

Frequently Asked IT Questions for Employee Guardian's ad Litem Who Home Office

Question: What are the expectations of the GAL employee who office out of their home going to be in terms of equipment needed, access and maintenance?

Answer: GAL employees who are required to home office will be given a yearly stipend to set up and maintain their home office (see also stipend policy). It is expected that the GAL employee will have a desktop computer (or laptop) that meets the requirements listed below, internet capability, private phone line with access to a confidential voice message system, and faxing capabilities. The equipment will not be "State owned", but rather personally owned by the GAL employee. Thus, the GAL employee will be responsible for the maintenance, service, upgrading and replacement (if needed) of all equipment.

Computer Equipment:

Requirements for PCs already owned, and for PCs that will be purchased:

	<u>Already Owned Desktop</u>	<u>New Desktop</u>
Operating System	Windows XP SP3 or Windows Vista	Windows 7
Processor	Pentium CPU 3.00 GHz or Equivalent	Pentium CPU Dual Core 3.00 GHz or Equivalent
Web Browser	Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher	Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher
Memory	2 GB RAM	4 GB RAM
RDP Client Version*	RDP 7.0	RDP 7.0
Antivirus Product	Each machine must have an antivirus product installed. The Court's product, Sophos, is available at no cost for those who wish to use it. Click this link for more information.	

	<u>Already Owned Laptop</u>	<u>New Laptop</u>
Operating System	Windows XP SP3 or Windows Vista	Windows 7
Processor	Intel Pentium CPU 1.00 GHz or Equivalent	Intel Pentium CPU 2.00 GHz or Equivalent
Web Browser	Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher	Internet Explorer 7.0 or higher
Memory	2 GB RAM	4 GB RAM
RDP Client Version*	RDP 7.0	RDP 7.0
Antivirus Product	Each machine must have an antivirus product installed. The Court's product, Sophos, is available at no cost for those who wish to use it. Click this link for more information.	

* RPD 7.0 installation instructions are provided in the directions for accessing RDS (Remote Desktop Services) for the first time.

Note: Refer to this document ([Determining Your Computer Resources](#)) for assistance on determining whether your computer meets the minimum requirements.

E-mail:

Question: Will home officing GAL employees be given Court email accounts? i.e. firstname.lastname@courts.state.mn.us

Answer: Yes. Court email can be accessed through either Outlook Web Access (OWA) or the full Outlook client. OWA will be available over the Internet, and the full Outlook client through Remote Desktop Services (RDS). We recently implemented RDS, which replaced our previous remote desktop solution (Netilla) to provide better support for home officed GALs.

Remote Access - Internet & Applications:

Question: What software applications are GAL employees expected to use? Are they available to the employee via RDS?

Answer: All software applications needed, including Outlook 2007, MNCIS, COURTNET and other Court web based applications, Service Desk Express, and document storage on the network will be offered through SharePoint (this is our preference) or RDS.

Question: What software applications are GAL employees provided for their home PCs.

Answer:

Office Suite

The Microsoft Office 2007 Suite (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) is the current Office Suite being used by the Courts and it will be provided to GALs through Microsoft's Home Use Program (HUP). GALs may purchase this product, and are permitted to use the Office Suite on their home computers as long as remain a Court Employee and as long as the Court renews the Software Assurance agreement with Microsoft. The cost for the Microsoft Office Suite through the Home Use Program is \$10 for download rights, and an additional \$15 if media is desired.

This is offered to all Court employees, but upon separation from the Court, the software cannot be legally used any longer. Additionally, we will not renew our Software Assurance agreement with Microsoft in June, 2011, so the software cannot be legally used after that date, and must be removed from the home computer. There is more information on COURTNET regarding the [HUP program](#).

Antivirus

Home computers used by GAL employees must be protected by an antivirus product (like Sophos, Norton, McAfee, etc.). The Judicial Branch also provides antivirus software for home use. The antivirus software is an **option** for those GAL employees who wish to use it. There is no cost for this software. GALs can continue using their current antivirus program if they wish or they can begin using the antivirus software the Court uses. Information for downloading and installing the Court antivirus program (Sophos) has been posted to SharePoint and can be accessed [here](#).

