

Electronic Mail

212.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper use and application of the Department's electronic mail (email) system by employees of this department. Email is a communication tool available to employees to enhance efficiency in the performance of job duties and is to be used in accordance with generally accepted business practices and current law (e.g., California Public Records Act). Messages transmitted over the email system must only be those that involve official business activities or contain information essential to employees for the accomplishment of business-related tasks and/or communication directly related to the business, administration, or practices of the Department.

212.2 EMAIL RIGHT OF PRIVACY

All email messages, including any attachments, that are transmitted over department networks are considered department records and therefore are department property. The Department reserves the right to access, audit or disclose, for any lawful reason, any message including any attachment that is transmitted over its email system or that is stored on any department system.

The email system is not a confidential system since all communications transmitted on, to or from the system are the property of the Department. Therefore, the email system is not appropriate for confidential communications. If a communication must be private, an alternative method to communicate the message should be used instead of email. Employees using the Department's email system shall have no expectation of privacy concerning communications utilizing the system.

Employees should not use personal accounts to exchange email or other information that is related to the official business of the Department.

212.3 PROHIBITED USE OF EMAIL

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.

Email messages addressed to the entire department are only to be used for official business related items that are of particular interest to all users and must be approved by the Chief of Police or a Division Commander. Personal advertisements are not acceptable.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message under another user's name. Users are strongly encouraged to log off the network when their computer is unattended. This added security measure would minimize the misuse of an individual's email, name and/or password by others.

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212.4 MANAGEMENT OF E-MAIL

Because the e-mail system is not designed for long-term retention of messages, e-mail that the employee desires to save or that becomes part of an official record should be printed and/or stored in another database. Users of e-mail are solely responsible for the management of their mailboxes. Messages should be purged manually by the user at least once per week. All messages in excess of one month will be deleted at regular intervals from the server computer.

212.4.1 REQUIRED REVIEW OF EMAIL

Electronic mailboxes are issued to full-time, part-time, and volunteer employees of the Azusa Police Department. Email communications is a fundamental method whereby important information and updates are relayed to staff. All full-time and part-time employees are required to monitor their assigned email for messages and respond appropriately to the sender within a reasonable amount of time if a response is required or encouraged, provided they are not on approved time off. Employees shall not filter their email that automatically sends specific messages to either a "junk" or "spam" file unless it is from an identified advertisement or other similar entity. Employees are required to check their email at least once per shift, but are not required to check when on approved time off or their regularly scheduled weekend unless directed to do so by a supervisor. Emails from supervisors that require a "read receipt" shall be marked accordingly and sent without unnecessary delay.