

# POLICY

## E-MAIL

Applicable to: <b>All MidCentral DHB Employees and Contractors</b>	Issued by: <b>Information Systems</b> Contact: <b>Manager IS Service Delivery</b>
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### 1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the acceptable use of Electronic Mail (e-mail) by MDHB staff and on MDHB systems.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Minimise the costs and risks.
- Give clear guidelines and standards for the use.
- Encourage sharing of appropriate information.
- Prohibit unauthorised, unacceptable and improper use of email.

### 2. SCOPE

All employees of MDHB and its subsidiaries and all contractors who are provided with a MDHB account for e-mail.

### 3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

**Information Systems** will provide e-mail access to any employee where the respective General Manager, Director or authorised deputy has approved such access on a MDHB user access form.

**All employees** will be personally responsible for their own actions in the use of e-mail and to ensure that these standards and guidelines are followed.

### 4. POLICY

- E-mail is a business tool and not a right of employment. MDHB reserves the right to designate those individuals to whom it will provide access.
- E-mail is an official communication and e-mail messages must be in line with the Communications Policy (see MDHB-2002).
- E-mail places MDHB in the public domain and it is therefore essential that e-mail is used in an acceptable and professional manner.
- Users should be aware that whenever they send an e-mail, the user's name, and MDHB identification are included in the e-mail message. All users should therefore exercise good judgment and common sense when creating and distributing e-mail messages.
- E-mail can be inadvertently sent to the wrong address. Therefore the following two items are used to reduce possible risk:
  - Email auto - complete is disabled.
  - All external emails are delayed for a period of five minutes to allow a time to recall the email if it has been sent to the wrong person. Information is available on the intranet to assist you on setting up your contact list etc.

- No right of privacy extends to the users of email as the email account and contents is the property of MDHB.
- MDHB may at any time wholly or partially restrict e-mail access without prior notice, and without the consent of the user.
- Those who use MDHB E-mail services are expected to do so responsibly. They must comply with all legal requirements, with this policy, and other relevant policies and procedures.
- Only individual e-mail accounts will be issued with the rights to send e-mail. Group E-mail accounts may be set up, where approved by the IS Manager Service Delivery but they will be configured to only receive e-mail.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- E-mail leaves an irrevocable written record and so extreme care should be taken by users with regard to content. Users should not send anything by e-mail that they are not prepared to sign their name to.
- Where users inadvertently open an e-mail message containing unacceptable content they should immediately delete it.

## 6. PROHIBITED USES

All of the following uses of email are prohibited:

- Obtaining, producing or distributing material which is considered "offensive material" or "objectionable" under any Act e.g. Human Rights Act, Employment Relations Act.
- Defamation or discrimination of others, or sending harassing, threatening or objectionable messages.
- Accessing, sending, receiving or soliciting sexually explicit or pornographic images.
- Forwarding or sending of any copyright protected materials.
- No computer software is to be introduced to the organisation's network by any electronic means (including e-mail attachment) without permission.
- Forwarding or sending any computer file which is deemed to be incompatible with MDHB systems or which may present a risk in terms of computer operations: Such files include, but are not limited to:
  - Streaming Video or Audio services
  - Movies e.g. file extensions avi, mpg, mov, vivo.
  - Music e.g. file extensions mp3, wav.
  - Executable files e.g. file extensions exe, com, bat.
  - Databases e.g. file extensions mdb.
  - VB Script e.g. file extensions vbs.
  - Games.
- Forgery or attempted forgery of E-mail messages, or any other illegal or unlawful activity.
- Reading, copying, modifying or deleting e-mail messages of other users without that user's express or implied consent.
- Sending unsolicited "junk" mail, "for profit" messages or sending or participating in chain letters, pyramid schemes or other illegal schemes. E-mail messages containing warnings regarding viruses or other "helpful" tips should be validated with Information Systems ServiceDesk before being forwarded.
- Misrepresentation of MDHB or communications that bring it into disrepute.
- Sending e-mail regarding politics, sex, religion and other such controversial subjects.

