

Blouberg Municipality



LAPTOP AND DATA POLICY

STATUS: As adopted on the 29 May 2025

LAPTOP AND DATA POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the recipients of municipal-owned laptops take responsibility for the laptop and ensure that it is safeguarded for the period assigned.

2. Application

This Policy applies to all employees, Councilors, and section 57 Managers who been issued with Municipal Laptops.

3. General principle

Laptops shall be granted to various employees in order to assist them with carrying out their responsibilities in terms of their job responsibilities and contractual responsibilities.

4. References for this Policy

Section 61 (1) (a) MFMA states that the accounting officer must take appropriate steps to ensure that the resources of the municipality are used effectively, efficiently and economically.

5. Receipt of New Laptops

5.1 In all situations, laptops received from suppliers shall be placed into the Laptop Store prior to being allocated to employees, even if this is for permanent allocation to a previously designated recipient.

5.2 The Laptop Register shall be completed for all Laptops on receipt of the laptop from the Supplier and all relevant information shall be retained. Where

possible, digital photographs of the Laptop must be taken from various angles, including close-ups of the serial number. These shall be stored for future usage.

6. Ownership of Laptop

6.1 At all times, the laptop shall remain the property of the municipality and is regarded as an asset or resource as provided for in the MFMA.

6.2 The Municipality shall reserve the right to take any laptop granted to anyone mentioned in clause 6.1 above.

7. Issuing and Return of Laptop/ Table

7.1 Employees may be allocated laptops as a part of their jobs, or may be allocated a laptop temporarily.

7.2 In all cases the recipient must accept responsibility by completing the form called Laptop Issue and Return Form (the "Form") which must be signed by themselves as recipient as well as by their next level manager and by the Asset Manager. There is no exception to this clause.

7.3 Laptops allocated to employees must be returned immediately on termination of employment before they leave the municipal offices for the last time. A similar rule applies to Councilors, contractors and other recipients.

7.4 Before being handed over, a set of checks will be performed by the IT Unit and these must be performed in the presence of the recipient to ensure that the laptop is in good working condition.

7.5 Recipient must familiarize themselves with the contents of this policy and that they understand all implications.

7.6 The system components shall be checked and reported, and in particular any additional cards and memory.

7.7 The Laptop shall be provided with a bag containing the correct cables and other items – all items in the bag shall be noted on the Form.

7.8 The correct version of Windows shall be loaded and there shall be a user password on the computer.

7.9 There shall be an Administrator account with a password known only to IT Officer under the Supervision of Manager IT which shall be used to gain access to the computer in the event

that the recipients forget their computer password and this shall be treated as a System Password as per Security Policy.

7.10 The necessary software for the user shall be loaded, including a properly licensed version of Microsoft Office.

7.11 An up to date version of the standard municipal virus-checking program shall be provided as well as any other software designed for information protection.

7.12 The storage systems including disk drives shall be encrypted in a manner sufficient to protect sensitive information for the eventuality that the laptop is stolen or lost.

It shall be the responsibility of the IT Unit to ensure that the laptop is in working order and contains the right components such as mouse, bag, strap and locking device and this shall be done before the laptop is issued.

7.13 When a laptop is returned an inspection shall be performed to ensure that the laptop has not been misused or damaged. These checks will include the following:

- (a) All of the checks performed before issuing are applied on returning.
- (b) No additional software has been added which is not permitted, such as software for which no license is provided, or software and programs which may have viruses.
- (c) No additional damage has occurred.

7.14 Following the completion of the return checks, the original Laptop Issue and Return Form shall be retrieved by the Asset Unit and shall be signed again by the person returning the laptop with any notes concerning faults as noted during the return inspection.

7.15 The Asset Unit shall maintain a list of issued laptops and must update this whenever laptops are issued and returned.

8. Essential Practice in Using Laptops

8.1 Whenever the laptop is in usage, the locking device must be used and affixed to a permanent point in a way in which it cannot be detached without considerable effort.

