

**Town of Calais, Vermont**  
**Computer Systems and Financial Accounts Access Policy**

**PURPOSE.** The purpose of this policy shall be to ensure that access to the Town of Calais' computer systems – and the financial accounts of the town stored on said systems – be regulated and monitored to preserve the integrity and security of those accounts.

**APPLICABILITY.** A public record is defined as any written or recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristic, which is produced or acquired in the course of Town business. Public records are available for inspection and copying unless there is a specific statute exempting the record from public disclosure. Those records exempt from public inspection and copying are set out at 1 V.S.A. § 317(c). Towns may 'make reasonable rules to prevent the disruption of operations, preserve the records security of records and protect the records from damage.' 1 V.S.A. §316(j).

This policy applies only to financial accounts maintained by the Treasurer of the town of Calais, and those computer systems operating at the town offices. Other records may be in the custody of other officers or employees of the town.

**DEFINITIONS.** For purposes of this policy, the following words and/or phrases shall apply:

1. "Agency" means an agency, board, committee, department, branch, instrumentality, commission, or authority of any town.
2. "Custodian" means the person that has charge or custody of the financial accounts of the town.
3. "Computer systems" means all computer-related components and equipment including, but not limited to, host computers, file servers, workstation terminals, laptops, software, internal or external communication networks, the world wide web (www), the Internet, commercial online services, bulletin board systems, backup systems and the internal and external e-mail systems accessed via the town's computer equipment.
4. "Financial accounts" means those software programs (Quickbooks, NEMRC, etc.) and associated records stored on the town office computer systems which can be manipulated, which track and manage the monies of the town of Calais, and which are used to keep such books and accounts as prescribed by Vermont Statute.

**ACCESS TO TOWN COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS.**

The Town Treasurer shall act as the custodian of the financial accounts of the town in every instance. No other municipal employee, appointed or elected municipal official or officer, or any other entity shall have access to the financial accounts stored on the computer systems of the Town of Calais wherein are kept records of monies, bonds, notes, and evidences of debt paid or delivered, and of monies paid out for the town. The custodian may on occasion grant access to another qualified municipal official or person for the purposes of an audit or some other necessary purpose.

The computer systems located at the town offices shall only be accessed by those town officers and officials, both appointed and elected, whose duties require them to access these systems on a regular basis, whose workstations are located exclusively at the town offices, and whose statutory duties may prescribe their maintaining any records, public or private, stored on said computer systems.

This policy shall not serve to prevent the reviewing of the finances of the town as a matter of public record. Static, unalterable records, images, and/or reports of the finances of the town which cannot be manipulated in such a way that could serve to disrupt the daily business of the custodian of the town's financial accounts shall be provided to any who make such a request.

## **PASSWORDS POLICY.**

### Password Creation

All user-level and system-level passwords must conform to the following Password Construction Guidelines.

All Town of Calais passwords should be constructed so that they possess the following 'strong password' characteristics:

- Contain at least 12 alphanumeric characters.
- Contain both upper and lower case letters.
- Contain at least one number (for example, 0-9).
- Contain at least one special character (for example, !\$%^&\*()\_+|~-=\`{}[]:;'<>?,/).

Oftentimes strong passwords can be constructed in the form of a sentence (for example: The1barnwasconstructedwell!)

Municipal employees should strive to avoid using poor, or weak, passwords which have the following characteristics:

- Contain less than eight characters.
- Contain personal information such as birthdates, addresses, phone numbers, or names of family members, pets, friends, and fantasy characters.
- Contain work-related information such as building names, system commands, sites, companies, hardware, or software.
- Contain number patterns such as aaabbb, qwerty, zyxwvuts, or 123321.
- Contain common words spelled backward, or preceded or followed by a number (for example, terces, secret1 or 1secret).
- Are some version of "Welcome123" "Password123" "Changeme123"

Users must not use the same password for Town of Calais accounts as for other non-Town of Calais access (for example, personal ISP account, email accounts, online shopping accounts, etc.). Where possible, users must not use the same password for various Town of Calais access needs.

Password Change

All system-level passwords (for example, root, enable, NT admin, application administration accounts, and so on) must be changed on at least a quarterly basis. All user-level passwords (for example, email, web, desktop computer, and so on) must be changed at least every six months. The recommended change interval is every four months.

Password Protection

Passwords must not be shared with anyone. All passwords are to be treated as sensitive, confidential Town of Calais information. Passwords must not be inserted into email messages or other forms of electronic communication. Passwords must not be revealed over the phone to anyone. Municipal employees shall not reveal a password on questionnaires or security forms. Municipal employees shall not hint at the format of a password (for example, "my family name"). Municipal employees shall not share passwords pertaining to town business with anyone, including friends and family members, with the exception of other municipal employees and/or approved IT support staff/organizations. Municipal employees shall not store passwords in a file on a computer system or mobile devices (phone, tablet) without encryption. Any user suspecting that his or her password may have been compromised must report and document the incident and change all passwords immediately.

This Passwords Policy shall not apply to the public Wi-Fi available at the Calais Town Offices or Town Hall.

The foregoing Policy is hereby adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Calais, Vermont, this 2nd day of April, 2018.

This Policy is effective as of this date until amended or repealed.

*Denise Wheeler, Selectboard Chair* \_\_\_\_\_

*John Brabant, Selectboard Vice Chair* \_\_\_\_\_

*Rose Pelchuck, Selectboard Member* \_\_\_\_\_

*Sharon Winn Fannon, Selectboard Member* \_\_\_\_\_

*Clif Emmons, Selectboard Member* \_\_\_\_\_