



E-Mail Acceptable Usage Policy

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 545

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Information System Security E-Mail Acceptable Usage Policy for Users

E-mail is perhaps the most popularly used system for exchanging information over the Internet. E-mail allows users to read, compose, send, and store messages over a network to USAID and third party users. While e-mail is a rapid and convenient means to communicate with other staff members and third parties, you must use e-mail in ways that: (a) respect the rights and privacy of others, and (b) keep USAID information secure. This document outlines acceptable usage policy for USAID e-mail.

The following are general guidelines for e-mail use:

- You must be courteous and follow etiquette.
- You must protect others' privacy and confidentiality.
- You must use USAID information technology resources efficiently and productively.
- You must not send anything in e-mail messages that you would not say to a person face-to-face.
- You are responsible for all e-mail that you send.

The following are USAID-specific guidelines for e-mail use:

- You must use e-mail only for business activities. Personal use of e-mail is permissible so long as:
 - The usage cost is negligible,
 - The usage does not preempt USAID business, and
 - The productivity of other staff is not eroded.
- You must send e-mail containing sensitive information only to persons who have a need-to-know.
- You must use only CISO-approved digital signing methods to sign e-mail.
- You must use only CISO-approved encryption methods to encrypt e-mail.
- When sending e-mail that contains sensitive but unclassified (SBU) information, you must mark the e-mail as SBU in the first paragraph of the message.
- You must send e-mail encrypted, if it is sent externally and contains SBU information.
- You must not send classified information using the USAID e-mail system.

The following are unacceptable uses for e-mail:

- You must not send profanities, obscenities, racial or derogatory remarks.
- You must not send e-mail to harass or intimidate others.
- You must not send unsolicited bulk e-mail, spam.
- You must not send chain letters/pyramid schemes.
- You must not send pornography.
- You must not illegally send copyrighted materials.
- You must not send sensitive or private information.
- You must not send e-mail to propagate viruses.
- You must not bombard others with multiple mailings, e-mail “bombing.”
- You must not modify the information in an e-mail message header.
- You must not send e-mail for personal for-profit activities, such as marketing or business transactions, private advertising of products or services, and any activity for personal gain.
- You must not send e-mail for unauthorized not-for-profit business activities, such as solicitation for charities, religious, or political causes.
- You must not express religious or political opinions.
- You must not send incendiary statements that might incite violence, or describe or promote the use of weapons or devices associated with terrorist activities.
- You must not send e-mail that supports unlawful/prohibited activities as defined by federal laws or regulations.