Security Policies Standard Definitions

Application	See Application Software.
Application Software	Application Software is a loosely defined subclass of Computer Software that employs the capabilities of a computer directly to a task that the user wishes to perform. This should be contrasted with System Software which is involved in integrating a computer's various capabilities, but typically is not directly applied in the performance of tasks that benefit the user. The term Application refers to both the application software and its implementation.
Authentication	Determines a user's identity, as well as determining what a user is authorized to access, e.g. a financial database or a support knowledgebase. The most common form of authentication is a user name and password, although this also provides the lowest level of security. Digital certificates and digital signatures are other ways of being authenticated.
Authorized User	Any current employee, volunteer, contractor, vendor, or other party who has been granted lawful access by the CIO of Brazos County to network, applications, or services.
Backup	A Backup is a copy of system software, application software and or data, typically written to magnetic tape, made to avoid loss of these Information Resources and to facilitate recovery in the event of a system crash.
Brazos County Local Area Network	Any Local Area Network owned by Brazos County and governed by Brazos County Commissioners Court.
Brazos County Network	The Brazos County Wide Area Network, including all interconnected Brazos County Local Area Networks, any standalone Brazos County Local Area Network and all related Information Resources.
Brazos County Wide Area Network	The Wide Area Network and interconnected Local Area Networks owned by Brazos County and governed by Brazos County Commissioners Court.
Change	Any of the following: implementation of new functionality, interruption of service, repair of existing functionality, removal of existing functionality.
Change Management	The process of controlling modifications to hardware, software, firmware, and documentation to ensure that Information Resources are protected against improper modification before, during, and after system implementation.
Chief Information Officer	The individual responsible for leading and managing the IT department. Reports to Commissioner's Court.

Communication Network	See Computer Network
Compliance Risk	The risk of legal or regulatory sanctions, financial loss, or loss to reputation that may be suffered as a result of failure to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, codes of conduct and standards of good practice (together, "laws, rules and standards").
Computer	A computer is a machine capable of executing complex instructions. The execution proceeds according to a program — or list of instructions. These instructions usually result in data being processed, and the data may represent many types of information including numbers, text, pictures, or sound. Computers are often classified into two broad groups: Personal Computers (PCs) and Servers. PCs are further classified into Desktops, Laptops, Tablets.
Computer Network	A computer network is a system for communication between computing devices. These networks may be fixed (cabled or wireless) or temporary (VPN).
Computer Program	A computer program or software program (usually abbreviated to "a program") is a step-by-step list of instructions written for a particular computer architecture in a particular computer programming language.
Criminal Justice Information	Criminal Justice information is defined as any data obtained from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division.
Customer Information	Customer Information is information that is collected, processed, maintained, or stored from or for citizens of Brazos County, users, vendors or other individuals or entities which, by its nature, is sensitive and must be secured from inappropriate disclosure. This information includes Voter Registration data; Human Resources information; Direct Deposit data; vendor information; and health, medical, and immunization records.
Data	Data is information that has been translated into a form that is efficient for movement or processing. This includes but is not limited to productivity documents like Word, Excel and email; web content; information entered into application software, like Odyssey and Oracle; Audio and Video files; electronic evidence.
Department Head	The head of any department within Brazos County. Includes elected officials, appointed officials, and employees hired by the Commissioner's Court.
Desktop	A general purpose computer, often used by an individual user to run office productivity and other Application Software, which small enough to sit on a desk top and typically will have monitor that is separated from a case containing the motherboard, video and network cards, hard disk drive, memory and other peripherals.
DMZ (de-militarized zone)	Any un-trusted network connected to, but separated from Brazos County's network by a firewall, used for external (Internet/Vendor/State, etc.) access from within Brazos County, or to provide information to external parties.

