

Title VI – Information Services

SECTION 469 – Data Access Policy

Latest Update: June 2024

A. OVERVIEW

This policy outlines the rules and responsibility for sharing electronic information between departments in the County of Santa Cruz.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. reinforce that existing standards and policies regarding professional conduct also apply to computer usage.
2. protect County data and computer systems from intentional misuse
3. ensure that County data and records are professionally managed and secured.

C. SCOPE

This policy applies to all County employees, interns, contractors, and all other users of County computers and computer systems.

D. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Ownership

Each piece of data kept in the County's data center or provided over the County's data network is controlled and maintained by a specific department. This control department has the authority to control access to the data.

2. Custodial Responsibility

The Information Services Department has custodial responsibility for data in the County's data center, or provided over the County's data network while it is on the network. Custodial responsibility also exists within the Department of Community Development and Infrastructure, Human Services Department, and Health Services Agency over data in their data centers. This custodial responsibility does not include authority to release the data or provide access to it. Information Services is not the controlling department for any data, except data that supports internal Information Services operations and contains no information controlled by another department.

3. Security

The Custodial Department is responsible for administering security and data controls per County Procedures Manual Section VI - 400, County Ownership and Access to Computer Data, Files, and Software.

4. Requests

This policy provides the procedure for the "request and consent" aspect of sharing data between departments. This policy conforms to and implements part of Section VI - 440 of the County Procedures Manual.

E. PROCEDURE

1. Requests for access to any data that is not under the control of the requesting department will be submitted to the Custodial Department in writing by the requesting department (see attached form)

2. The request, combined with any details, will be forwarded to each affected control department for consideration within three working days from the date the request was received by the Custodial Department.

3. Once approved by all affected controlling departments, the package will be filed in the Administrative Section of the Custodial Department for future reference.

4. The Custodial Department will normally implement access to the specified data within three working days following receipt of all approvals unless special arrangements are made for a different schedule.

F. RESPONSIBILITIES

Users - responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to this policy.

Requesting Department - responsible for submitting requests for authorization.

Information Services Department - responsible for granting access to the data once all departments have been approved.

Controlling Department - responsible for completing the authorization for access to their data.

G. COMPLIANCE

The County reserves the right to investigate potential violations of computer resources. Users will be held accountable for any breaches of policy, security, or confidentiality. Violations may result in disciplinary actions. Abuse or misconduct

can be reported (by employees, supervisors, IT staff, the public, or others) to the appropriate authority for remedial action. Violations will be handled through the applicable union contracts, personnel rules, and County/State/Federal statutes. Depending on the nature and severity of the abuse, violations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Criminal or civil action may be initiated in appropriate instances.

H. EXEMPTIONS

None

J. AUTHORITY

County Procedures Manual Section VI-400

County Procedures Manual Section VI-410

I. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Access Authorization Form (attached) [\(click here\)](#)