

## Electronic Mail

### 212.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper use and application of the Department's electronic mail (email) system by employees of this department. E-mail is a communication tool available to employees to enhance efficiency in the performance of job duties and is to be used in accordance with generally accepted business practices and current law (e.g., California Public Records Act). Messages transmitted over the e-mail system must only be those that involve official business activities or contain information essential to employees for the accomplishment of business-related tasks and/or communication directly related to the business, administration, or practices of the Department.

### 212.2 EMAIL RIGHT OF PRIVACY

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

All email messages, including any attachments, that are transmitted over department networks are considered department records and therefore are department property. The Department reserves the right to access, audit or disclose, for any lawful reason, any message including any attachment that is transmitted over its email system or that is stored on any department system.

The email system is not a confidential system since all communications transmitted on, to or from the system are the property of the Department. Therefore, the email system is not appropriate for confidential communications. If a communication must be private, an alternative method to communicate the message should be used instead of email. Employees using the Department's email system shall have no expectation of privacy concerning communications utilizing the system.

Employees should not use personal accounts to exchange email or other information that is related to the official business of the Department.

#### 212.2 (a)

#### EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

All employees are required to view their e-mail daily on work days and respond in a timely manner.

E-mail users should delete any unexpected or unknown e-mails especially with attachments, or report them to ITS immediately to prevent computer virus attacks. E-mail users should review and delete their obsolete messages periodically.

### 212.3 PROHIBITED USE OF EMAIL

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

Sending derogatory, defamatory, obscene, disrespectful, sexually suggestive and harassing or any other inappropriate messages on the email system is prohibited and may result in discipline.

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Email messages addressed to the entire department are only to be used for official business related items that are of particular interest to all users and must be approved by the Chief of Police or a Division Chief. Personal advertisements are not acceptable.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message under another user's name. Users are strongly encouraged to log off the network when their computer is unattended. This added security measure would minimize the misuse of an individual's email, name and/or password by others.

#### **212.4 EMAIL RECORD MANAGEMENT**

Discretionary **MODIFIED**

The email system is not designed for long-term retention of messages. Emails that the employee desires to save or that becomes part of an official record should be printed and/or stored in another database. Users of email are solely responsible for the management of their mailboxes. Non-essential messages should be purged manually by the user at least once per week. All messages in excess of one month may be deleted at regular intervals from the server computer.

Email may, depending upon the individual content, be a public record under the California Public Records Act and must be managed in accordance with the established records retention schedule and in compliance with state law.

The Custodian of Records and the Director of IT shall ensure that email messages are retained and recoverable as outlined in the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.