

MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

USE OF DEPARTMENT EMAIL

Management Directive # 08-02

Date Issued: **04/16/08** **10/14/08**

- New Policy Release
- Revision of Existing Management Directive, MD 08-02, Use of Department Email, dated 02/21/08

Revision Made: **Added Employee Number to DCFS 5611**

Note added to indicate the DCFS 5611, is now available on LA Kids Form Page.

Cancels: None

DEPARTMENTAL VALUES

The Department continues to focus on the three priority outcomes. We have identified improved safety for children, improved timelines to permanency. Timely permanence is achieved, with the first permanency option being reunification, followed by adoption with a relative and legal guardianship with a relative followed by adoption with an unrelated caregiver and legal guardianship with an unrelated caregiver.

APPLICABLE TO

This directive applies to all Department staff (County employees, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers and other governmental and private agency staff) who make use of the Department's email system.

POLICY

Access to County and/or Department email services is a privilege that may be wholly or partially restricted without prior notice or without consent of the user.

All email messages are the property of the County and are subject to review by authorized County personnel. Staff cannot expect a right to privacy when using the County email system.

All County and Department email is subject to audit and periodic unannounced

review by authorized individuals as directed by County management. The County and DCFS reserve the right to access and view all electronic mail messages for any business purpose.

The management of email must comply with legal requirements regarding record retention and destruction. Retention of email must be minimized to the greatest extent possible to conserve information technology resources, eliminate excessive unnecessary and duplicative email records and to prevent risk of unauthorized disclosure. All employees are instructed to manage the retention of all incoming and outgoing emails in accordance with this directive.

- A. Email is provided as a County of Los Angeles and Department of Children and Family Services resource for conducting County business only.
- B. All email is subject to audit and periodic unannounced review by authorized individuals as directed by Department and County management. The County of Los Angeles and the Department of Children and Family Services reserves the right to override any individual password and access all electronic mail messages for any business purpose.
- C. Each employee/contractor is to read and sign the attached "Employee Acknowledgement of Electronic Mail Usage" form. This form is to be signed upon receipt and reading of this policy and at the time of signing each annual Report of Performance Evaluation.
- D. All current County and Department policies regarding confidentiality must be followed while using email.
- E. The confidentiality of children, families and personnel is to be protected when using email. All policies applicable to the records of children, families and employees served by our Department are applicable to email.
- F. When in the office, each employee is responsible to open and read his or her email on a daily basis.
- G. Email may not be used to transmit insulting, offensive, demeaning, disruptive; sexually suggestive language, topics involving harassment in any form, sexual, racial, ethnic, gender slurs; material that is harmful to morale, obscenities or any representations of obscenities.
- H. Email may not be used to transmit gossip, personal information about the sender to others, or to forward messages under circumstances likely to embarrass the sender or others.
- I. Email may not be used to solicit or proselytize for commercial ventures, religions, or personal causes.

J. All employees must activate the Microsoft Outlook "Out of Office Assistant" with appropriate alternate contact information in the event of vacation or other extended absence from the office. If necessary, Office Heads must request that Bureau of Information Services automatically refer all email for long term absent employees to appropriate alternate staff.

K. Email users shall not:

1. Send a message using another person's email address unless authorized by that person.
2. Send an altered message to a third party as though it is the original message.
3. Send anonymous messages.
4. Provide his/her email address to anyone for personal, non-business use or personal gain.

L. Email services shall not be used for purposes that could reasonably be expected to cause directly or indirectly excessive strain on the email system or unwarranted or unsolicited interference with others' use of email or the email system. For instance, email users may not use the email global address list to mass mail the recipients on that list.

M. Internet based email services (e. g. Yahoo mail, Hot Mail, etc.) must not be accessed using County and or Department information technology resources except for County purposes.

N. Email retention must comply with legal requirements, but must be minimized to conserve information technology resources and prevent risk of unauthorized disclosure.

O. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including discharge as well as civil and criminal penalties. Non-employees including contractors may be subject to termination of contractual agreements, denial of access and/or penalties both criminal and civil.

PROCEDURES

A. All employees conducting business using email as a means of communication are individually responsible for determining if the content of an email message, whether sent or received, is subject to legal record retention requirements in the same way they would for business-related correspondence received in paper form. Any question employees have with regard to applicable retention requirements of a particular email message should be brought to the attention of his or her manager or supervisor prior to disposing of that email message in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Incoming emails

- a. **Non-business related (personal/spam type) incoming emails:** Delete from the desktop **Inbox** folder on the same date of receipt (or immediately upon reading).
- b. **Business-related incoming emails:** Delete from the desktop **Inbox** folder after held for no more than 90 days. If employee desires to retain this email beyond 90 days for business-related reasons, employee must transfer that email from this or their Inbox folder to another storage location on their desktop PC or to some other storage medium (e.g., CD-ROM, floppy disk, paper copy).

2. Outgoing (Sent) emails

- a. **Non-business related (personal) outgoing emails:** Delete from the desktop **Sent Items** folder on the same date of transmission.
- b. **Business-related outgoing emails:** Delete from the desktop **Sent Items** folder after held for no more than 30 days. If employee desires to retain this sent email beyond 30 days for business-related reasons, employee must transfer that email from their desktop Sent Items folder to another storage location on their desktop computer or to some other storage medium (e.g., floppy disk, CD-ROM, paper copy).

