

# Northern Essex Community College

## EMAIL POLICY

Created: 1/06/2004

Modified: 10/7/2013

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of the Northern Essex Community College (NECC) email system and make users aware of what NECC deems as acceptable and unacceptable use of its email system. NECC reserves the right to amend this policy at its discretion. In case of amendments, users will be informed appropriately. The most recent policies can be found at <http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/general-resources-and-policies/faculty-and-staff-exchange-mail/how-to-guides-and-policies/>.

### Legal Requirements

Email is a business communication tool and users are obliged to use this tool in a responsible, effective and lawful manner. Although by its nature email seems to be less formal than other written communication, use of email is subject to important College policy and legal restrictions. Therefore, it is important that users are aware of the policy and legal issues involved in email use.

The following is a list of prohibited uses of College email resources. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and should be construed according to the fair import of its terms. The College reserves the right to prohibit any use of its computing facilities if and when such use appears to be inconsistent with this policy, the mission of the College, or any applicable state or federal law.

- a. Copying software or any intellectual property in a manner that appears to violate copyright law, or otherwise infringing on any intellectual property rights of others;
- b. Transmitting, copying, creating or storing obscene material.
- c. Conducting a business or any activity for profit, regardless of whether such activity actually makes a profit.
- d. Any use that violates any College policy or any law, such as sexual harassment or conflict of interest.
- e. Any attempt to “crash” any College computing facilities, including any so-called “denial of service attack”.
- f. Any attempt to access an account belonging to another user, or breach a firewall, or otherwise access any data, account, or computing facilities for which the user is not authorized.
- g. Sharing of any user ID or otherwise granting access to College email resources to an unauthorized person.
- h. Use of College email resources for partisan political purposes, as that term is defined by Massachusetts law.
- i. Intentional introduction of any virus, worm, or other similar type of program or file into any College email resources or computing facilities;
- j. Any use by a student user that is inconsistent with the College’s Honor Code or Code of Student Conduct.

By following the guidelines in this policy, the email user can minimize the risks involved in the use of email. If any user violates the rules set out in this Email Policy, the user will be subject to loss of email and/or computer privileges, and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for employees and expulsion for students.

## **Best Practices**

NECC considers email as an important means of communication and recognizes the importance of proper email content and speedy replies in conveying a professional image and delivering good customer service. Users should take the same care in drafting an email as they would for any other communication. Therefore NECC suggests users to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Writing emails:**
  - Write well-structured emails and use short, descriptive subjects.
  - NECC's email style is informal. This means that sentences can be short and to the point. You can start your email with 'Hi', or 'Dear', and the name of the person. Messages can be ended with 'Best Regards'. The use of Internet abbreviations and characters such as smileys however, is not encouraged.
  - Signatures should include your name, job title and company name. Users should spell check all mails prior to transmission.
  - Do not send unnecessary attachments. It is recommended that any large files such as PowerPoint presentations be compressed. For assistance with this please contact the Service Desk.
  - It is highly recommended not to write emails in capitals as it could be considered inflammatory.
  - It is highly recommended not to use bcc: fields (blind copy).
  - If you forward mails, state clearly what action you expect the recipient to take.
  - Only mark emails as important if they really are important.
- **Maintenance:**
  - Due to space considerations on the server and tape backups, delete any email messages that you will not need and set your email client to automatically empty your 'deleted items' on closing.

## **Confidential Information**

Confidential messages such as student financial information should never be sent via email unless they are encrypted. If you are in doubt as to whether to send certain information via email, check with your supervisor.

Always remember that emails containing student information are subject to disclosure under the provisions of FERPA.

Always remember that emails are business records and are subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

## **Passwords**

The use of passwords to gain access to the computer system or to secure specific files does not provide users with an expectation of privacy in the respective system or document. Passwords will be a minimum of 8 characters long, complex, changed every 90 days, and not given out to any other person. Accounts with passwords older than 90 days will be disabled.

Complex passwords contain 3 of these 4 elements: Uppercase, lowercase, numbers & symbols.

Examples: pixie&Dust, p1xieDust, Redsox10.