8.2 If the locking device has a key, this must be removed and kept with the recipient. If the locking device has a combination it must never be left in the unlock combination when not in usage.

8.3 Always carry the laptop in its proper carry bag, and secured by means of the proper restraints and zipped shut.

8.4 When the laptop is being carried in the bag, the bag must remain with the recipient at all times.

8.5 The laptop must not under any circumstances be lent to others or be used by other users without the permission of the IT Manager in writing, indicating the reasons for this and the intended usage.

8.6 This previous condition may be relaxed for usage by other employees for acceptable use with the permission of the recipient. Even in this case the recipient must never on-lend the laptop.

8.7 Always place some form of personal identification in the laptop case and under the cover of the laptop when closed, such as a letterhead or business card. This will greatly improve the chances of return in case of loss in cases in which the laptop is left behind at a place and forgotten about.

8.8 Laptops must always have a logon password which prevents access to the file systems for anyone who gains access. The Information Security personnel must also add a separate Administrator account which they can access using a secret password and this Administrator account must never be tampered with or destroyed.

8.9 Never use a laptop in an environment in which the risk of damage or loss is increased, such as next to a swimming pool, in the sun, or in areas in which water may damage the laptop.

9. Leaving Laptops in the Office

Whenever Laptops are left in the office environment while the recipient is out of the office for shorter long periods, the office must be locked at all times, and the laptop must be locked into a lockable cabinet to which only the recipient has access.

10. Using Laptops at Home, Hotel Rooms or Other Offices

10.1 Care must be taken in the home or other places and it is important to never leave the laptop unattended.

10.2 While staying in a hotel, lock the laptop in a safe whenever you leave your room.

11. Using Laptops in Public Places, Airports and on Aircraft

11.1 In public places, such as airports, restaurants and at conferences, it is important to take extra care and to never let the laptop out of your sight.

11.2 When you pass through airport security, you are required to take the laptop out of the case and pass this and the bag separately through the security equipment. It is essential that you take extra care to ensure that you pick up the right laptop and the right bag at this time.

11.3 When placing a laptop into the overhead compartment on an aircraft, ensure that it is placed so that it will not fall out and that no heavy objects are placed on top. Do not allow other passengers to move the laptop once you have placed it. Take extra notice of the overhead compartment to ensure that another passenger does not take your laptop by mistake when disembarking.

12. Good Practice in the Care of Laptops

- 12.1 No drinks or foods must be consumed near laptops. Whereas desktop keyboards are relatively inexpensive and can be replaced if damaged by liquids, the same does not apply to laptops and in most cases, spillages of liquids over the keyboard of a laptop will render the laptop either disabled or permanently destroyed.
- 12.2 The laptop is a sensitive item of electronic equipment and must never be placed into a situation in which it may be damaged by dropping or falling. This also applies when the laptop is firmly secured in the bag and laptop must always be secured in the laptop bag when not in usage.

13. Loss or Damage and replacement of laptop.

- 13.1 In all situations in which the laptop is stolen within the municipal offices, you must report this to Security immediately.
- 13.2 In all situations in which the laptop is stolen outside of the municipal offices you must report this to South African Police Service immediately and to follow the Procedure: Reporting Theft of Laptop.
- 13.3 In all cases the insurance policies and procedure of the municipality must be followed.
- 13.4 If you have taken all of the precautions as indicated in this policy and the laptop is stolen or damaged, then the laptop will be replaced.
- 13.5 If your laptop is stolen or damaged in situations in which you have not taken all of the precautions identified in this policy, you shall be personally responsible for the loss and will be responsible for replacement and/or repair.
- 13.6 The laptop issued to employee will be replaced after a period of three years from the date of issuing it to the employee and maybe sold on market value or given to the user.

