

Policy Owner:	Chief Information Officer
Last Revised:	09/2016
Last Full Review:	03/2017
Contact:	Division of the Chief Information Officer, 518-276-2122

# Electronic Mail Acceptable Use by Rensselaer Personnel

## 1 Purpose

Electronic mail is an essential component of the administrative and academic functioning of Rensselaer. Rensselaer has invested in the information technology and human resources needed to address campus email needs, to preclude replication of services and duplication of effort by the separate units or individuals, and to promote a consistent identity. Rensselaer also believes that adherence to this policy will help avoid misleading email recipients as to the source of emails they receive from Rensselaer personnel and assist the Rensselaer research community to comply with applicable export control laws. This policy defines appropriate use of Rensselaer electronic mail resources.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all personnel of Rensselaer while performing Institute employment duties, including student employees, visiting students, visiting faculty and visiting researchers. It is subordinate to Rensselaer's *Cyber Citizenship Policy*.

## 3 Policy

Electronic mail is an official communication channel for Rensselaer. All persons who have been assigned an Institute email account, including, but not limited to faculty, staff, trustees, guests, retirees and students, must therefore maintain appropriate standards in using email in consideration of the email recipient, the email facilities themselves, and the positive public image for Rensselaer.

1. All persons who have been assigned an Institute email account shall be solely responsible for use of the account, and are expected to read their email on a regular basis, keeping in mind that there will be time-sensitive information contained in the email.
2. Only Rensselaer email accounts may be used by Rensselaer personnel when conducting Institute business, which includes, among other things, teaching and research. Individual employees, departments, and other campus units may not create and use their own alternate email accounts.
3. Email accounts obtained through third parties (e.g., <name>@gmail.com, or <name>@myowncompany.com) may not be used in conducting the business of the Institute, including, but not limited to, sponsored research, program development and the work of any consortium or center.
4. The administration of the email systems and the assignment of email accounts to individuals is the exclusive responsibility of the Division of the Chief Information Officer. The Chief

Information Officer may authorize departments and campus units to operate ancillary email services in support of specific approved business applications. Such approved applications may not be used to circumvent this policy with respect to email accounts for individuals, however, and the authorization for the application may be revoked at any time.

5. The personal use of Rensselaer email accounts is permitted to the extent it is incidental in nature, does not disrupt the normal functioning of the email service, and otherwise meets the acceptable use requirements. Email sent or forwarded through the Rensselaer email facilities must not violate Rensselaer policy or local, state, or federal law or regulations. Email must not be slanderous in nature nor be used to harass other individuals or groups. Email must not be what is generally regarded as unsolicited nuisance email or 'spam'.
6. Email header information must accurately reflect from whom the email originated. The headers may not be altered to misrepresent the actual sender with the intent to deceive the recipient.
7. Rensselaer cannot guarantee the security, privacy, or confidentiality of electronic mail. Extra caution should be used when transmitting materials or information meant to be private or confidential in nature and use of University email shall be in compliance with FERPA, HIPAA and applicable University policies. Rensselaer personnel should not assume confidentiality of their messages and are advised not to send confidential Institute or private communications via electronic mail.
8. Although email is backed-up for disaster recovery purposes, it is not retained in perpetuity, and deleted email may not be retrievable by the user or DotCIO after a relatively short period. Consequently, email communications that need to be retained after being deleted should be kept either electronically in a location other than the email server, or in print.
9. Faculty and staff who retire from Rensselaer in good standing are eligible to receive a Retiree E-mail Account at the discretion of the Institute. Those faculty recognized as emeritus/emerita for their significant contributions to Rensselaer through teaching, research, service, and demonstrated exemplary citizenship, can retain and continue to use the same Rensselaer email account and credentials that they were using prior to their retirement.

## 4 Implementation

The Vice President for Information Services and Technology and Chief Information Officer is responsible for implementing the provisions of this policy and for its maintenance.

## 5 Compliance

Employees who violate the requirements of this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

## 6 Approval

This policy is approved under the authority of the President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

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June 27, 2017

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Signature

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Date

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson

## 7 Revision History

11/22/2016 – Initial version released for comment.