

Electronic Communication

Number: B-23

Revision:

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1.0 POLICY

The Town maintains electronic communications systems to assist employees while conducting business for the Town. The Town also maintains a public email terminal located in Town Hall.

2.0 PURPOSE

Employee access to the Town's electronic resources imposes certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to relevant Town policies and local State and Federal laws. In order to comply with those laws, the Town will provide the media and general public with access to town emails during regular business hours.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Town of Carolina Beach employees.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Electronic Communication Systems – are systems owned, operated or leased by the Town. They include, but are not limited to, telephones, voicemail, email, Internet access, computer work stations, or other electronic equipment used for communication.

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL RULES

5.1 Electronic communication equipment is for business use and any personal use must be brief, infrequent, not interfere with other employees' work and be on the employee's own time.

5.2 Employees should have no expectation of privacy for any information gathered or maintained on a town owned electronic communication systems.

5.3 The public will be able to view incoming and outgoing emails of the Mayor and Town Council, the Town Manager and all Department Heads. This includes business email accounts with the extension @carolinabeach.org. Emails will be archived for up to 6 months. The public will have the ability to download the emails and/or attachments onto a thumb drive. Emails may not be forwarded or sent from the public email terminal.

5.4 Emails that are of a CONFIDENTIAL nature will be filtered out and not captured on the public email terminal. In order for an email to be filtered out of the terminal, the sender must type the word "Confidential" in the subject line as well as in the

body of the email. Employees and Council are accountable for labeling confidential emails as such.

5.5 Categories of emails considered "Confidential" are:

- Personnel records
- Criminal investigation records
- Legal materials
- Closed session minutes and general accounts
- Social security numbers or personal financial information
- Contract bid documents until after the contract is awarded

Categories of emails considered "public record" are:

- Policies or directives
- Final drafts or reports and recommendations
- Meeting agendas or minutes
- Correspondence and memos related to official business

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 Employees are responsible for the safety and integrity of their electronic information. Employees should set up passwords to ensure the protection of information.

6.2 Under no circumstances may employees use Town electronic communication systems to send or receive any material that might be considered offensive including but not limited to pornography, comments or images which could be considered offensive to someone based on gender, race, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or genetics.

6.3 All information created, stored or transmitted on or with Town resources is the property of the Town. The Town reserves the right to inspect or audit any documents, emails or messages sent or received on the Town's equipment. Except as authorized by the Town, employees may not read or listen to any electronic communication intended for others.

6.4 Each employee is responsible for the security and integrity of Town information stored on the computer(s) assigned to the employee. The employee is responsible for controlling access to the electronic system, utilizing supplied virus protection software and ensuring the protection of personal passwords.

7.0 APPENDIX

Employees are required to sign a written acknowledgement that they have received, read, understand, and agree to comply with the Town of Carolina Beach's Electronic Communication Policy.

- Acknowledgement of Electronic Communication policy.