



UNIVERSITY POLICY IT-02.03-05/23

TO: The University of West Florida Community
FROM: Dr. Martha D. Saunders, President
SUBJECT: Disposal of University Information Technology Hardware,
Software, and Data Storage Devices
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Information Technology Services

I. Purpose:

To clarify the responsibilities for disposing of University-owned information technology hardware, software, and data storage devices.

The University of West Florida (UWF) is committed to:

- Complying with federal and state statutes associated with the protection of confidential information;
- Abiding by software licensing agreements;
- Conforming to the applicable rules and regulations for property; and
- Following federal and state regulations for the safe and appropriate disposal of electronic equipment.

In addition to ensuring legal and environmental compliances, the intent of this policy is to develop a more consistent approach for the disposal of University hardware, software, and data storage devices.

II. Definitions:

Data is any information related to University business that is saved or stored electronically on a hardware device or storage media regardless of who owns the device, media, or equipment on which the data is stored. Data can include, but is not limited to, information records, files, spreadsheets, pictures, and recordings. Data may be general or it may be categorized as “protected” if it contains social security numbers or other personal information regulated by law or other compliance rules.

Hardware is the physical aspect of computers, telecommunications, and other devices, that often, but not always, have the ability to store and/or manipulate information. Some examples of hardware are desktop computers, desktop phones and Voice-over-IP phones, smart TV’s, and mobile devices such as cellular phones, laptop computers, and tablets. Some examples of storage

media hardware are: hard drives, solid state drives (SSDs), CDs/DVDs, floppy disks, and memory sticks (also called flash drives and thumb drives).

Software refers to the various kinds of programs used to operate computers and related devices. Software is frequently divided into two categories: system software and application software (apps). System software includes the operating system and the utilities that enable the computer or device to operate. Application software consists of programs that perform productive work for users. Application software includes such items as word processors (e.g.: Microsoft Word), spreadsheets (e.g.: Microsoft Excel), graphic and data management programs (e.g.: Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Access), and statistical packages (e.g.: SAS, SPSS).

III. Policy:

A. Disposal

Disposal includes any form of equipment leaving custody of the University, regardless of whether the equipment is being returned as part of a rental, becoming surplus, or being thrown away. Employees and any other users acting on behalf of the University are responsible for applying for disposition of records and data on University technology equipment by submitting a Records Disposition Report to Records Management for review by Records Management in consultation with the University Archivist as further described below. Regardless of the funding sources used to purchase the item(s), it is the responsibility of the department and the employee in custody of the item to understand and manage the terms and conditions of its use and disposal.

1. Hardware Disposal

University employees are required to follow the UWF property survey process for disposal of all property items regardless of origin, cost, whether the items have UWF property tags, or whether they are in working condition or non-working condition. The property survey process is located on-line at <https://confluence.uwf.edu/x/ioON>. If any data remains on the hardware, the data must be reviewed and disposed of as described below prior to disposal of the hardware.

2. Data and Software Disposal

a. University Data and Software Stored on University Hardware or University-Purchased Storage Devices

Employees must have all institutional data and licensed software reliably removed from devices prior to the devices being disposed of or transferred out of University control. The UWF property surplus system includes a process for the secure removal of hard drives or other applicable storage media from hardware. Prior to deletion, employees must follow appropriate records retention procedures and schedules and shall consult with the University Records Management Office.

Employees should consult with Records Management regarding data that might be of special archival value. Records Management will coordinate an archival review with the University Archivist.

b. Personal Data and Software Stored on University Hardware or University-Purchased Storage Devices

University employees are expected to remove their personal data and software from such devices and then follow the process above for university-purchased storage devices.

c. Storing University Data and Software on Non-University Hardware or Non-University-Purchased Digital Storage Devices

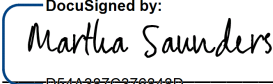
Employees should contact their Local Support Provider (LSP) or the ITS Help Desk for advice and consultation regarding the storing of University Data or Software on these devices as it is generally discouraged unless the employee can reliably protect data and software on these devices. Employees should also contact their LSP to seek advice on appropriate disposal of such data in the case that it was approved. Employees must have all institutional data and licensed software reliably removed from devices prior to the devices being discarded or transferred out of the employee’s ownership. Prior to deletion of the data, employees must follow appropriate records retention procedures and schedules and shall consult with the University Records Management Office.

B. Environmental Compliances

Both Facilities and ITS are authorized to notify the UWF Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) when electronic waste (e-waste) needs to be disposed of. Once notified, EH&S will collect and dispose of the e-waste in accordance with federal and state recommended guidelines.

C. Policy Enforcement

Employees and any others acting on behalf of the University are expected to stay informed of University disposal and recycling efforts. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to UWF disciplinary procedures defined in University policies and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Approved by: 
Dr. Martha D. Saunders

Date: 05/08/2023

Authority: BOG Regulation 1.001

Cross Ref.: HR-22.00-2004/07

History: Created June 2010; amended December 2015 and May 2023

Last Review: May 2023