

Electronic Mail

419.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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). County employees and volunteers with access to electronic mail shall also comply with Board of Supervisors policy A-50 regarding Electronic Media and Use. 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.

419.2 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

- Executive Committee;
- Board of Supervisors Policy A-50;
- California Public Records Act.

419.3 E-MAIL RIGHT OF PRIVACY

All e-mail 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 e-mail system or that is stored on any department system.

The e-mail system is not a confidential system since all communications transmitted on, to or from the system are the property of the Department. Therefore, the e-mail 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 e-mail. Employees using the Department's e-mail system shall have no expectation of privacy concerning communications utilizing the system.

This policy shall not be interpreted to limit the County's access to e-mail messages under appropriate circumstances. However this policy is in no way intended to permit unauthorized access to e-mail messages.

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

419.4 PROHIBITED USE OF E-MAIL

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

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E-mail messages addressed to the entire department are only to be used for official business related items that are of particular interest to all users. Personal advertisements are not acceptable.

E-mail may not be used to engage in any communications which would otherwise violate County rules, policies or procedures or applicable laws.

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 e-mail, name and/or password by others.

419.5 MANAGEMENT OF E-MAIL

E-mail users should be aware that when they have deleted a message from their mailbox it may not have been deleted from the e-mail system and that every e-mail message may be saved by the County. E-mail users should always remember that e-mail messages may be read at a later date by persons other than the sender and the recipient.

In compliance with County policy, e-mail messages must be retained in the department's online e-mail systems no longer than 90 days after they are created or received into the email system.

Each user's e-mail messages must be automatically deleted from the department's online email systems according to the following schedule:

- All items in the "Trash" will be purged every 14 days.
- All "In" and "Out" box items (whether read, opened or unopened) will be purged after the 90 day e-mail retention period has expired.

419.5.1 POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

E-mail users shall acknowledge in writing that they have received and read this policy and the Board of Supervisors Policy A-50 (<http://www.rivcocob.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/A-501.pdf>). Such written acknowledgement will be retained in each employee's personnel file.

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Attachments: None