

## Electronic Mail

### 204.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper use and application of the electronic mail (email) system provided by the Office.

### 204.2 POLICY

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office members shall use email in a professional manner in accordance with this policy and current law, remaining aware that emails are subject to public disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act (Md. Code GP § 4-101 et seq.).

### 204.3 PRIVACY EXPECTATION

Members forfeit any expectation of privacy with regard to emails accessed, transmitted, received or reviewed on any office technology system (see the Information Technology Use Policy for additional guidance).

### 204.4 RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF EMAIL

Messages transmitted over the email system are restricted to official business activities, or shall only contain information that is essential for the accomplishment of business-related tasks or for communications that are directly related to the business, administration or practices of the Office.

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.

- An employee should report immediately any such message received to their supervisor. The supervisor will relay the message through their respective chain of command for action. Notification to the Director of Information Technology will be the responsibility of the Office of Professional Responsibilities and/or the Information Technology Liaison after consultation with the Office of Professional Responsibilities.

Email messages addressed to the entire Office are only to be used for official business-related items that are of particular interest to all users. In the event that a member has questions about sending a particular email communication, the member should seek prior approval from a supervisor in his/her chain of command.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message under another member's name or email address or to use the password of another to log into the system unless directed to do so by a supervisor. Members are required to log off the network or secure the workstation when the computer is unattended. This added security measure will minimize the potential misuse of a member's email, name or password. Any member who believes his/her password has become known to another person shall change their password immediately.

St. Mary's County information systems are provided for, and must be used only for business purposes. Incidental personal use is permissible if the use:

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- (a) Does not consume more than a trivial amount of resources that could otherwise be used for business purposes.
- (b) Does not interfere with worker productivity.
- (c) Does not preempt any business activity.
- (d) Is not illegal or unethical.
- (e) Permissible incidental use of an electronic mail system would, for example, involve sending a message to schedule a luncheon.

Employees may use e-mail to communicate confidential information internally to those with a need to know when such transmissions enhance operations. Such e-mail must be marked "Confidential". Confidential information to external recipients should not be sent via e-mail unless appropriate encryption technologies are utilized. This includes the transmission of customer financial information, Social Security numbers, employee health records, or other confidential material

#### **204.5 OTHER ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATIONS**

Certain items of correspondence will routinely be forwarded to agency personnel through e-mail. All personnel are required and supervisors will ensure e-mails are checked on all duty days so as to receive updated agency correspondence and notification of pending items.

The electronic notifications and receipt of those notifications will be monitored.

#### **204.6 EMAIL RECORD MANAGEMENT**

Email may, depending upon the individual content, be a public record under the Maryland Public Information Act and must be managed in accordance with the established records retention schedule and in compliance with state law (Md. Code SG § 10-610; COMAR 14.18.02.04).

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

[Saint Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: EMAIL RETENTION PROCEDURES](#)