



CHESTERFIELD COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Department: Information Systems Technology
Subject: External Link Policy

Policy Number: 7-9
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I. INTRODUCTION

The county's Internet site is primarily for the purpose of providing information and resources to county citizens and employees about county actions, resources, and events. Chesterfield County is not a commercial Internet service provider and it is not the intent of the county that its Internet site be a public forum.

II. POLICY

A. Only those links within one of the categories listed below will be considered for connection to the county's Internet site:

1. Federal, state and local governmental agencies.
2. Professional associations or entities that represent local government interests and with which the county is affiliated by means of memberships, subscriptions or the payment of dues.
3. Non-profit organizations serving Chesterfield County residents that also receive funding or support from the county or provide professional support to special populations served by county programs.
4. Commercial sites if the county has entered into a contract with the business for services to be provided to either county employees or county residents.

B. In addition:

1. The Library webpage may provide links to any information or materials currently available in the library in physical form and to sites which have been approved through the Library's collection development policy.
2. The Economic Development web page may provide links to businesses that are located in Chesterfield and that are participants in county economic development programs.

III. PROCEDURE

All applications to be added to the external links must be sent in writing to the county's Director of Public Affairs. Links will be authorized if the application is within one of the named categories and the content is appropriate for all audiences. Once the link is authorized by the Director of Public Affairs, the webmaster will have 10 business days to complete the review process and add the URL to the external links. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the proper URL is made available to the Director of Public Affairs, as well as inform the Director of Public Affairs of any changes to the URL.

The county will remove a link if the link is no longer in service or access to the information has become difficult because of odd formatting, lengthy download times, or intrusive advertising. If a link has become inactive or if there is a question or concern, the user is to contact the webmaster so that he or she may consider removal of the link.

The county shall not enter into reciprocal link agreements with entities other than those that qualify under this policy.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A. **Disclaimer**

Because the county cannot control the sites to which we link, it cannot be held responsible for content included in them. Moreover, in no way should an external link be considered any form of endorsement by the County of Chesterfield.

Information contained on web sites that the County of Chesterfield web site provides links to are maintained by other public and private organizations. Because the county cannot control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of sites to which it links, the county cannot be responsible for their content. Further, the inclusion of pointers to particular items in hypertext is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed or products or services offered by the author of the reference or the organization operating the server on which the reference is maintained.

B. **Links Requested by County Departments**

Links requested by county departments will be evaluated under the criteria outlined above and will not include personal websites. Links to commercial products which assist in the viewing of graphical displays of county information are permitted. Where links are intended to provide information for the benefit of county employees only, links should be located on the county Intranet site. Additionally, commercial links should be avoided, if possible, by providing the information in an alternative format (i.e., instead of linking to a private website, link to another government website that provides the same information or give contact information without providing a link).

Departments have the responsibility of reviewing links on their webpages to ensure that the link continues to point to the original information or resource that was intended, and that the information on the linked page continues to be accurate and trustworthy. Departments are responsible for ensuring that the proper URL is made available to the Director of Public Affairs and for informing the Director of Public Affairs of any changes to the URL.

Note: The external link policy and disclaimer will be posted on the website; this portion of the policy will be internal only and not posted on the Internet.