

Title/Subject: **COMPUTER DISPOSAL**

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Applies to: faculty staff students student employees visitors contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: October 10, 2005

Contact for More Information: Office of Information Technology

Board Policy Administrative Policy Procedure Guideline

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

Concerns often surface concerning CMU computers that are sent from various CMU departments and organizations directly to University Stores for salvage. Sensitive personal data as well as university licensed software packages can easily be left on the hard drives. Access to this sensitive information and licensed university software would then be available to anyone that purchases the salvaged equipment. In such cases, the university could be held liable for the release of personal information and/or a violation of software licensing agreements, and this policy is being enacted to guard against that possibility.

POLICY:

All data from university-owned computers must be erased by University Stores prior to disposal or other release to the general public of those computers. For those computers being redistributed from a college/department to another university operating unit, it is the responsibility of the sending college/department to ensure that all university and personal data files are deleted.

PROCEDURE:

Security Processing for Salvage:

Any computers that university departments wish to dispose of or otherwise remove from their inventory must be processed through University Stores. University Stores will remove all data from each computer hard drive prior to releasing the computer to salvage or other release to the general public. This procedure will erase and possibly destroy track marks on the computer's hard drive. This procedure will destroy all information on the hard drive, including data files as well as licensed application system software. Purchasers of the salvaged computers will be informed that a bulk erase process has been performed and that the computers, in order to become functional, will require a low-level of disk reformatting and an operating system. Bulk erase processing may permanently destroy the drive's usefulness.

Security Processing for University Redistribution:

It is the responsibility of each department and college to ensure that all university and personal files are deleted from a computer before it is transferred to another university operating unit. While it is possible for the previous user of the machine to manually delete all relevant files and then use a disk utility program (like Norton Utilities) to permanently remove all traces of the previous files, users should be aware that this process does not guarantee the complete removal of files. Instead,

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Indexed as: Disposal of Computers; Salvage - Computers; Transfer of Computers within University.

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departments or colleges with local technicians are encouraged to contact their local technicians for assistance in erasing hard drives. Alternatively, university faculty and staff may contact the Help Desk for advice and/or to have an Information Technology technician assigned to erase the drives. In the event of a site visit for this purpose, time and material charges may apply.

*CMU reserves the right to make exceptions, modify or eliminate this policy.
This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures and directives relative to this subject.*