



Helpdesk Policies and Procedures

Purpose

This policy outlines the method of how requests to the Helpdesk are prioritized and timeframes for resolution. The Helpdesk is the first point of contact for technology resources support for the faculty, staff, and students at Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU). The Helpdesk provides technology assistance through telephone, emails, web based queries, and walk-in requests for technology support. The Helpdesk uses Track IT Service Desk software, a ticket system to record and track all technology requests and to triage service. This system provides procedures of operation for the Helpdesk and technology support model. The system defines the processes necessary to insure technology problems and requests for service are resolved in an efficient and timely manner.

Scope of Support

The Department of Information Technology Helpdesk is committed to providing hardware, software, network, telephone, video cable, media, event, and lab support for the MVSU community during business hours and all other times for priority one events. A standard process and single point of contact for all technology problems is necessary to eliminate confusion over whom to call for each type of issue.

The Department of Information Technology is comprised of director, assistant director/application, network manager, network service technician, information technologist specialist, computer technician, webmaster and network support personnel to provide support for technology issues or respond to questions via telephone, email, or the online self-service process.

Helpdesk Support

Helpdesk staff strives for first call resolution. Helpdesk staff may use remote control when possible, always requesting permission prior to taking control of a user's machine. Sometimes a desk visit is required to resolve a problem. Staff members who receive calls directly, rather than through the Helpdesk should direct the caller to email helpdesk@mvsu.edu.

The caller should be informed that calls made directly to staff members are subject to delays, missed calls, and delayed resolution of problems. Helpdesk staff are to enter a ticket for each caller, even in the event of a major outage. Helpdesk staff are to assist the caller in the event of a major outlet not to just tell the caller we are aware of the problem. If a trouble ticket requires escalation, the Helpdesk staff is to maintain ownership of the problem and escalation process. Helpdesk staff are to advise the caller that the problem is being escalated and that a Technician will contact them.

Helpdesk staff are to follow up with Tier I or II to insure resolution is achieved and the ticket is updated. When entering or updating tickets, the Helpdesk staff is to describe the problem accurately and include detail. Generalizations such as “Broken” or “Fixed” are not sufficient to communicate worthwhile information.

Helpdesk staff are to update tickets so that when users call the Helpdesk for status updates, anyone taking his or her call can provide meaningful information. Helpdesk staff are to furnish the caller with his or her ticket number before terminating the call. If the caller does not want to wait for the Helpdesk agent to complete entering the information, the caller is to be informed that they would receive a notification via email referencing the ticket number. The Helpdesk agent is to keep the user informed and updated on the progress of his or her ticket.

Helpdesk Support Center Tier 1 and 2

The Helpdesk is staffed Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and Fridays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Helpdesk staff will be available to answer support calls, as well as to monitor Helpdesk email.

Unresolved calls are assigned to technicians for further resolution. Technicians are responsible for keeping the end user informed of the status and realistic expectations. Technicians are responsible to confer with each other and escalate problems, to management, that they cannot fix within a reasonable timeframe.

All technicians are required to meet a certain service –level agreement based on the severity of the problem. Technicians also provide second level hardware, software, and network support for problems escalated and issues are escalated to the director when dictated by service level agreements. The network service technician will work closely with colleagues to administer network software applications, create desktop images, deploy desktop solutions, and provide patch management. The network service technician is also responsible for assisting with phone support when called upon to do so. In the case of a system wide service outage, the Director of Information Technology is responsible for posting Event Notifications. Examples of system wide service outages include a power failure, partial or widespread network failure, and failure of the Banner system.

Helpdesk Support Center Manager

The Helpdesk Manager is responsible for monitoring ongoing performance and productivity of the Helpdesk, striving for continual improvement. He or she monitors the call management and ticketing system to determine when resources need to be reallocated amongst business units in order to provide essential IT and media support.

The Helpdesk Manager coordinates with all technicians to appropriately balance the workload across the support infrastructure, as well as oversee technology deployments, special technical projects, and support for events across the University. The Helpdesk Manager is responsible for

implementing best practice standards and promote a consistent high level of service delivery to Mississippi Valley State University staff, faculty and students.

The Helpdesk Manager will also review service call reports to identify aging or unusual trouble tickets and determine appropriate escalations. The Helpdesk Manager will be responsible for escalating service outages and unresolved Event Notifications to the Director of Information Technology.

The Helpdesk Manager will supervise technicians to ensure that

- Trouble ticket requests are monitored to identify service outages
- Service Outage Event Notifications are posted promptly
- Service Restored Event Notifications are posted promptly

The following table shows different priority levels for requests, a brief description of what constitutes each priority category, and timelines for problem response and resolution by the IT Department.

Tier (Severity)	Description	Response Time	Resolution Time
1	Critical system is down Little to no functionality No workaround Data corrupted Many users affected Regulatory or legal implications Password Resets Classroom session is interrupted	30 minutes	< 2 hours
2	Functionality severely restricted No workaround Several users affected	1 hour	< 4 hour
3	Basic functionality with some restrictions Workaround available One or more users affected	4 hours	24-48 hours
4	Minor problem Functionality unaffected Cosmetic or an annoyance	Next business day	48-72 hours

Technician Support

Problems and requests designated

- Tier 1 Severity will take priority.
- Tier 4 Severity issues hold the lowest priority.
- Problems and requests within a specific priority category will be handled on a first come first served basis.
- In some cases, special consideration will be given to mobile and remote employees whose access to company resources is more constrained. In the event of a natural disaster, failure of a third-party utility (such as electrical power), or other situation resulting in multiple Level 1 issues, stated response and resolution times maybe longer.

Procedures

Employees or students may contact the Helpdesk in one of the following ways to report a problem. Provide your name, ID number, email address, telephone number, description of the problem, problem type, and problem location. This information serves to verify identity and contact information, and identifies equipment location. After entering a service request, you will be furnished a ticket number to be referenced when checking status of the ticket.

- Call 662-254-3744 to have the helpdesk staff to check on a ticket.
- Email: your request to helpdesk@mvsu.edu. Include name, contact information, timeline, and all necessary details.
- Walk-in assistance is available at the Annex I building.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Directory of Information Technology every year.