Documentation	In general terms, documentation is any communicable material (such as text, video, audio, etc., or combinations thereof) used to explain some attributes of an object, system or procedure. It is often used to mean engineering or software documentation, which is usually paper books or computer readable files (such as HTML pages) that describe the structure, components, or operation of a system or product.
Electronic Mail	Any message, image, form, attachment, data, or other communication sent, received, or stored within an electronic mail system.
Electronic Mail System	Any Information Resource involved in the collection, storage and delivery of electronic mail.
Email	See Electronic Mail
Emergency Change	When an unauthorized immediate response to imminent critical system failure is needed to prevent widespread service disruption.
Employee	For the purpose of this policy, an employee is defined as an individual employed by the County on a full-time, part-time, seasonal, temporary, or internship basis. This includes elected officials, appointed officials, department heads, any person in a department reporting to one of these.
Encryption	In cryptography, encryption is the process of obscuring information to make it unreadable without special knowledge. Encryption makes it difficult for any non-authorized party to read or change data. The level of protection provided by encryption is determined by an encryption algorithm. The strength is measured by the number of possible keys and the key size.
Ethernet	Ethernet is a frame-based computer networking technology for local area networks (LANs). The name comes from the physical concept of ether. It defines wiring and signaling for the physical layer, and frame formats and protocols for the media access control (MAC)/data link layer of the OSI model.
Ethernet Connection	A high speed direct connection to a network where an Ethernet network interface card (NIC) is installed so that, with appropriate access rights, the user can access any host connected to the network.
External Audit	An external audit is an assessment of risks and tests of established controls conducted under the direction of an independent, third-party provider to determine the adequacy of existing policies and procedures in meeting the goals of securing information resources. The findings of the assessment and results of the tests are reported to Brazos County Commissioners Court.
Firewall	A Firewall is an access control mechanism that acts as a barrier between two or more segments of a computer network, used to protect internal networks or network segments from unauthorized users or processes. A Firewall may be a dedicated device with specialized software and firmware manufactured specifically for this purpose, or it may

	be a general purpose computer running a set of related programs. A Firewall is often deployed on a network gateway server between a trusted, protected private network and an untrusted public network.
Freeware	Application or System Software which is distributed free of charge by the author. Often, the author often retains the copyright thereby preventing alteration or reselling of the software.
Gateway Service	The email service through which all incoming and outgoing email passes.
Ghost Accounts	Accounts created for a particular user in addition to their main account using their unique moniker. (eg. John Smith would have a moniker of jsmith) Most common examples are 'webmaster', 'root', 'admin.'
Helpdesk	A service providing information and services to Brazos County employees
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act	The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a federal law that required the creation of national standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge.
Improper Material	Pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are racist, sexually suggestive, sexually/racially demeaning, pornographic, offensive, intimidating, harassing, disparaging, and/or hostile on the basis of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, color, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic.
Information Resource (IR)	Any computer printout, online display device, magnetic storage media, and any computer-related activity involving any device capable of receiving email, browsing Web sites, or otherwise capable of receiving, storing, managing, or transmitting electronic data including, but not limited to, mainframes, servers, personal computers, notebook computers, hand-held computers, tablets, pagers, smartphones, distributed processing systems, network attached telecommunication resources, network environments, telephones, fax machines, printers and service bureaus. Additionally, it is any procedure, equipment, facility, software, or data that is designed, built, operated, and maintained to create, collect, record, process, store, retrieve, display, and transmit information.
Information Security Officer (ISO)	The Information Security Officer (ISO) is the person responsible to executive management for administering the information security functions within Brazos County. The ISO is Brazos County's internal and external point of contact for all information security matters. Also called CISO Chief Information Security Officer.
Information Technology (IT)	The name of the Brazos County department responsible for evaluating, recommending, purchasing, installing, maintaining and managing Information Resources. Reports to Commissioners Court.

