Operational Area:	Information and Technology
Responsible Executive:	Chief Information Officer
Responsible Office:	Information Technology Services
Effective:	October 1, 2022

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Email and Electronic Communications Security Policy
Information and Technology

Contents

I.   Introduction

A. **Authority:** Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 23-54-102, *et seq*. (2022) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver ("MSU Denver" or "University") to establish rules and regulations to govern and to operate the University and its programs. The MSU Denver Trustees retain the authority to approve, to administer, and to interpret policies pertaining to University governance. The MSU Denver Trustees authorize the MSU Denver President to approve, to administer, and to interpret policies pertaining to University operations.

B. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to govern the usage of MSU Denver's email and other electronic communications services. As email is the official means of communications at MSU Denver, it is critical that appropriate use of these services be defined and enforced.

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C. **Scope:** This policy applies to all individuals, including MSU Denver students, faculty, staff, and contractors, who are provided MSU Denver email addresses and functionality.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

A. **Responsible Executive:** Chief Information Officer

B. **Responsible Administrator:** Chief Information Security Officer

C. **Responsible Office:** Information Technology Services

D. **Policy Contact:** IT Services, msudenver.edu/technology, 303-352-7548

III. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to govern the usage of MSU Denver's email and other electronic communications services. As email is the official means of communications at MSU Denver, it is critical that appropriate use of these services be defined and enforced.

A. **Electronic Mail (email) Access**

1. All users of University computing systems will be provided an email address and email functionality based on their role on campus. Official University email communications should be addressed to the University-issued email address. Personal, non-MSU Denver email

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addresses should not be used for official University communications. When email conversations are found to be mis-addressed to personal email addresses instead of MSU Denver email addresses, the email address should be updated to the MSU Denver email address and the included parties notified of the error.

2. Personal, non-MSU Denver email addresses may be used for the following official University communications, in accordance with applicable privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

   a. Recruitment and marketing to prospective students, applicants, and newly admitted students;

   b. Recruitment and marketing to prospective employees, applicants, and new employees;

   c. General enrollment and registration information, including course registration, drop/withdrawal deadlines, and notifications;

   d. Orientation and transfer;

   e. Tuition and fee appeals; and

   f. To authenticate an individual's identity when an MSU Denver employee or student is locked out of an MSU Denver account.

3. Users have the option of accessing their email accounts from University-issued devices using University-licensed software but may

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opt to utilize personal devices and personally licensed software to access their mailbox. MSU Denver IT Services is responsible for maintaining University-issued devices and software and will exercise best efforts to support personal devices.

4. Manual forwarding of individual emails to external email addresses is permitted if such forwarding is permitted by the Data Classification Policy. Automated forwarding of MSU Denver email to external accounts is not permitted except when approved by and coordinated through IT Services.

5. All systems used to generate official MSU Denver email must abide by the Email and Electronic Communications Security Policy.

B. **Acceptable Use of Email**

1. Use of MSU Denver email services should follow standards of normal academic and professional ethics and is governed by University policies and applicable law. Inappropriate use may result in revocation of access to University computing systems and could result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and Staff Handbook.

2. Inappropriate use examples include, but are not limited to:

   a. Unauthorized attempts to access or use another person's email account;

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b. Sharing MSU Denver account NetID and password with other individuals;

c. Using email in a harassing, obscene, or violent manner; and

d. Using email in a manner that is illegal, that violates University policy, or that may adversely impact the University's computing systems resources.

3. Incidental personal use is permitted if this use does not adversely affect the functionality of University computing systems, incur additional costs, interfere with the performance of job duties, or violate applicable laws or University policies.

C. **Email Privacy**

1. MSU Denver email system and other electronic communications services are subject to disclosure per the Colorado Open Records Act and other e-discovery requests. Computer activity is monitored by automated systems and by authorized individuals for purposes of maintaining system performance and security. Files, logs, and systems will be scanned in response to system security alerts for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, and investigating risks from potential malware or compromise of systems and accounts.

2. In instances when individuals are suspected of abuse of computer usage, the contents of user files may also be inspected upon the approval of the Office of General Counsel, as well as approval from

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Human Resources and the Dean of Students. Any such monitoring or inspection must be formally requested and approved through IT Service Desk tickets to ensure that the request and any related activities are appropriately documented.

D. Mass Communication Tools

Use of mass communications tools, such as Listserves, global distribution lists, or mass marketing services, are not covered under this policy, but are governed separately by the Global Email Policy.

E. Enforcement and Reporting

1. Adherence to Information Security Policies is mandatory and may be based on State or Federal statute, contract language, or information security standards. These policies are not intended to unreasonably interfere with system utilization. Individuals should contact the IT Service Desk to report security risks, violations of policy, or to make requests for exceptions or amendments to the policies. The Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and other IT Services staff will respond to all reported security issues and will work with the University Policy Advisory Council to develop appropriate updates to policies. Violations of these policies may result in fitting

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administrative action up to and including revocation of system privileges, employee termination, or student expulsion.

2. Technical controls will be utilized to enforce policies when possible. In-scope individuals must abide by policies even in cases when these technical controls do not prevent policy violations. Individuals who identify shortcomings in technical controls should report the issue to the Chief Information Security Officer so technical controls can be appropriately adjusted.

IV.   Related Information

A. **Colorado Open Records Act (CORA)**
https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/info_center/cora.html

B. **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**
https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

C. **MSU Denver Acceptable Use of Computing Systems Policy**
https://www.msudenver.edu/policy/acceptable-use-computing-systems/

D. **MSU Denver Data Classification Policy**
https://www.msudenver.edu/policy/data-classification/

E. **MSU Denver Global Email to Employees Policy**
https://www.msudenver.edu/policy/global-email-employees/

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F. **MSU Denver Global Email to Students Policy**
https://www.msudenver.edu/policy/global-email-to-students-policy/

G. **MSU Denver Public Records Request Policy**
https://www.msudenver.edu/policy/public-records/

V.   History

A. **Effective:** October 1, 2022

B. **Enacted:** July 1, 2017

C. **Revision Notes:** Personal email addresses may not be used for official University communications. Automatic forwarding of all email is disallowed. Clarification that content and activity is scanned.

D. **Review:** This policy will be reviewed every five years or as deemed necessary by University leadership.

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VI.   Approval

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

N/A

Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver