

# Computer Hardware Allocation, Replacement, and Disposal Policy

## Policy/Procedure

### Introduction

This policy explains how Dickinson manages the distribution, maintenance, upgrade, and disposal of college-owned computer hardware. This policy sets general standards for the assignment, use, re-use, and disposal of computer hardware, which helps us to ensure that as a community we are: using college resources wisely, being proactive regarding security issues, being mindful of the environment, and acting equitably regarding our practices across departments, employees, and the learning environment.

This policy covers all purchases made with Dickinson funds, including departmental funds, grant funds (even though these may not be specifically Dickinson funds, these are managed by Dickinson), User Services funds, and faculty start-up funds.

*NOTE: In any complicated situation involving resources and those who need them, there may be cases that warrant exceptions. Questions about exceptions can be sent to the Associate Director of User Services.*

### Computer Provisioning

The following section outlines the process by which college-owned computers are acquired and designated to employees and classrooms.

Dickinson provides one "standard" computer to each college faculty and professional staff member, including visiting faculty, for the work they need to accomplish. A "standard" computer is a system which meets the shared needs of varying users, while also considering factors such as specifications, cost, reliability, longevity, supportability, quality, and sustainability. By choosing consistent hardware specifications, the college can manage and select technology more effectively, reduce system prices, lower maintenance costs, and enhance assistance from manufacturers and vendors. These hardware standards are reviewed and adjusted every semester.

For Tenure Track faculty members and full-time administrative employees, the computer will be new (i.e. made by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) and bought by Dickinson in the last year) or the best effort will be made for the computer to be as similar as possible to the specifications of standard computers that have been recently acquired. For visiting or temporary faculty, as well as part-time employees, User Services may give a new or used computer depending on what they have in stock and will try to provide the requested operating system where possible. Visiting faculty, temporary

instructors, or part-time employees, who want a different computer than the one given by User Services, may request it following the [Technology Acquisition Process](#). In this document, the term 'primary' computer refers to the one system assigned to an employee and that functions as the main computer for their daily work.

### **Employee Computer Replacement Cycle**

User Services plans and allocates funds for replacing computers on campus according to a regular rotation, to ensure that users have updated hardware as their systems age. User Services is currently expecting to replace desktop computers (Dell and Apple) approximately every six years and laptop computers (Dell and Apple) approximately every four years. As hardware improves over time and the college's financial needs vary, this replacement cycle may adapt to these external factors. If there are any changes to this cycle, User Services will communicate them to the campus in advance.

Employees due for a replacement will receive an email telling them their primary computer is ready to be replaced in the current refresh period. The email contains the replacement period and the features of the new computer they are to receive. Employees do not need to reply to the email unless they have different computing needs than what User Services is offering, in which case they will need to request it following the [Technology Acquisition Process](#). If employees are not certain that the technology they are requesting is subject to the [Technology Acquisition Process](#), they may contact the Help Desk or their User Services liaison for guidance.

### **Overage Charges**

If the employee's computing needs have changed or they require different specifications than that which User Service is providing, and the change in specification results in a more costly computer than that which User Services is providing, the employee is responsible for requesting that change via the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to support this change. In these instances, User Services will cover the cost up to the value of the computer User Services had intended to provide. The employee is responsible for the cost differential beyond the value of the computer User Services had intended to provide.

NOTE: Employees are responsible for finding the funding for additional specifications above the cost of a standard computer (if desired) EACH time the system is replaced. In other words, if an employee obtains funding to support a change away from the computer which User Services is providing, these specifications do not carry over to their next computer and the employee must use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to fund the different specifications for the new system if those specifications are still required.

### **Full/Partial Personal Contributions to Purchases of College-Owned Computers**

An individual may not use their own personal money to cover the extra cost beyond what the computer User Services was planning to provide. This creates unclear ownership of the hardware which becomes difficult when it needs to be serviced or replaced.

### **Personal Hardware in College-Owned Computers**

An individual may not put in their own hardware (i.e., hard drives, peripheral boards, graphics cards, memory, etc.) in computers owned by the college unless User Services gives them explicit permission to do so in writing. Hardware that is unfamiliar and/or untested may affect the computer's stability, may negate a manufacturer's warranty, and/or may compromise its functionality or security.

