

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

AR No. 4C.11

Effective: July 1, 2005

ELECTRONIC MAIL AND MESSAGING POLICY

I. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this Administrative Regulation is to establish guidelines for creating, sending, receiving, and storing electronic mail messages using the City of Beverly Hills electronic mail (E-mail) system from within the City network as well as via the Internet.
- B. This Administrative Regulation does not supersede any state or federal laws, or other City policies regarding confidentiality, information dissemination, or standards of conduct.

II. SCOPE

- A. This Administrative Regulation applies to all Workers regardless of status, including but not limited to employees (permanent, exempt, probationary, part-time, and others), volunteers and contractors, who have been given access to the City E-mail system through the use of an account.
- B. This Administrative Regulation applies to the contents of E-mail communications, and to the electronic attachments and transactional information with such communications. This policy applies only to E-mail records in electronic form, not to printed copies of electronic records or printed copies of transactional information.
- C. Please refer to the Information Systems Acceptable Use Administrative Regulation (4C.14) for general computer usage policies.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The City Manager, City Attorney, Director of Human Services and Director of Information Technology are the primary persons charged with administering these policies.
- B. Any request to monitor an individual E-mail account shall be submitted to the Director of Human Services. If approved, Information Technology will work with the specific department to provide the requested information or to provide access to an E-mail account.
- C. Authorized users shall not have an expectation of privacy in E-mail transmitted via or stored on the City's network. The City reserves ownership of all E-mail communications and file attachments residing on the City's E-mail system. All E-mail accounts may be monitored at any time and for any reason in accordance with the process outlined above or as provided in other Administrative Regulations.

- D. Authorized users shall act responsibly and professionally in their use of E-mail. While communicating in E-mail, users shall follow proper etiquette. Clear, civil, respectful language and wording shall be used in composing messages. Written insults, rudeness, innuendos, harassing, intimidating and/or threatening messages are prohibited.
- E. Authorized users shall compose E-mail messages in normal upper and lower case style as would be used in a formal written letter. Users shall refrain from sending ALL-UPPER-CASE messages, which are considered the same as "shouting" and may imply undue importance and urgency.
- F. E-mail messages shall contain appropriate Subject titles that describe in very concise words the general content of the overall message.
- G. E-mail messages shall be considered the same as a formal written letter and shall follow the same general etiquette and formatting. As a general guideline, authorized users should not send any messages or content via E-mail that they would not be willing to send in a formal written letter representing the City.
- H. The use of a Blind Carbon Copy (Bcc) in an E-mail message is discouraged except when it is used within an official capacity to preserve the confidentiality of recipients in a formal distribution list thereby limiting the interaction of the recipients. Most authorized users are not likely to have an appropriate need to use the Bcc function.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. E-mail Retention and Storage

1. All E-mail items older than thirty (30) days will automatically be deleted from the E-mail system. If a message is deemed relevant beyond the thirty (30) day retention period, it should be transferred by the user from the E-mail system to an electronic file or printed. As a caveat, retained messages are regarded as a Public Record per the California Public Records Act, Government Code Sections 6250-6268.
2. The E-mail system is backed-up daily, including each user account. Backup files for each E-mail account are retained for forty-eight (48) hours. Backing-up the E-mail system is solely for recovery of the E-mail system due to a catastrophic failure and is not intended to support the recovery of deleted messages nor the analysis of a particular E-mail account.

B. E-mail Attachments

Information Technology reserves the right to limit the size of E-mail attachments, both incoming and outgoing, to maintain the efficient operation of the City E-mail system and as a courtesy to external mail systems.

C. Recommended Signature Line

The E-mail system provides for multiple "signature lines" as a means of providing additional information about the sender. For inbound and outbound E-mail, the recommended format shall be as follows, using Times New Roman, 10-point Font:

Name
Title
Department
City of Beverly Hills
Address
Beverly Hills, CA 902xx

Direct: 310.xxx.xxxx
Pager: 310.xxx.xxxx
Fax: 310.xxx.xxxx
E-mail: account@beverlyhills.org

D. Distribution Lists

Distribution lists are maintained in the E-mail system's Global Address Book. Lists are provided to help with the distribution of important messages to City users. The sending of a "Citywide" E-mail message is restricted to work-related information of some urgency and shall be reviewed and have the approval of the Department Head and the City Manager's Office. Replies to the author of a Citywide message shall be directed only to the author and not to all members of the distribution list. To accomplish this, authorized users shall select "Reply" in the reply dialog box, instead of, "Reply to All".

E. SPAM and Unsolicited E-mail

Unwelcome and unsolicited E-mail messages can result in the reduction of timely delivery of E-mail, both internally and externally, and are used as a delivery mechanism for introducing computer viruses, unsolicited advertising, and sexually explicit materials. The City reserves the right to implement keyword filtering techniques, file attachment filtering techniques, virus protection, and blocking of inappropriate or offensive content. Sender blocking may also be used to maintain the integrity and security of the City's E-mail system.

F. Personal E-mail Disclaimer

Authorized users of the City E-mail system shall be aware if sending an E-mail message of a personal nature, that their words may be interpreted as official City policy or opinion. The following disclaimer shall be used at the end of a personal message:

"This E-mail contains the thoughts and opinions of INDIVIDUAL and does not reflect official City of Beverly Hills policy."

G. Confidential E-mail Disclaimer


If the content of the E-mail contains confidential information, the following disclaimer is recommended:

"This message contains information which may be privileged, confidential and intended only for the addressee. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this communication, or any part thereof, is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please advise the sender by reply E-mail and delete the message."

V. MORE INFORMATION


For questions or additional information relating to this Administrative Regulation, please contact Human Services or the Department of Information Technology.

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