakers. Ask for clarification on any point or issue that is not clear due to issues with sound or network interruption.

7. CHAIRING AND FACILITATING A VIRTUAL MEETING

The Chairperson must ensure that agenda, presentations, documents, and other supporting materials are sent out to participants ahead of time. Verify that participants have replied to meeting invites and the Secretariat contact individuals (if possible) to verify their attendance. Before starting the meeting verify that everyone is able to hear, speak and/or see properly.

At the beginning of the meeting, the chairperson shall review how attendees should signal their desire to ask a question or comment on an item (using the "raise hand" software function, typing a question in the Chat window, jumping in verbally, etc.). Assign someone (staff from your office) to monitor the Internet collaboration software or chat window and alert attendees when a question is raised, or someone wants to talk.

When there is a change in the agenda, the chairperson shall remind participants of what the change is and how it will impact the rest of the agenda.

8. MEETING ATTENDANCE AND RECORDINGS

Departmental data is considered sensitive and confidential; therefore, all users or any other authorised user(s) must treat it as such. The information contained in the recording is for official purpose only. Access to the recording for virtual meetings shall be made available to the Secretariat and the Chairperson of the meeting. Any other participants who need access to the recording shall request approval from the Accounting Officer or Delegated Official. Meeting attendees shall use their First Name and Surname when joining the meeting for the purposes of identification and meeting attendance register.

Attendees may not share the link to the meeting with any person, who was not initially on the list of participants, without the consent of the Chairperson and the Information Communication Technology (ICT).

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

The risks associated with virtual meetings are as follows:

RISKS IDENTIFIED	MITIGATION PLANS
Lack of computing resources (laptop, 3G)	Provision of ICT resources to officials
Poor network coverage	Procurement of booster/signal extender
Load shedding	Monitor load shedding schedules and use of alternative sites
Limited data (IT facilitate and download all recordings for all meetings which takes a whole lot of data)	Reconsider the amount of data for officials carrying out functions that requires data
Unauthorised access into the meeting (Unknown external intruders)	Meeting organiser to admit only officials in the list of attendees (Users to identify with official names i.e. initials and Surname) Follow IT security protocols.
Old IT network Infrastructure	Engage OTP to upgrade network infrastructure

Limited IT personnel to facilitate and provide technical support	Appoint IT personnel as per the approved Organisational structure
Technological challenge for users on the use of computing resources	Training to be provided to users on the use of meeting tools
Incompatible browser blocking use of conferencing software	Users to communicate with ICT to ensure they have the correct browser i.e Chrome, MS Edge
Interruption of IT Services	Escalate declining level of services to mitigate unplanned outages

10. CONCLUSION

Chairing and facilitation of a meeting where attendees are virtual can be valuable in helping to keep work moving, engaging a broader number of participants, and overcoming budget and travel restrictions. Use of any Departmental ICT resources for any illegal activity shall be dealt with in terms of the disciplinary procedures.

11. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

This policy is approved by the Accounting Officer and is applicable with effect from the date of approval below. The Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as and when the need arises. This policy shall remain valid until the approval has been granted for the reviewed policy.

MR M. MORULE

ACCOUNTING OFFICER

24/04/23

DATE