### **Replacement Due to Accidental Damage, Loss, or Theft**

In the event an employee's college-owned computer is lost, stolen, or accidentally damaged beyond repair, User Services will make every effort to replace it with a standard computer as soon as possible. While there is no charge to the employee, or the employee's department, for this **first** replacement, if the employee obtained funding for additional specifications, they **will** need to request the additional specifications again if they are still required.

In the event an employee's college-owned computer is lost, stolen, or accidentally damaged beyond repair a **second (or more) time(s)**, User Services will **not fund** a replacement computer for the employee. The employee must use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to request this replacement device.

NOTE: In the rare event where an employee's personal insurance pays for the replacement of a damaged or lost computer, the replacement computer will be property of Dickinson College.

### **Peripheral and Multiple Peripheral Provisioning**

Peripherals are defined as: external monitors, keyboards, mice, or docks (peripheral hub) connected to a desktop or laptop computer. User Services attempts to provision peripherals for computers where feasible and fiscally responsible to do so. In general, a desktop computer will be provisioned along with a keyboard, mouse and, if the computer is not an all-in-one style chassis, a single external monitor. Laptop computers are typically provisioned with a power adapter and an optional dock.

If the employee requires additional monitors, or other peripherals, the employee must use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to request this technology.

### **Shared Computer Provisioning**

Shared computers are not assigned to a specific college employee/user. These systems typically make up the college's computing resources in classrooms, labs, department-specific locations, and public spaces. User Services budgets for, and schedules, computer replacements for many of these shared computers on a defined rotating basis to ensure that end user computing needs are met with new hardware as machine hardware becomes dated over time. User Services collaborates with the departments which mainly use a particular space to provide computers which best meet its needs. However, if a suitable replacement is unable to be provided by User Services due to customized builds or changing needs that exceed standard specifications, employees in these areas may be required to request new systems via the [Technology Acquisition Process](#).

NOTE: Employees may also request additional computers or adjustments to classroom technology for campus locations via the [Technology Acquisition Process](#).

### **Scientific Instrumentation and Special Use Computer Purchasing**

Computers which support faculty research, specialized equipment, or computers in private labs, are typically funded by departments, grants, committees, or the Provost's Office. These equipment categories are the college's property and are not eligible for replacement using User Services funds. Employees must use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to request replacements for these devices.

As these are typically specialized systems, User Services will provide support to the extent feasible given the skills and knowledge of current User Services staff members.

### **Computer Disposition**

The following section outlines various aspects related to the support of college-owned computers.

### **Multiple Computers Per Employee**

Multiple computers per employee naturally incur added support burden for User Services due to; additional systems for support technicians to maintain, added costs at replacement time, additional licensing fees for software and inventory applications, and added hardware costs when components fail and need to be replaced. Therefore, as stated in the Employee Computer Provisioning section above, Dickinson will provide one college-owned computer (deemed the 'primary' device) to each member of the faculty and professional staff of the college, including visiting faculty, to perform the required work of their position. Any subsequent computers used exclusively by an employee are referred to as the employee's 'secondary' computer(s).

### **Acquiring Multiple (Secondary) Computers**

Employees who need more than one computer for their work must use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to ask for both, the first purchase, **and the subsequent renewals** for these devices going forward.

### **Support for Multiple (Secondary) Computers**

Given that 'secondary' computers tend to be replaced less frequently than 'primary' computers, support for these aged devices can become complicated for User Services. The following points outline the support and lifecycle parameters of secondary computers:

- User Services will label secondary computers as 'secondary' in the asset inventory system.
- As stated above, secondary computers will **NOT be replaced** as part of the normal Computer Replacement Cycle.
- Employees may retain the secondary computer for as long as it is able to be supported by User Services (see section titled 'End of Life' below).

- Also as stated above, it is the employee's responsibility to use the [Technology Acquisition Process](#) to request replacement of the device when either they, or User Services, determines the system has reached the end of its supportable life (see section titled 'End of Life' below).
- Software on secondary computers will be supported by User Services for the useable life of the device.
- Hardware in secondary computers will be supported by User Services so long as replacement hardware is readily available in inventory. Replacement hardware will not be bought by User Services, but User Services will help affect physical replacement of hardware components obtained via the Technology Acquisition Policy.

### **Reassignment and Re-Use**

When an employee who has used a computer leaves the college, the department must notify User Services of the vacancy and the status of their computer. User Services staff will help departments determine the need to retain systems or acquire a replacement for incoming employees.

