



## E-mail Acceptable Use Policy

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### Purpose

E-mail is a critical mechanism for business communications at Fort Valley State University. However, use of Fort Valley State University's electronic mail systems and services are a privilege, not a right, and therefore must be used with respect and in accordance with the goals of Fort Valley State University.

The objectives of this policy are to outline appropriate and inappropriate use of Fort Valley State University's e-mail systems and services in order to minimize disruptions to services and activities, as well as comply with applicable policies and laws.

### Scope

This policy applies to all e-mail systems and services owned by Fort Valley State University, all e-mail account users/holders at Fort Valley State University (both temporary and permanent), and all company e-mail records.

### Account Activation

E-mail access at Fort Valley State University is controlled through individual accounts and passwords. Each user of Fort Valley State University's e-mail system is required to read and sign a copy of this ***E-mail Acceptable Use Policy*** prior to receiving an e-mail access account and password. It is the responsibility of the employee to protect the confidentiality of their account and password information.

**All employees (full-time, part-time) and paid students** of Fort Valley State University will receive an e-mail account. E-mail accounts will be granted to third-party non-employees on a case-by-case basis. Possible non-employees that may be eligible for access include:

- Contractors.
- Media representatives.
- Attendees/Trainees (workshops, expositions, assessment).

Applications for these temporary accounts must be submitted to **Office of Information Technology - (478) 825-6228**. All terms, conditions, and restrictions governing e-mail use must be in a written and signed agreement.



## Account Termination

E-mail access will be terminated when the employee or third party terminates their association with Fort Valley State University, unless other arrangements are made. Fort Valley State University is under no obligation to store or forward the contents of an individual's e-mail inbox/outbox after the term of their employment has ceased.

## General Expectations of End Users

The enterprise often delivers official communications via e-mail. As a result, employees of Fort Valley State University with e-mail accounts are expected to check their e-mail in a consistent and timely manner so that they are aware of important company announcements and updates, as well as for fulfilling business and role-oriented tasks.

E-mail users are responsible for mailbox management, including organization and cleaning. If a user subscribes to a mailing list, he or she must be aware of how to unsubscribe from the list, and is responsible for doing so in the event that their current e-mail address changes.

E-mail users are expected to remember that e-mail sent from the company's e-mail accounts reflects on the company. Please comply with normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct.

## Appropriate Use

Individuals at Fort Valley State University are encouraged to use e-mail to further the goals and objectives of Fort Valley State University. The types of activities that are encouraged include:

- Communicating with fellow employees, business partners of Fort Valley State University, and clients within the context of an individual's assigned responsibilities.
- Acquiring or sharing information necessary or related to the performance of an individual's assigned responsibilities.
- Participating in educational or professional development activities.

## Inappropriate Use

Fort Valley State University's e-mail systems and services are not to be used for purposes that could be reasonably expected to strain storage or bandwidth (e.g. e-mailing large attachments instead of pointing to a location on a shared drive). Individual e-mail use will not interfere with others' use and enjoyment of Fort Valley State University's e-mail system and services. E-mail use at Fort Valley State University will comply with all applicable laws, all Fort Valley State University policies, and all Fort Valley State University contracts.

The following activities are deemed inappropriate uses of Fort Valley State University e-mail systems and services, and are strictly prohibited:



- Use of e-mail for illegal or unlawful purposes, including copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g. spreading of computer viruses).
- Use of e-mail in any way that violates Fort Valley State University's policies, rules, or administrative orders, including, but not limited to, [list any applicable code of conduct policies, etc.].
- Viewing, copying, altering, or deletion of e-mail accounts or files belonging to Fort Valley State University or another individual without authorized permission.
- Sending of unreasonably large e-mail attachments. The total size of an individual e-mail message sent (including attachment) should be **10MB** or less.
- Opening e-mail attachments from unknown or unsigned sources. Attachments are the primary source of computer viruses and should be treated with utmost caution.
- Sharing e-mail account passwords with another person, or attempting to obtain another person's e-mail account password. E-mail accounts are only to be used by the registered user.
- Excessive personal use of Fort Valley State University e-mail resources. Fort Valley State University allows limited personal use for communication with family and friends, independent learning, and public service so long as it does not interfere with staff productivity, pre-empt any business activity, or consume more than a trivial amount of resources. Fort Valley State University prohibits personal use of its e-mail systems and services for unsolicited mass mailings, non- Fort Valley State University commercial activity, political campaigning, dissemination of chain letters, and use by non-employees.

## Monitoring and Confidentiality

The e-mail systems and services used at Fort Valley State University are owned by the company, and are therefore its property. This gives Fort Valley State University the right to monitor any and all e-mail traffic passing through its e-mail system. This monitoring may include, but is not limited to, inadvertent reading by IT staff during the normal course of managing the e-mail system, review by the legal team during the e-mail discovery phase of litigation, observation by management in cases of suspected abuse or to monitor employee efficiency.

In addition, archival and backup copies of e-mail messages may exist, despite end-user deletion, in compliance with Fort Valley State University's records **30-day** retention policy. The goals of these backup and archiving procedures are to ensure system reliability, prevent business data loss, meet regulatory and litigation needs, and to provide business intelligence.

Backup copies exist primarily to restore service in case of failure. Archival copies are designed for quick and accurate access by company delegates for a variety of management and legal needs. Both backups and archives are governed by the company's document retention policies. These policies indicate that e-mail must be kept for up to [xx] years. [Replace with details of retention policy.]

If Fort Valley State University discovers or has good reason to suspect activities that do not comply with applicable laws or this policy, e-mail records may be retrieved and used to document



the activity in accordance with due process. All reasonable efforts will be made to notify an employee if his or her e-mail records are to be reviewed. Notification may not be possible, however, if the employee cannot be contacted, as in the case of employee absence due to vacation.

Use extreme caution when communicating confidential or sensitive information via e-mail. Keep in mind that all e-mail messages sent outside of Fort Valley State University become the property of the receiver. A good rule is to not communicate anything that you wouldn't feel comfortable being made public. Demonstrate particular care when using the "Reply" command during e-mail correspondence to ensure the resulting message is not delivered to unintended recipients.

## Reporting Misuse

Any allegations of misuse should be promptly reported to the **Office of Information Technology - (478) 825-6228**. If you receive an offensive e-mail, do not forward, delete, or reply to the message. Instead, report it directly to the individual named above.

## Disclaimer

Fort Valley State University assumes no liability for direct and/or indirect damages arising from the user's use of Fort Valley State University's e-mail system and services. Users are solely responsible for the content they disseminate. Fort Valley State University is not responsible for any third-party claim, demand, or damage arising out of use the Fort Valley State University's e-mail systems or services.

## Failure to Comply

Violations of this policy will be treated like other allegations of wrongdoing at Fort Valley State University. Allegations of misconduct will be adjudicated according to established procedures. Sanctions for inappropriate use on Fort Valley State University's e-mail systems and services may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Temporary or permanent revocation of e-mail access;
2. Disciplinary action according to applicable Fort Valley State University policies;
3. Termination of employment; and/or
4. Legal action according to applicable laws and contractual agreements.

## E-mail User Agreement

I have read and understand the E-mail Acceptable Use Policy. I understand if I violate the rules explained herein, I may face legal or disciplinary action according to applicable laws or company policy.



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Employee Name (print)

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Employee Signature

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Date

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