



Sample Email Usage Policy

Introduction

Electronic mail (email) is a computerised electronic communications system that you are required to use in the performance of your duties as a (CTC NAME) employee. While email is important to the normal conduct of business, it also carries considerable risks, if used inappropriately. The intention of this email policy is to help (CTC NAME) staff use electronic mail properly, to reduce the risk of intentional or inadvertent misuse and to ensure that official (CTC NAME) information transferred via email is properly handled. For that reason the use of electronic mail in (CTC NAME) is governed by acceptable use as stipulated by this policy.

Scope

This policy covers the use of email services by (CTC NAME) employees. Contract and temporary staff using (CTC NAME)'s computing resources must also be made aware of, and comply with this policy.

It may be amended from time to time and employees will be notified of amendments to the policy by way of written notice and/or electronic notice (which may be by email or by notice on the staff intranet).

Privacy

All intellectual property rights in documents generated on (CTC NAME) systems, and documents sent via (CTC NAME)'s email, rest with (CTC NAME). If there is a personal element to the email, the email nevertheless belongs to the organisation and will be open to such monitoring and dealings as are appropriate within the organisation.

(CTC NAME) regularly backs-up information stored on its network, including information relating to email messages. Accordingly, you have no expectation of privacy in relation to the sending, or storing of email messages.

While (CTC NAME) does not routinely monitor the content of email messages, it may, for computer maintenance and other purposes, analyse emails (individually or collectively). Circumstances giving rise to such analysis include, but are not limited to:

- investigations triggered by indications of misconduct,
- the detection of computer viruses,
- monitoring proper use,
- the location of information required for (CTC NAME)'s business,
- responding to legal or regulatory requirements and / or
- fulfilment of obligations to customers, clients, third parties and relevant regulatory authorities.

Acceptable use of email

Email as a resource is primarily to be used for authorised business purposes. Personal use of email should be kept to a minimum such that it does not interfere with work commitments and is undertaken in your own time. Excessive use of email for personal purposes is strictly prohibited. Such use must also comply with the requirements of this policy.

You must protect your user ID and system from unauthorised use. You are responsible for all activities carried out under your user ID, and originating from your system.

Remember that external email should be considered a public, visible postcard, without any security. You must assume that any correspondence sent via the internet can be read by anyone desiring to do so.

You must use email as you would any official CTC communications tool. This implies that when the email is sent, both the sender and the reader should ensure that the communication complies with normal communications guidelines.

No communication sent via the (CTC NAME) email system should be unethical, be perceived to be a conflict of interest, or contain confidential information.

Inappropriate use

In making use of email, you must NOT:

- use someone else's ID to send mail;
- use email to circulate joke mail or chain letters, internally or externally;
- use email to harass or intimidate another person, broadcast unsolicited messages, or send unwanted mail;
- communicate to another in any manner which could cause him/her distress, embarrassment, or unwarranted attention. There must be no personal attacks, inclusive of those based on gender, race, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or affiliation;
- use email, or other system resources to gain access to, or possession of pornographic materials;
- accept/open electronic mail messages that might be harmful to (CTC NAME)'s computing resources, or to information stored thereon;
- use vulgar, abusive, or hateful language;
- save, download, transmit or purposely view sexual, pornographic, racist, profane or other offensive material;
- download software, graphical or other forms of information for personal use;
- produce advertising or listings for personal benefit;
- use the email system to send mail, which may be damaging to (CTC NAME)'s corporate image;
- engage in any activity which is in competition with the commercial interests of (CTC NAME);
- subscribe to any contracts unless you are authorized to do so within the terms of (CTC NAME)'s policy on purchasing;
- accept any material by email which may give rise to a breach of the intellectual property rights of any outside party;
- engage in any other activity that does not comply with the principles presented above.

Potential risks

The Internet is the medium for external email communications. Because of its design, the internet cannot guarantee security or message integrity. There are many risks attached to the sending of emails including the following.

- Email messages to a particular addressee may be intercepted, viewed by other persons in the addressee organisation, forwarded without your knowledge, altered, or cut and pasted into another email or medium without authority.
- An email message may go to persons other than the intended recipient. If the email contains confidential, or commercially sensitive information this could be damaging to (CTC NAME).
- Emails should be regarded as potentially public information. There is therefore a heightened risk of legal liability for the sender, the recipient and the organisations for which they work.
- Email is a form of publishing. Therefore, defamation laws apply to emails.

- Personal data contained in emails may be accessible under Data Protection legislation. Furthermore emails to Government and other public bodies may be accessible under Freedom of Information legislation.
- Email is speedy and therefore messages written in haste, or written carelessly can be sent without the opportunity to check or rephrase. This could give rise to legal liability on (CTC NAME)'s part such as claims for defamation, etc.
- Information contained in, or attached to emails may belong to others and there may be copyright implications in sending or receiving them without permission.
- An email message may legally bind (CTC NAME) contractually in certain instances without the proper authority being obtained in-house.
- Email messages can carry computer viruses that are particularly dangerous to (CTC NAME)'s computer operations.

You are required to be conscious of the above risks and to ensure that, in your use of email or other (CTC NAME) resources, you do not expose (CTC NAME) to any such risks.

Protection of (CTC NAME) staff

(CTC NAME) is committed to protecting our staff from the effects of inappropriate use of email by others. If you receive any offensive, unpleasant, harassing, or intimidating messages via the email you should inform your manager/director immediately. It is important that such emails are traced as quickly as possible. The message should be printed and kept for investigative purposes.

Enforcement

If any breach of this email policy is observed then disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be taken. This policy is not exhaustive. In situations which are not expressly governed by this policy, you must ensure that your use of email is at all times appropriate and consistent with your responsibilities towards (CTC NAME). In case of any doubt, you should consult with your manager/director.