### **Equipment Return (Shipping)**

If the employee is a teleworker and will not be returning to campus within one month of receiving the new computer (or upon their last day of employment, if leaving the college), the employee must contact User Services to arrange shipping their equipment back to Dickinson. User Services will work with the Mail Center to facilitate shipping. All charges related to shipping, including insurance, will be the responsibility of the employees' department.

### **Bumpdown Computers**

When a computer is at the end of the lifecycle prescribed in the sections above titled 'Employee Computer Replacement Cycle' or 'Classroom Computer Replacement Cycle,' User Services may choose to re-designate the computer as a 'bumpdown.' Bumpdown computers are gently used computers which are used in locations where basic computing resources are needed and the use of a new computer is unnecessary. Bumpdown computers may be used for student-used computers where only web browsing and/or light work is needed, or for temporary staff, where the specifications of a new computer would not be a requirement for daily use. User Services labels bumpdown computers in the asset inventory system and replaces them as needed, usually, with newer bumpdown computers as they become available via established replacement cycles.

### **Emeriti Faculty**

Emeriti faculty are not eligible for college-provided computer hardware. Emeriti faculty may be provided ongoing access to shared computer resources within their academic department in coordination with their department chair and the Provost's Office. Software may be provided to emeritus faculty when it can be done in compliance with current license agreements. License agreements limit what User Services can provide and can change from year to year at the software license provider's discretion. Specifically,

software licenses may require User Services to install software only on college-owned computers or require a college affiliation of ‘current faculty, staff or student.’

### **Asset Management**

User Services installs KACE client software on college-owned computers to track inventory information about devices, which is essential for installing software and security updates, making configuration changes, and assessing where the computer is deployed as well as where it is in its lifecycle. It is not permissible to alter or disable the KACE client software on any college-owned system.

Information and Technology Services reserves the right to apply security measures, updates, as well as modify operating system settings and functions on college-owned computers in the interests of protecting college data and the college community.

### **End-of-life**

The following section outlines various aspects related to the decommissioning and disposal of college-owned technology.

As stated above in the section titled “Reassignment and Re-Use,” all computers and equipment must be returned to User Services when long longer being used by their primary designee or when the system is at the end of useable life. User Services defines the “end of usable life” as equipment that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- is unable to run a supported operating system,
- requires an operating system that is considered by the vendor as “end of life,”
- is greater than 7 years old,
- lacks necessary specifications (hard drive space, memory, etc.) to apply critical security patches or software updates,
- is damaged and is not fiscally prudent to repair.

When a computer is at the end of the lifecycle (as prescribed in the sections above titled ‘Employee Computer Replacement Cycle’ and ‘Classroom Computer Replacement Cycle’, has completed service under ‘bumpdown’ designation, and/or meets the “end-of-life” criteria above), User Services may choose to liquidate the computer via one of the three following methods:

### **Resale for Revenue**

The newest decommissioned employee and classroom computers, which are not serving in a bumpdown role, are sold to third-party vendors in bulk to provide a valuable revenue source to fund new computers each year. Where fiscally, and contractually, feasible, User Services will make every attempt to use local vendors for this effort.

### **Hardware Donation**

Older computers, those that have completed their service in a bumpdown role, are donated to organizations in need of computers. Preference is given to organizations in the Carlisle area.

### **Hardware Recycling**

The oldest hardware coming out of service that cannot be sold or donated, is disposed of via the materials recycling service contracted by the department of Facilities Management.

### **Data Security on Decommissioned Computers**

For security purposes, the hard drives of ALL decommissioned computers are wiped using Department of Defense compliant erasure techniques with multiple zeroing passes to assure college data is destroyed before hardware leaves campus.

### **Resale of College Computers to Employees**

It is not allowable for employees to acquire computers for personal use that have been purchased with college funding, for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include, but are not limited to; information security, restrictions of software licensing contracts, risk of dated equipment failure, and the general avoidance of issues pertaining to fairness for any who may wish to buy used equipment from the college.

Faculty, staff, and students can find a list of vendors on the ITS (Information & Technology Services) website which offers discounts on technology and services to Dickinson students and employees.

### **Sustainability**

Dickinson has an institution-wide preference to purchase:

- EPA Energy Star computers and monitors
- Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) Certified Computers and Monitors

The college strives to comply with EPEAT Gold and Energy Star standards for as many computers and peripherals as feasibly possible.

<b>Related Information</b>
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<b>History/Revision Information</b>
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