3. Emptying "Deleted Items" folders:

- a. In that deleted emails remain active in the email system until the **Deleted Items** folder is "emptied," employees shall cause their **Deleted Items** folder to be emptied on a weekly basis.

B. Employees shall be responsible for:

- 1. Adhering to all the procedures listed above, as appropriate (see 3.A.1-3).
- 2. Using email for business purposes only.
- 3. Using email only as is appropriate.
- 4. Adhering to policy regarding Password Protection as outlined in Management Directive 08-01, "Use of Department Information Technology Resources."
- 5. Opening and reading email on a daily basis.
- 6. Adhering to all policies concerning conduct, sexual harassment, conflict of interest and confidentiality in use of email.

7. Notifying the immediate supervisor of any email messages received which may be characterized as non-business related, threatening, derogatory, or sexually harassing.
8. To not open, read, reply or forward email that is suspected or is known to have a virus.
9. Activating the “Out of Office Assistant” with appropriate alternate contact information in the event of vacation or other extended absences from the office.

C. Supervisors shall be responsible for the following:

1. Adhering to all the procedures listed above, as appropriate (see 3.A.1-3 and 3.B.1 -9).
2. Ensure that all employees read and sign the “Employee Acknowledgement of Electronic Mail Usage” with the original being sent to Human Resources for filing in the employee’s Official Personnel Folder, one copy to be given to the employee and one copy to be filed in the employee’s Office Personnel Folder.
3. Forwarding to the Office Head or his/her designee any report by any employee regarding email received which is of a threatening or derogatory nature or which is perceived as sexually harassing.
4. Confer with the Office Manager, and/or Human Resources for appropriate action, including disciplinary, for any known violation of this policy by employees.

D. Office Heads shall be responsible for:

1. Ensuring that email policy is distributed, understood, and adhered to by all employees.
2. Adhering to all the applicable procedures listed above (see 3.A.1-3 and 3.B.1-9).
3. Investigating and then reporting to the Personnel Section, Human Resources Division any email received by employee/employees which appears threatening or derogatory or which is perceived as sexually harassing.

E. Human Resources is responsible for reviewing all reported employee abuses of email. If evidence of abuse is identified, notice must be provided to the Auditor-Controller’s Office of County Investigations.

APPROVAL LEVELS

Section	Level	<u>Approval</u>
A.-D	None	

LINKS

Board of Supervisor Policy Manual <http://countypolicy.co.la.ca.us>

RELATED POLICIES

Board of Supervisor Policy 3.040, General Records Retention and Protection of Records Containing Personal and Confidential Information

Board of Supervisor Policy 6.104, Use of Electronic Mail (e-mail) by County Employees

FORM(S) REQUIRED/LOCATION

HARD COPY **DCFS 5611**, Employee Acknowledgement of Electronic Mail Usage

LA Kids: **DCFS 5611**, Employee Acknowledgement of Electronic Mail Usage

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Employee Acknowledgement of Electronic Mail Usage

It is the policy of the County of Los Angeles and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) that each employee, whether permanent, temporary, part-time, contract or any other, be individually responsible for the protection of all County information, data, and information processing resources to which he or she has access by virtue of employment by the County.

I hereby acknowledge that I will be held accountable for my actions when using electronic mail (email) through County resources. I hereby state that I will use due diligence to conform my actions to the following rules governing email usage:

- I will use email for County and DCFS approved purposes only.
- I understand that I do not have a right to privacy in any information stored and/or transmitted on our Department's computers.
- I understand that the County and DCFS expressly reserves, and has the right to review any and all information or any message stored and/or transmitted by me via email without my consent.
- I understand that my email activities may be logged and are subject to audit and review by authorized individuals as directed by County and/or Department management, with or without prior notice.
- Only I will use my email account. I will not share my email address with inappropriate persons as outlined by this policy.
- I will not transmit or make available confidential County data outside of the County via email.
- I will not transmit data and/or communication violating any applicable law or regulation (including copyright laws).
- I will not communicate or transmit any text, graphic, audio, video, or other data that may in any reasonable way be deemed offensive, or that may be a violation of the County's or Department's non-discrimination and/or harassment policies.
- I will not transmit data and/or communicate using another person's email address.
- I will not transmit altered data and/or communications to a third party as though it is the original message.

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- I will not transmit data and/or communications anonymously.
- I recognize that my willful or negligent failure to fulfill these responsibilities, including the actions of someone else using my email account, could result in the abuse of County Information resources and data, and that the County may hold me personally responsible for such abuse and may subject me to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the Management Directive 08-02, Use of Department Email, and will abide by its direction.

Employee Name (PRINT) Employee Number

Employee Signature Date

Supervisor's Name (PRINT) Supervisor's Signature Date

PREPARATION: Original and two copies
DISTRIBUTION: Original in employee's Official Personnel Folder
One copy in employee's Office Personnel Folder
One copy to employee