Question: How will home officing GAL employees access the Courts Intranet "CourtNet"?

Answer: GAL employees who operate out of a home office will gain remote network access through RDS which can be accessed from a standard internet connection. A Service Desk ticket will be submitted by each Judicial District and IT will create the necessary accounts. CourtNet will be accessible to each GAL once the RDS account has been activated.

Question: Should we use the Internet Explorer icon from the remote access environment to surf non-Judicial Branch websites?

Answer: No, this will be slower than using Internet Explorer from your home desktop, and can introduce viruses to the remote access environment. Normally our antivirus software should catch viruses, but we had a recent situation where people that went to the Star Tribune website infected our environment.

Question: Is access to the Minnesota Court Information System (MNCIS) accessible through remote network access?

Answer: Yes, MNCIS will be available remotely through RDS.

Question: How much network bandwidth is needed for home guardians?

Answer: We are recommending high speed Internet with a minimum of 1.5MB of bandwidth. Performance with a connection that has less bandwidth will be slower.

Question: Is printing to a local printer from Remote Desktop Services (RDS) applications possible?

Answer: Printing from applications (those with File, Print) should work with Remote Desktop Services. Printing from MNCIS will also be possible. RDS uses a universal print driver which should work for the majority of printers. Printing from RDS is not supported by the Court's IT staff, however, so some printers may never be able to print from RDS.

Question: Will the GAL employee be able to use their personal laptops in a courthouse and access their Court accounts?

Answer: Wireless access is available at most court houses, and in locations where you can get a signal, GALs will be able to connect to these networks with their personal laptops (we ask that they keep their antivirus current). Once connected wirelessly, they would still need to use their valid network account to utilize Court applications like e-mail. They could also use a public county wireless connection to connect to Court resources through RDS. Each Judicial District may have their own rules concerning use of wireless in their respective courthouses.

Technical Support from Court IT:

Question: What Court IT support can the home officing GAL employee expect?

Answer: Court IT will respond to connectivity issues whether at home or accessing wirelessly at a courthouse location. It should be understood that we have two technicians in most Judicial Districts with hundreds of users to support. Tickets are prioritized according to the number of people impacted. IT will also provide virus protection for home computers, via a product from Sophos, but if you already have a product you like such as McAfee, or Symantec that is fine. Use of Sophos is free to Court employees. Computer failures, and all other regular maintenance or repairs are the responsibility of the home officing GAL employee. Refer to the following tables for more information.

Application/Product	Issues Supported by the Judicial Branch IT (Service Desk)
RDS (Remote Desktop Services)	Unable to connect to RDS (but can connect to other websites)
	Unable to open an application within RDS
	Missing an application within RDS
	Unable to login to RDS
	Trouble changing your Windows password inside RDS
OWA (Outlook Web Access)	Unable to connect to Outlook Web Access (OWA) (but can connect to other websites)
	Unable to login to Outlook Web Access (OWA)
Other Issues	Questions regarding use of Microsoft Office Home Use Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)
	Upload/download with SharePoint and/or Windows Explorer
Wireless Support	Laptop wireless issues connecting to Branch wireless hotspots.
Antivirus Products*	Sophos antivirus installation issues
	Sophos antivirus connection issues (Not receiving Sophos updates)
<i>* Sophos antivirus is provided as an option - You may continue using a product you already have</i>	

Application/Product	Issues NOT Supported by the Judicial Branch IT (Service Desk)
RDS	Unable to connect to <u>any</u> websites including RDS
	Unable to print from applications within RDS
OWA	Unable to connect to <u>any</u> websites including OWA
Other Issues	Microsoft Office Home Use Program installation issues
	Hardware issues (Unable to print, computer/monitor not working, etc.)
	Issues with antivirus products not distributed by the Courts (Norton, McAfee, etc.).
Wireless Support	Laptop wireless issues connecting to public wireless hotspots.
Antivirus Products	Assistance with removing a virus from your computer

Additional Resources for GAL Employees:

The following website has been created for GAL Employees who work from home. Topics covered on the website include accessing RDS, changing your Windows password, and using SharePoint and OWA.

<http://mncourts.gov/?page=3997>