## **System Support**

The NECC email system is supported from 8:30am to 4:30pm during regular business days. NECC reserves the right to use the hours of 6am to 8am daily for system maintenance. Whenever possible, NECC will make reasonable effort to notify users of upcoming maintenance periods.

## **Email Retention**

All deleted messages will be purged after 30 days. Users will be allowed to keep a maximum of 500MB of mail and attachments on the mail server. Users exceeding 500MB will be warned that they have exceeded their limitations and need to begin to clean their mailbox. Users exceeding 525MB will be unable to send email and users exceeding 550MB will be unable to send or receive additional emails. Warning messages will be sent to the users exceeding these limits nightly. Additional storage space on the server can be made available upon request from the users' supervisor. Messages and attachments kept on the file server will be backed up.

## **Windows Accounts/Email box**

All email accounts maintained on our email systems are property of NECC. Passwords should not be given to other people and must be changed every 90 days. Warning emails will be sent during the 3 week period prior to the password expiring. Any account with a password over 90 days old will be disabled. Any account that is disabled will lose access to all NECC resources including workstations, Email, Blackboard, Atomic Learning, proximity card secured classrooms, etc.

## **Retiree Accounts**

Employees who retire from NECC will have the opportunity to retain an @necc.mass.edu email address. Requests to keep this email account must be made prior to retirement. These accounts will be limited to 50MB of storage and will be accessible only via a web interface. The retiree must reduce the size of their mailbox to meet these new limitations by the time they retire. These accounts are still subject to proper password management and retention, if the account is purged due to these events, it will not be reinstated.

## **Account Retention**

All disabled email accounts will be purged on the first day of the third week of the Spring & Fall semesters.

## **Forwarding**

Email accounts that are set to automatically forward email outside of NECC controlled systems are done at the risk of the mailbox owner. NECC does not guarantee delivery of email to systems outside of the necc.mass.edu domain. Mailboxes configured this way will render proper backup and restore features futile. However, the user is still responsible for the proper maintenance of their mailbox account.

## **Out Of Office**

Out of office messages are the responsibility of individual users. Please contact the Service Desk if you have any questions on how to set this up.

## **Calendar Sharing**

The email system has the ability to allow users to share calendars with themselves and other members of their department. It is the responsibility of users and departments to implement calendar sharing, if desired. Please contact the Service Desk if you any questions.

## **Outlook Web Access (OWA)**

Because Outlook Web Access uses additional network and server resources, it should be used only by users not currently at their own workstations or at home.

## **Name Change**

If a user becomes married or changes their name, their email address can be changed to reflect their new name. Email sent to the previous address will be forwarded for a period of 60 days. After that time, the previous account name will be deactivated.

## **Employment Status**

Users who are no longer employees of NECC will have their email account immediately disabled based on notification from their supervisor or Human Resources.

## **System Monitoring**

Users expressly waive any right of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive on NECC's computer systems. NECC reserves the right to monitor emails without prior notification. If there is evidence that any user is not adhering to the guidelines set out in this policy, NECC reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including termination and/or legal action.

## **Viruses**

Local and remote users of NECC's email system must have in place and be using appropriate antivirus software. Users found to be sending messages or attachments with viruses will have their email accounts suspended. NECC assumes no responsibility for messages sent containing viruses. Please contact the Service Desk for any questions on viruses or the use of anti-virus software.

## **Mobile Device Access**

Access to NECC email via mobile devices is permitted, support will only be provided for NECC provided devices. Personal devices will be given best effort to configure, but not supported. All devices connecting to the email system will be required to have a minimum of simple PIN to access the device. **Important:** If your device is lost or stolen please notify the Service Desk. The device can also be factory reset and wipe out all data through OWA interface.

## **Questions**

If you have any questions or comments about this Email Policy, please contact Service Desk. If you do not have any questions NECC presumes that you understand and are aware of the rules and guidelines in this Email Policy and will adhere to them.

## **Declaration**

I have read, understand and acknowledge receipt of the Email policy. I will comply with the guidelines set out in this policy and understand that failure to do so might result in disciplinary or legal action.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_