

CITY OF RICHARDSON INTERDEPARTMENTAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

ELECTRONIC MAIL RETENTION

POLICY

This policy applies to electronic mail stored, used, created or retained within the City and e-mail used conjointly with the Internet, and does not supersede any state or federal laws, or any other city policy regarding confidentiality, information dissemination, or standards of conduct. Electronically stored information that is determined to be a record shall be treated in the same manner as any other record.

PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

E-mail messages are the property of the City, thus, they are subject to the requirements of the Texas Public Information Act and the laws applicable to the State Records Retention Schedules adopted by the city. A complete e-mail message not only includes the contents of the communication, but also the metadata (how and when and by whom the data was originated including dates and times that messages were sent, received, opened, deleted, etc.; as well as aliases and names of groups), and any attachments.

It is the policy of the City to provide for the efficient, economical and effective management of electronic documents in accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 13, Sections 6.91-6.97 (State Agency Bulletin Number One, Electronic Records Standards and Procedures). TAC Chapter 13, Section 6.92(c), provides that the designated records management officer must administer a program for the management of records created, received, retained, used or disposed via electronic media.

The City desires to adopt a policy for that purpose and to prescribe guidelines and procedures for the management of electronic mail consistent with the Electronic Records Standards and Procedures and in the interest of cost-effective recordkeeping, including long-term records retention for the Archives of the State of Texas.

II. SCOPE

E-mail accounts are provided to employees for conducting public business. **Therefore, employees should have no expectation of privacy when using the City's computer resources.** Authorized individuals within the City may monitor equipment, systems, and electronic message traffic at any time for security and maintenance purposes and reserves the right to audit networks and systems on a periodic basis to ensure policy compliance.

Applications affected include the City's e-mail program, e.g., Lotus Notes, and any related applications used and stored on network servers. This policy also applies to each application used to create electronic mail, including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, financial and accounting software, and any customized software applications used within the City where electronic documents are created or stored and whether such storage space is shared or personal.

III. RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

The City's approved retention schedule lists the record series that is created and the retention period for each series. It is the content and function of an e-mail message that determines the retention period for that message. All city-

related e-mail sent or received is considered a record. Therefore, all e-mail messages must be retained or disposed of according to the City's retention schedule.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of individual users of the City's computer system, with guidance and training from Records Management and the I.T. staff, to manage electronic mail according to the City's retention schedule. It is the responsibility of all City employees to assign expiration dates to e-mail that are considered "records" by utilizing the mark/unmark feature included with Lotus Notes.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that e-mail records remain accessible until the appropriate retention and disposition schedule authorizes their destruction. Employees who use a home computer and a personal e-mail account to conduct City business must manage their work-related e-mail the same way as those messages that are created and received using City computer resources. Distribution lists must be able to identify the sender and recipient of the message. Just like paper records, e-mail messages may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

V. MAINTENANCE OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

This policy is effective January 1, 2011. E-mails older than one year that are not designated as a record will be automatically deleted beginning January 1, 2012. Records created using the City's e-mail system may be saved for their approved retention period by printing the message and filing it the appropriate hard copy file or by placing expiration dates on each e-mail so that they are retained in accordance with the appropriate retention period and destroyed accordingly. Designated Records Liaisons from each department are responsible for training new employees to ensure compliance in accordance with the City's approved retention control schedules.

Original Signed By Bill Keffler

Bill Keffler
City Manager

09-15-10

Date