

# LAKE COUNTY



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## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Subject: Acceptable Links on County Web Sites,

Date Issued: Tuesday, September 20, 2011

Issued by: Director of Information Technology

Applies to: All Officers and Employees

### **PURPOSE**

This policy is designed to:

- Ensure proper handling and treatment for external links shown on County owned and operated websites.
- Ensure that content linked to by County websites is appropriate and meets specified criteria.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The County of Lake website and the associated departmental websites may provide hypertext links to external websites as a convenience for users. Because the County does not have control over external sites, it is necessary to define a process by which links to external sites can be evaluated .

*Note: For County maintained web sites which already have a policy that has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors, such as the [www.lakecounty.com](http://www.lakecounty.com) marketing site, the site-specific policy will apply. For such sites, portions of this policy that conflict with the already adopted policy will not apply.*

The County of Lake is not responsible for the subject matter, contents, or accessibility of external sites. Any County web page featuring links to any external site must feature a disclaimer that lists the following text:

"The County of Lake Website contains hypertext links to external websites. The County of Lake is not responsible for the subject matter or accessibility of these external websites, and the County does not endorse any entity or product for which a link may be provided. External links are provided as a convenience for users of this site. Once you leave the County of Lake Website via a link to an external site, the County of Lake Privacy & Security Policies no longer apply. "

**Approval Process:**

Links on the county home page or other common/general areas will be subject to approval. Each external link in these areas must be approved by the CAO, IT Director, and County Counsel. Department-maintained areas of the site will not be subject to the approval process, but are at all times subject to the criteria listed below. Links on Departmental Websites may be subject to removal if they are found to be out of compliance with the criteria below. Each approval will be subject to a formal review process as follows:

Each proposed link to an external site must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The site is an official website of another government entity, including local, regional, state, tribal, or federal government agency, public or private credentialed educational institution, or special district.
- The site is provided as a part of a service that the County contracts for via a subscription, license fee, transactional fee, or other financial arrangement which binds the provider to maintain the site in a condition suitable for use by employees and the public at large.
- The site provides utility or transit service information to County residents.
- The site provides emergency information, such as flood management, river conditions, weather & travel conditions, road & Traffic conditions, homeland security, or emergency assistance/aid.
- The site contains useful health related information or alerts local to Lake County, important health emergency information, and medical reference information.
- The site contains reference materials and/or informational items that the County subscribes to, or contracts for access to, as a part of its business operations and functions.
- The site is a non-profit or community-based organization making a positive impact in our community through its donations and volunteers, or provides information, services or programs of specific interest to the Lake County community.
- The site provides information on laws and regulations.
- The site contains recognition involving Lake County with respect to achievement awards or noteworthy accomplishments and activities.
- The site contains local news and community events.
- The site contains useful information about visiting Lake County and the immediate region.
- The site provides a community guide for the Lake County area.

Under no circumstances will an external link from a County web page be provided to a site that meets any of the following prohibitions. This is not to be considered an all inclusive list of exclusions.

- The site content is not suitable for readers or viewers of all ages.
- The site has content that a reasonable person may not consider to maintain the dignity and decorum appropriate for government.
- The site has distasteful, offensive, obscene or objectionable content.
- The site is primarily for or about political campaigns.
- The site content promotes the use of alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substance.
- The content promotes or describes illegal activities.
- The content is in essence a personal homepage.

- The site is primarily a chat room or bulletin board.
- The site is essentially a commercial retail site promoting products or services, unless the site is maintained by a commercial business partner of the County and the site is used for the conduct of official County business, or the site affords product or service information of concern to the County or in support of County Programs.
- The content is primarily editorial in nature.

Requests for external links received by the general public will be submitted using the *External Website Link Request* form published on the County of Lake Website. In addition to the form, the requestor is to provide a written communication on the letterhead of the organization represented on the website detailing at a minimum:

- Contact information
  - Name, title, phone number of the individual maintaining the website
  - Name, title, phone number of the individual representing the organization
- A statement of the organization's purpose
- A statement of how the organization serves the community
- The signature of an officer of the organization

The County reserves the right to deny a request for any reason and to add or remove links from the County's web pages without notice. If an external site or link is observed to be non-operational the link will be removed by the appointed webmaster for the page upon which the link appears. If a site no longer conforms to this policy, the webmaster will immediately remove the link.

County of Lake Departmental websites will be reviewed for compliance with this Policy by a review group consisting of the IT Director, CAO, and County Counsel on a cyclical basis. The review group's goal will be to perform reviews annually, at a minimum. The group's Report of Findings will be used as a resource to identify and resolve any policy compliance issues.