Internal Audit	An internal audit is an assessment of risks and tests of established controls conducted under the direction of the Information Security Officer to determine the adequacy of existing policies and procedures in meeting the goals of securing information resources. The findings of the assessment and results of the tests are reported to Brazos County Commissioners Court.
Internet	A global Wide Area Network interconnecting Information Resources worldwide. The Information Resources are owned separately by a host of organizations, government agencies, companies, and colleges. The Internet is the present information super highway. The globally interconnected collection of IP protocol based networks.
Internet Service Provider (ISP)	An ISP is an entity that provides commercial access to the Internet. ISPs may also provide web hosting and other services.
Intranet	A private network for access to applications, communications, and sharing of information and resources, that is accessible only to authorized users within an organization. An organization's intranet is usually protected from external access by a firewall.
Jailbreak	The privilege escalation of an Apple device for the purpose of removing software restrictions imposed by Apple on its operating systems. This is typically done via a series of kernel patches. See Rooting
LAN	See Local Area Network
Laptop	A general purpose computer, often used by an individual user to run office productivity and other Application Software, which small enough to sit on the user's lap and typically will have a Liquid Crystal Display that is integrated with the motherboard, video and network controllers, hard disk drive, memory and other peripherals.
Local Area Network (LAN)	A Local Area Network (LAN) is a network of interconnected Information Resources that is distinguished by its small geographical size (typically measured in meters), its private ownership or ownership by a single entity, its high-speed (usually measured in megabits per second), and its low error rate (typically 1 bit in a trillion).
Login ID	See Username
Mobile Device	A device intended to be portable, carried on one's person, or readily moved from location to location, such as smartphones, cell phones, radios, pagers, laptops, tablets, and others.
Network	See Computer Network.
Network Hardware	Any Computer Hardware involved in the electronic transmission of Data, including switches, routers, hubs, firewalls, gateways, and cabling.

Non-employee	Any individual that is not currently approved for access to Brazos County Information Resources by Brazos County IT. This includes former employees that no longer work or volunteer for the County.
Offsite Storage	Offsite storage is the placement of backup media in a location geographically separate from the production data that is backed up. Typically, this location is in a secure and climate controlled facility.
Operating System	An Operating System is System Software that controls the general operation of computer hardware and provides services used by Application Software. An Operating System is generally specific to CPU architecture.
Operational Risk	The risk of loss due to system breakdowns, employee fraud or misconduct, errors in models or natural or man-made catastrophes, and the risk of loss due to incomplete or incorrect documentation of systems. Also included is the risk of loss resulting from breakdown in administrative procedures and controls or any aspect of operating procedures.
Owner Department	An owner department is a Brazos County department, headed by an elected official or department head, which is responsible for the processing, storage, and dissemination of information specific to that department.
Password	A string of characters which serves as authentication of a person's or process's identity, which may be used to grant, or deny, access to Information Resources. Can include upper and lower case letters, numbers, special characters.
Personal Identification Number	A Personal Identification Number (PIN) is a confidential number or pass code, usually consisting of four to six numeric digits, which is provided by a user, typically in conjunction with some additional means of identifying the individual, that serves to verify the authenticity of the individual.
Proxy Server(Proxying)	A Proxy server is a computer that allows a client to access internet resources. Brazos County deems any proxy server outside of our network to be a risk because it can hide internet traffic from the protections that have been put in place.
Registered Software	Registration of software is the process, set forth by the vendor, by which purchase and the right to use said software is delineated. This can include but is not limited to filling out a web form, issuing a PO.
Remote Access	Any access to Brazos County's Network through a non-Brazos County controlled network, device, or medium.
Rooting	The privilege escalation of an Android device for the purpose of removing software restrictions imposed by Google on its operating systems. This is typically done via a series of kernel patches. See Jailbreak

