

Don't Get in Trouble With the Software Police!

Does your company buy a copy of software and install it on all company computers or on a network server for all employees to use? Does your company allow employees to take a copy of software home to use it on a home computer? Does your company allow employees to bring software from home to use on your company's computers? If so, the software police may be looking for you.

Comply With the Software License Agreement

A license may allow use of software on more than one computer, on a network server, or on a home computer; but often it does not. Most people do not read the license agreement. Many make the mistake of assuming that buying a copy of software entitles them to use the software wherever they want. Read the agreement. It will be very clear about what you are allowed to do.

One Credible Tip and the Software Police Are on Your Doorstep

The tip usually comes from a disgruntled employee or former employee. The Software & Information Industry Association makes it easy to report violations online, by e-mail, or by phone; and it offers rewards of up to \$1 million.

What's the Risk?

The penalties for using unlicensed software include statutory damages of up to \$150,000 for each software product infringed. The software owner may also recover court costs and attorney fees. If willful infringement is found, the company may be subject to criminal penalties.