14. ALLOCATION OF LAPTOP ALLOWANCE

- 14.1 An amount of R2000.00 laptop allowance and R500 Data allowance for Senior Managers
- 14.2 An amount of R2000.00 laptop allowance and R500 Data allowance for Managers.
- 14.3 An amount of R2000.00 laptop allowance and R500 Data allowance for Officers

14.4 The municipality will implement the laptop policy based on the motivation from the heads of the department on officers and below officers level starting from 1st July 2024.

14.5 The allowance amount for a laptop and data shall remain fixed for a period of five years based on the financial ability of the municipality.

14.6 All recipients of this allowance shall return municipal laptops and internet gadgets and sim cards in their possession within 30 days from the date of the first payment of laptop and data allowance. Those wish to remain with the laptops shall be subjected to purchase it at the amount valuated by the asset unit.

15. Updating System Software on Laptops

On a regular basis, at least once per week the Windows Update facility must be invoked, preferably automatically, in order to update any patches on the systems software. This particularly applies to virus control software and operating system security in usage.

16. Sending Laptops for Repair to External Service Agents

Any sensitive information on the laptop shall must be removed prior to sending it out for repair.

17. Procedure: Issuing of a Laptop

17.1 Trigger

This procedure is triggered by a request for issuing the Laptop.

17.2 Requestor

Any person requesting the issuing of a Laptop in terms of this policy – either temporarily or on a permanent basis.

17.3 Responsibility

Manager IT

17.4 Steps

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
A	Requestor completes the form: Laptop Issue and Return Form.	Requestor	
B	Requestor hands completed form to IT Admin Officer.	Requestor Admin Officer	
C	IT Manager checks the form, to ensure that the form is filled in properly.	Admin Officer	
D	If the form is incomplete, then inform Requestor and hand back the form.	Requestor	
E	If the form is complete, then select an appropriate Laptop from the store to meet the requirements of the Requestor.	Requestor	
F	Check the Laptop together with the Requestor and identify the components of hardware and software on the Form. The Admin Officer must instruct the Requestor how to use the laptop properly.	Admin Officer Requestor	
G	The Admin Officer ensures that the Requestor understands this and other related policies.	Admin Officer Requestor	
H	The Requestor signs the form that indicates that they fully understand the policy and that the checks have been completed to their satisfaction.	Requestor	

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
I	<p>The laptop is packed into its bag prior to issue and a final physical check is made to ensure that all the components are there.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bag • Power cable • Mouse • Locking device • Instruction manual • Any other components or documentation • Any existing damages must be noted by both parties and written on the form. 	Requestor Admin Officer	

18. Procedure: Return of Laptop

18.1 Trigger

Request for Return of the Laptop

18.2 Requester

The original Requestor to whom the laptop equipment was issued or anyone else acting on their behalf and with their authority.

18.3 Responsibility

The IT Admin Officer will be responsible to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

18.4 Steps

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
A	The Admin Officer retrieves the original form used to issue the laptop.	Admin Officer	
B	The Admin Officer and the Requestor both check the laptop equipment in terms of the list of equipment provided as well as any damage anywhere in the laptop equipment returned. Additional checks are performed in terms of software that may have been loaded or evidence of other examples of unacceptable usage.	Admin Officer Requestor	
C	The Admin Officer will advise the Requestor that any data on the laptop will be removed and that they must extract anything of importance at this time.		

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
D	The Requestor signs the request form indicating to the best of their knowledge no damage was caused to the equipment while they were responsible for it and that they complied fully with the policies and procedures relating to the usage of the laptop.	Requestor	
E	The final check is made to ensure that all the components are returned and are all in working order. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bag • Power cable • Mouse • Locking device • Instruction manual 	Admin Officer Requestor	

19. Procedure: Reporting Loss or Damage of Audiovisual Equipment

19.1 Trigger

The Laptop equipment has been damaged or lost.

19.2 Requester

The original Requestor is required to notify this.

19.3 Responsibility

The original Requestor is responsible for this procedure. This must be explained to the Requestor at the time of Issue.