Root User	The top administrator on a server or other computer equipment. This individual has unrestricted access to the management of the computer equipment and software. Typically, this user installs application software, but does not use it.
Security Administrator(s)	The person(s) charged with monitoring and implementing security controls and procedures for a system. Whereas Brazos County will have one Information Security Officer, technical management may designate a number of security administrators.
Security Incident	A Security Incident is a violation of any Brazos County Information Security Policy and includes assessed events of attempted entry, unauthorized entry, or an information attack on an automated Information Resource; unauthorized probing and browsing; disruption or denial of service; altered or destroyed input, processing, storage, or output of information; or changes to hardware, firmware, or software without Information Technology's knowledge, instruction, or intent.
Security Posture	Security Posture is the technology and policies in place to help protect a company, department or the county from a security incident. The County is concerned not just about its own security posture but also the security posture of partners, vendors and 3rd parties.
Security Token	A security token (or sometimes a hardware token) is a small physical device that an authorized user of computer services is given to aid in authentication. They can also store cryptographic keys and biometric data. Tokens are typically small enough to be carried in a pocket or purse and often are designed to attach to the user's keychain. Better designs feature tamper resistant packaging and some include small keypads, allowing PIN entry
Server	A server is a computer or device on a network that manages network resources. For example, a file server is a computer and storage device dedicated to storing files. With appropriate access rights, any user or process on the network can store files on the file server. A print server is a computer system that manages one or more printers, a network server manages network traffic, and a database server processes database queries. It is possible to partition the resources on one computer to create more than one server.
Software	Computer Software, Application Software and System Software, collectively.
Source Code	Source code (commonly just source or code) is any series of statements written in some human-readable computer programming language. In modern programming languages, the source code which constitutes a program is usually in several text files, but the same source code may be printed in a book or recorded on tape (usually without a filesystem). The term is typically used in the context of a particular piece of computer software. A computer program's source code is the collection of files that can be converted from human-readable form to an equivalent computer-executable form. The source code is either converted into an executable file by a compiler for a particular computer architecture, or executed on the fly from the human readable form with the aid of an interpreter.

System Administrator(s)	The person(s) responsible for the effective operation and maintenance of Information Resources, including implementation of standard procedures and controls to enforce Brazos County's Security Policies.
System Software	System Software is a generic term referring to any computer software whose purpose is to help run the computer system. Most of it is responsible directly for controlling, integrating, and managing the individual hardware components of a computer system.
Unscheduled Change	Failure to present notification to the formal process in advance of the change being made. Unscheduled changes will only be acceptable in the event of a system failure or the discovery of security vulnerability.
User(s)	See Authorized User
Username	A unique identifier given to every authorized user for authentication to gain access to county information resources. Created by IT and given to the user. Also called login ID
Vendor(s)	A corporation, sole proprietorship, or individual who exchanges goods or services with Brazos County for money. Vendors must be setup in Brazos County's financial system before exchanges may be made. See Brazos County's Purchasing manual.
Virtual Private Network (VPN)	A private communications network existing within a shared or public network platform (i.e. the Internet).
Virus	A program that attaches itself to an executable file or vulnerable application and delivers a payload that ranges from annoying to extremely destructive.
WAN	See Wide Area Network.
Wide Area Network (WAN)	A Wide Area Network (WAN) is a network of interconnected Information Resources covering a wide geographical area, involving a vast array of computers. This is different from personal area networks (PANs), metropolitan area networks (MANs) or local area networks (LANs) that are usually limited to a room, building or campus. WANs are used to connect local area networks (LANs) together, so that Information Resources in one location can communicate with Information Resources in other locations. Many WANs are built for one particular organization and are private. Others, built by Internet service providers, provide connections from an organization's LAN to the Internet. WANs are most often built using leased lines. At each end of the leased line, a router connects to the LAN on one side and a hub within the WAN on the other. Network protocols including TCP/IP deliver transport and addressing functions. Protocols including Packet over SONET/SDH, MPLS, ATM and Frame relay are often used by service providers to deliver the links that are used in WANs. X.25 was an important early WAN protocol, and is often considered to be the "grandfather" of Frame Relay as many of the underlying protocols and functions of X.25 are still in use today (with upgrades) by Frame Relay.

Wireless Access Point	A wireless access point (WAP or AP) is a device that connects wireless communication devices together to form a wireless network. The WAP usually connects to a wired network, and can relay data between wireless devices and wired devices. Several WAPs can link together to form a larger network that allows "roaming". (In contrast, a network where the client devices manage themselves - without the need for any access points - becomes an ad-hoc network.) Wireless access points have IP addresses for configuration.
World Wide Web (WWW)	See Internet.