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

- The confidentiality of e-mail cannot be assured.
- By default, e-mail is transferred in a non-encrypted format. Therefore, consideration should be taken to encrypt e-mail or password protect attachments of a particularly confidential or sensitive nature.
- Copies of any e-mail deleted by the user may still be recorded on Internet and in-house e-mail servers, the recipient's computer, and backup media.

## 8. RECORDING AND MONITORING

- MDHB uses an e-mail gateway sentry system to inspect incoming and outgoing e-mails for virus infection, spam, unacceptable content etc, and will block and quarantine messages accordingly. E-mail users will be advised when certain e-mail messages addressed to or from them are quarantined.
- If there is a valid business reason to receive quarantined e-mail, the user should contact the Information Systems ServiceDesk requesting release. Blocked items which are not released in this manner will be deleted after 7 days.
- MidCentral District Health Board may at any time open and examine the contents of any file held on a MidCentral District Health Board computer system.
- Audits and investigations of misuse of E-mail will be carried out with due diligence and respect for employees. This includes adherence to any and all applicable provisions of any Act.
- Where audits show minor breaches of the policy for e-mail, the IS Manager Service Delivery will bring it to the attention of the individual user. For more serious or repeated breaches of the policy, the evidence of such breaches will be passed immediately to the employee's manager.
- The employee's manager and the HR Manager (or their appointed deputies) will determine any further action to be taken.

## 9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVING

- E-mail items, whether in an electronic form or printed, may form part of the statutory records of MDHB and should be treated as such.
- It is the responsibility of individual users to carry out reasonable housekeeping on their mailbox. Junk mail or copies of attachments which have already been saved to a server should be deleted.
- The email system is not designed as a document filing system. Accordingly, the following constraints are applied to the mail system:
  - Individuals will receive a warning when their mailbox reaches 200 megabytes or larger.
  - Restrictions will be applied to a mailbox when it exceeds 300 megabytes.
  - Users who exceed the 300 megabytes can request exemption from the Manager IS Service Delivery as long as they are not using the space to store documents that should be filed elsewhere and they can demonstrate a genuine business requirement.
- Mailboxes which are not used for a period of six months or more will be deleted.
- An employee's e-mail account will be disabled on the termination of their employment, and deleted within one month.

## 10. PERSONAL USE OF E-MAIL

- Limited personal use of e-mail is acceptable provided it does not interfere with or compromise the performance or use of the system for business related purposes.

- An e-mail public folder called GOSSIP is provided on the MidCentral domain for limited and controlled personal use of e-mail.
- This folder is moderated by Information Systems.
- It permits users to advertise their own house, their own car or their own odd personal items for sale, publicise school galas, publicise approved fundraisers etc.
- Items for sale which are in breach of any applicable Acts are not permitted e.g. sale of eggs, home kill etc
- E-mail will remain in GOSSIP for 14 days, after which time it is automatically deleted from the folder.
- The rules regarding prohibited email content as per 4 apply to GOSSIP.

## **11. MAIL GROUPS**

- Ability to send e-mails to some groups e.g. All MidCentral Users is limited and approval must be requested by a Service Manger or equivalent via the Service Desk.
- Ad hoc access to these groups is to be requested through Information Systems.
- The Service Delivery Manager may decline any request not deemed suitable for wide distribution.

## **12. RELATED MDHB DOCUMENTS**

MDHB-2002      Communications -Policy-

MDHB-2005      Statement of Privacy for All Persons Who Access MidCentral District Health Board's Care Services -Policy-

## **13. FURTHER INFORMATION / ASSISTANCE**

The "E-Mail Guidelines" Public Folder provides useful information on E-Mail Etiquette.

## **14. KEYWORDS**

E-mail acceptable use, E-mail, Mail, Information systems, Mailbox, Mail etiquette