19.4 Steps

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
A	Requestor must notify all relevant authorities immediately if theft or malicious damage is suspected. A police case number must be obtained which will be required for insurance purpose.	Requestor	
B	Requestor completes the Form called: Asset Loss or Damage Report. Particular attention must be paid to completion of the situation analysis in terms of conditions that may have given rise to the theft or damage.	Requestor	
C	The Admin Officer checks the form and completes any missing information in conjunction with the Requestor.	Admin Officer Requestor	

Seq	Activity	Who	Duration
D	The Admin Officer identifies whether warranty claims are applicable and if this is the case they will invoke the warranty claim procedures as applicable with the relevant supplier. (NOTE: These are not standardized and will differ from one supplier to another).	Admin Officer	
E	If the equipment is stolen or lost or damaged beyond repair, then the Financial Services Manager must be notified in terms of an insurance claim.	Admin Officer	
F	Damaged equipment beyond repair must be scrapped in terms of the Municipal Policy on disposal.	Admin Officer	
G	Equipment able to be repaired must be done in conjunction with the original equipment supplier.	Admin Officer	
H	The Register of Laptop Equipment must be updated to reflect that this unit is no longer available, and also to note its location in terms of repair or warranty claims.	Admin Officer	

20. Enforcement

Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary hearing.

21. Inventory Management

21.1 A Laptop storage shall be maintained in a secure facility within the Asset Unit used for unallocated Laptops. This store may be shared with other loan equipment such as scanners, printers, digital cameras and projectors.

21.2 The Laptop Store shall be locked at all times and only opened as required for the purpose of issuing laptops or receiving back laptops.

21.3 For practical purposes the Laptop Store may be shared with other equipment that is also required to be stored in a secure location.

21.4 The full information concerning the complete set of Laptops under the control of the Asset Unit shall be maintained in the Laptop Register, including its current status and to whom it is currently allocated.

22. Forms / Registers

22.1 All forms and registers indicating the required information shall be obtained from Asset Unit.

22.2 The shall contain the following information;

(a) The complete details of the laptop issued, including serial numbers and hardware and software components.

(b) The name and position of the person who is receiving the laptop.

(c) Signature of the recipient and of the IT Manager for pool laptops, and by the line manager for permanently allocated laptops.

(d) Date on which it is issued.

(e) Date on which is returned.

(f) The reasons for return.

(g) Statement of any problems noted on return by both the recipient and the IT Manager.

(h) A statement that by signing the form the recipient understands and accepts the laptop policy and that this has been explained to them prior to issuing.

22.3 One copy shall be retained by the Asset Unit and second copy shall be given to the recipient to be kept with the laptop until it is returned.

23. Asset Loss or Damage Report

There shall be the standard loss of damage report covering all IT assets and the report shall include the following information;

23.1 The complete details of the laptop issued, including serial numbers and accessories.

23.2 The details of what was lost or damaged, for example theft of the bag and all of its contents, or simply loss of the laptop itself or the damage to a specific cable such as the power supply cable.

23.3 A description of the situation in words including the cause of the loss or damage from the view point of the responsible person.

23.4 The situation in which the laptop was last used, including the location where it was being used stored, the person who was responsible for it, and whether a locking device was used.

23.5 Description of all data stored on the laptop which may compromise the Information Sensitivity policy of the municipality.

23.6 Any person was notified about the loss or damage, including names and contact numbers of the relevant authorities.

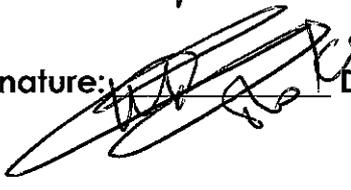
23.7 Any police case number provided including the police station to which this was reported.

24.POLICY APPROVAL

This policy was formulated by IT Division in consultation with the IT Steering Committee.

Authorised by Municipal Manager: Signature:  Date: 29-05-2025

Recommended by Portfolio Committee on Corporate Services: Signature:  Date: 29-05-2025

Approved by Municipal Council: Signature:  Date: 29-05-2025