



DEPARTMENT NOTICE

23-144

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Department Email Policy & Procedures

(Update to DN 20 070)

The purpose of this Department Notice is to outline policy and procedure for the use of email for sworn and non-sworn members ("members"), specifically related to who can send email, what information can be sent and to whom the information can be distributed.

The Department email system allows members to communicate efficiently with other members, respond to the concerns of the community and conduct official Department business. Accordingly, the Department assigns each member an individual email account for official Department business.

EMAIL POLICY:

- Use of computers and email is governed by DGO 10.08 (Use of Computers and Peripheral Equipment). Members shall comply with this General Order when using and accessing their email accounts to eliminate any potential liability and inappropriate use.
- Department email is for official Department use and for Department sanctioned events only. Members shall not use the email system for personal use.
- Members shall not include offensive content in emails. Offensive content includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any comments that would reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, creed, ethnicity, age, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, ancestry, color, medical condition, genetic characteristics, gender identity, marital or domestic partner status, parental status, veteran status, height, weight or any other basis protected by law or any other comments that would bring discredit on the Department or the member. An email which contains offensive content will not subject a member to discipline provided the transmission of such content serves an investigative or administrative purpose.
- The "SFPD Everyone" group email address is intended for critical or essential information that requires immediate dissemination to all members. With the exception of otherwise approved sources, i.e. Written Directives, Academy Training, and Investigation Bureau, members shall obtain approval from their Officer-in-Charge (OIC) prior to sending out a "SFPD Everyone" email communication. The member shall send the intended email to the OIC and wait for approval prior to sending the email to all members. The email sent to all members shall also include the OIC as a courtesy copy (cc).
- Emails and documents on City-owned computers are not private. Accordingly, members shall not transmit or store any personal emails or documents on City-owned computers. This rule applies to any and all personal use of City-owned computers and email accounts, even incidental or minimal usage. Members do not have any expectation of privacy in the contents of their emails on the City owned system. The Department may monitor, record, access, retrieve, or delete any information, including websites that a member viewed, created, stored, received, or sent over the Department's computers, internet link and email system for any reason with or without cause or notice at any time and without member's permission. This may

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include monitoring and reviewing emails, personal or private instant messages, and use of the internet and intranet, including the time spent on the internet and web sites visited.

- Email is intended and designed to be a tool of transmission and not a tool for storage of information. Email and email systems are not meant for electronic storage or maintenance of permanent records. Members should refer to the [City Attorney's Good Government Guide](#) for questions about the retention of email in accordance with the Department's record retention and destruction schedule and policy. Alternately, members should direct any questions to SFPD Legal Division at (415) 837-7394.
- Members should delete the information contained in the email if it is no longer needed to discharge the employee's official duties unless the Department's record retention and destruction schedule states otherwise.
- Members shall not use their personal email address for official City business. Under the Sunshine Ordinance and the Public Records Act, an email created or received using the City email system is a public record and may be subject to disclosure unless a specific exemption applies.

EMAIL PROCEDURES:

- **Members are responsible for monitoring their department email accounts at least once during the course of each shift. Members shall read and respond to (as necessary) any new messages in the Inbox. Members will be held accountable for information and documents transmitted by email.**
- Members shall provide their department email address to the public when asked or when email correspondence might aid in an investigation or otherwise assist with follow up.
- Members shall create a signature within their email that includes their name, rank, star number, assignment and unit phone number.
- Members shall use the "out of office" notification when a member expects to be away from work for more than three (3) working days.

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Failure to follow policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action.


WILLIAM SCOTT
Chief of Police

Per DN 20-150, all sworn & non-sworn members shall electronically acknowledge this Department Document in PowerDMS. Members whose duties are relevant to this Document shall be held responsible for compliance. Any questions regarding this policy should be made to sfpd.writtendirectives@sfgov.org who will provide additional information.